

KOINONIA



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Orthodox President: The Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain

Anglican President: The Bishop of London

Chairman of the Committee

The Revd Dr William Taylor
St John's Vicarage
25 Ladbroke Road
London W11 3pd
Tel: 020 7727 4262
email: vicar@stjohnsnottinghill.com

General Secretary

Janet Laws
The Bishop of London's Office
The Old Deanery
Dean's Court
London EC4V 5AA
Tel. 020 7248 6233
email: janet.laws@btopenworld.com

Treasurer

Mr David Powell
32 Westminster Palace Gardens
Artillery Row
London SW1P 1RR
Tel. 020 7222 3604
email: dp@dpcca.co.uk

Koinonia

THE JOURNAL OF THE ANGLICAN & EASTERN CHURCHES ASSOCIATION

Editorial

I HAVE recently come into temporary possession of some historic documents relating to the Eastern Church Association, a forerunner of the AECA. These are important archives in the history of Anglican-Orthodox relations and they make fascinating reading, and in future editions I intend to include some of the material with a series of articles 'from the archives'.

The oldest material is a selection of occasional papers from 1902-1904. A paper by Bishop Wordsworth of Salisbury contains an appendix of 'Official intercourse with the Orthodox Eastern Church and the Patriarchate of Constantinople' Among the letters is one from Constantine the Ecumenical Patriarch to Archbishop Frederick Temple. The Archbishop had presided over the Lambeth Conference of 1897 during which the significant resolution was made to secure 'a clearer understanding and of establishing closer relations between the Church of the East and the Anglican Communion'. As a result Temple had written to Constantine, and in a letter of 15th September 1899, received a warm response that included the following words:

'The end of all this, beloved brother in Christ, is that we grow in love to one another, and that our hearts, and those of the clergy and people under us, be more closely knit together; because it is from hearts filled with love that the glorious-fruited trees of peace and concord, of communion and unity, of Christian faith and hope are wont to spring. May God multiply the years of your Grace and make them

full of health and enjoyment, pouring upon yourself and all your enlightened hierarchy and the Christ-loving English people His gifts in unstinted measure.'

As the AECA celebrates its 150th anniversary this year, this edition of *Koinonia* celebrates that legacy of understanding and relations, which it has undoubtedly helped to foster, through a series of articles with an historical theme.

The Chairman, William Taylor, reflects on the sesquicentenary of the AECA in an article that outlines some of its background and current significance. He comments that 'relations between our two families of churches have never been more important than they now are.' In the light of the correspondence between Archbishop and Patriarch at the end of the 19th century it is interesting to compare this with the recent greetings between the current holders of those offices, and their recent official exchange is included in full for the record. Dimitris Salapatias continues the theme by reviewing Anglican-Orthodox relations and asking if we have reached 'a dead-end or a way forward?' Matthew Duckett also writes from an historical perspective as he describes the emergence of the cult of relics in the Early Church and its comparative development among eastern and western Christians.

Many of you will remember that in the last edition of *Koinonia*, we announced a significant Travel Award for students engaging in field-work that would strengthen Anglican-Orthodox relations and understanding. The occasion was another anniversary – the 1700th of the Edict of Milan – and it was felt that this momentous date should not go unmarked. The Committee were delighted with the response and particularly the quality of the applications. In the end we chose to award the prize to Catherine Reid, an ordinand at Mirfield, and she has written a reflection on her time at St Elisabeth's Convent in Belarus. In due course we hope to include the academic work resulting from her time there. Although we could only award the prize to one person, it threw up an exciting range of projects and we have sought to support many of the applicants in different ways by pointing them to other grants, per-

sonal contacts and information that will aid their studies. Many readers will be aware of the usual and regular grants given by the AECA, and one of those recipients, Susan Mobberley, tells us about what that support enabled her to achieve. Other short articles include a review by Stephen Stavrou of the recent book *Eastern Orthodox Theology* by Andrew Louth, and George Novaković has contributed an obituary of his friend Nenad Petrovic who had been a faithful and active member of the AECA for many years, and who saw many developments in Anglican-Orthodox relations.

With all this history in mind, I conclude with the words of Archbishop Justin on his recent visit to Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople:

‘There is much that unites us and as we continue to strengthen the bonds of friendship our understanding of each other’s traditions will grow. It is therefore in this spirit that I greet you and ask for your prayers for our ministry.’

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Contributors

WILLIAM TAYLOR is the Chairman of the AECA and Vicar of St John's, Notting Hill. He is also the Ecumenical Advisor for the Kensington Episcopal Area.

DIMITRIS SALAPATAS has studied Theology and Byzantine Music in Athens, and International Relations at the University of London. He is currently undertaking research on the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius at the University of Winchester. He is a member of the AECA committee.

MATTHEW DUCKETT is the parish priest of St Peter le Poer, Friern Barnet in the Diocese of London.

CATHERINE REID is an ordinand at Mirfield theological college. She was recently awarded the AECA's Travel Prize in commemoration of the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan.

SUSAN MOBBERLEY is an Anglican priest in the Diocese of Coventry who has undertaken an icon-writing course with Aidan Hart with the help of AECA funding.

STEPHEN STAVROU is Succentor of Southwark Cathedral and Chaplain to the Guy's Campus of King's College, London. He is a member of the AECA Committee and Editor of its journal.

News and Notices

This Autumn there are three significant AECA events.

Annual General Meeting and Lecture

The AGM will take place this year on 9th September at St Mark's Coptic Church in Allen Street, London, W8 6UX at 6pm. Following this at 6.45pm there will be a lecture by Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the UK. The evening concludes with refreshments.

Sesquicentenary Dinner

In celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Anglican & Eastern Churches Association there will be a celebration dinner at Lambeth Palace on the evening of Wednesday 29th October. Further details including speakers, cost and timings will be released soon.

Constantinople Lecture

The annual Constantinople Lecture will take place this year on 27th November at St Mellitus College, 24, Collingham Rd, London SW5 0LX. Evening Prayer is at 6.00pm with the lecture at 7.00pm, followed by a reception. Please put the date in your diary now, and further information will be sent out in the near future. This year's speaker is Fr John Behr, Dean of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York. His title is '*Take Back Death! Christian Witness in the Twenty-First Century*'. He has published numerous monographs with SVS Press and OUP, most recently an edition and translation of the fragments of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia and a monograph on Irenaeus.

Holy Britannia

The Rev'd Andrei Petrine has recently launched a new initiative. He describes its ethos and aims:

“Since the beginning of my work as the Pilgrimage Secretary for the AECA I have been dreaming and praying about sharing the beauty and richness of Britain’s ancient history and its Christian spirituality with the Russian-speaking world. Now I am happy to announce the creation of ‘Holy Britannia’ – a Christian Pilgrimage Mission set up to fulfil this dream. At the moment this is the first and only officially registered Christian company specialising in providing tours for Russian-speakers to the British Isles. My vision is to introduce and enrich the understanding of historic Christianity in Britain and in doing so, help visitors to understand their own faith more deeply and profoundly in the contexts of historical Christianity. Holy Britannia offer a unique opportunity to visit important historical places of worship and monuments, to visit local Orthodox centres, make friends with local Christians and to attend their services, to hear their prayers and music, to worship at the holy sites, and of course, to enjoy a restful time in this wonderful country. While providing all necessary preparation for the pilgrimages: official invitations, itinerary, and Christian guides, we encourage parish priests to be spiritual leaders of their own groups and to facilitate orthodox ‘spirit’ of the pilgrimage. This work has been blessed by the Lord Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, and is undertaken in connection with the AECA. In addition to this, my prayers and deepest wish is that Holy Britannia will serve well to provide a place of meaningful dialogue and understanding between Orthodox and Anglican believers. More information (mainly in Russian) could be found on our website: www.holybritannia.com or Facebook.”

AECA at 150

WILLIAM TAYLOR

IN THE second half of the nineteenth century, The Tractarian (or “High Church”) party of the Church of England came into increasing prominence and positions of influence within that church. As it did so, it employed particular “narratives of identity” to present itself as a sister church to Orthodox Churches. As such, these narratives influenced the Church of England’s involvement with all Orthodox Churches. What was important to the Church of England during this time was to take the characteristics considered to be essential to an accurate description of the Church, and to present them as having been present from the Church’s origin. The sense of continuity and identity thereby invoked was used by the Church of England to describe its own history in ways that were designed to present itself as a church possessing historical and ecclesiological authenticity.¹

The search for ecclesial authenticity and recognition was the principal motivating factor of those involved in this work. There were many factors within the Church of England that were changing its character, and at the same time, propelling it towards closer relations with the Eastern Orthodox Churches. These factors included the growth of Tractarianism and the influence of the High Church party within the Church of England, the significance of Royal and Prime Ministerial preferment of clergy from this section of the Church of England, the effect of the Papal Bull *Apostolicae Curae*, the growth of religious communities for men and women and their deployment in the mission field, and growth in knowledge of the Syriac tradition leading to a Syriac and Eastern policy from the Church of England. At the same time, these developments were bitterly contested within the Church of England,

¹ In this scheme of things, the Tractarians used the term ‘apostolic succession’ to describe their claim to unbroken continuity with pre-Reformation England. The term *Ecclesia Anglicana* was also often used by them in the same way.

and did not command universal acceptance. However, there was one ‘core characteristic’ of the Church of England that was unchallenged by any of the competing groups within it. This characteristic was Establishment – the church of the nation, whose supreme earthly authority was an anointed Monarch.

The Tractarian party of the Church of England was therefore employing narratives about that church, which were both designed to create new identities and simultaneously to be seen as rooted in historical reality. In the case of the Church of England during this period, it was most keen to use its theological publications, as well as hymnody and liturgy, to demonstrate that it was a historic church, with a claim to legitimacy equal to any Orthodox Church. In this way it fulfilled what the philosopher Paul Ricoeur termed the search for mutual recognition.

Achieving closer relations with eastern churches had been placed more into the day-to-day life of the Church of England by the existence of two societies dedicated to this aim. The Eastern Churches Association had been founded in 1864

“...to inform the British public as to the state and position of the Eastern Christians, to make known the doctrines and principles of the Anglican Church to the Christians in the East, and to take advantage of all opportunities for intercommunion with the Orthodox Church and friendly intercourse with the other ancient Churches of the East, and to assist as far as possible the Bishops of the Orthodox Church in their efforts to promote the spiritual welfare and the education of their flocks.”²

The growth in interest in closer relations with eastern churches was given further impetus in 1906 with the creation of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union, “in order by practical effort to promote mutual sympathy, understanding and intercourse, and to pro-

² Anglican and Eastern Churches Association Archives, deposited in Lambeth Palace Library, January 2008. These papers do not yet have a detailed classification.

mote and encourage actions furthering Reunion.”³ The nuance in the terminology of the two Associations is important, and reflects the growth in self-confidence during the period of those who sought formal relations of intercommunion between the Church of England and the Orthodox Churches.

Drawing on this greater knowledge of the Orthodox Churches within the Church of England, and utilising the existence of one of the monastic orders for men, the Society of St John the Evangelist, the Anglican and Eastern-Orthodox Churches Union sponsored the lectures of Frederick William Puller, SSJE, in St Petersburg in 1913. The lectures, *The Continuity of the Church of England Before and after its Reformation in the Sixteenth Century, With Some account of its Present Condition*, were published later that year, and gave impetus to this cause.⁴ Puller referred explicitly to the revival of religious life for men and women in the Church of England under the influence of the Oxford movement and Tractarians when he was presenting the Church of England in a series of lectures in St Petersburg.

“For three hundred years, the monastic life in all its forms was stamped out of the church of England, not by any action of the Church, but by the sacrilegious act of a tyrannous King. But one of the results of the Oxford movement was to give back to our Church that dedicated life of chastity, poverty, and obedience, of which she had been so wickedly robbed.”⁵

The difference between this school of thought and theology, and those who believed that closer relations between Anglicans and Eastern Orthodox were neither achievable nor desirable was also to be played out at successive Lambeth Conferences. Both societies were to con-

³ Anglican and Eastern Churches Association Archives, deposited in Lambeth Palace Library, January 2008.

⁴ See F. W. Puller, *The Continuity of the Church of England Before and after its Reformation in the Sixteenth Century, With Some account of its Present Condition* (London: Longmans, 1913).

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

tinue their independent existence until 1914 when they were amalgamated into one society, the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association, whose aim was

“to unite members of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches for the object of promoting mutual knowledge, sympathy and intercourse between the Churches, praying and working for re-union, and encouraging the study of Eastern Christendom.”⁶

The work of these two Societies is well illustrated by a publication, first published for the Eastern Churches Association in 1895, and re-issued in 1917 for the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association. *Russia and the English Church* recounted the exchanges of correspondence between William Palmer and Alexei Khomiakov in the 1840s.⁷ This correspondence had articulated the Tractarian branch theory of the Church for the benefit of an Orthodox reader. It had fallen from public memory, and was felt to be sufficiently important that it should be re-introduced to a wider readership. The work of the two societies dedicated to closer relations between Anglicans and Orthodox had done much in this period to popularise the work amongst the general public. This growing interest in closer relations, whether of formal intercommunion, or of simple ecumenical friendship, had now moved out of the specialist realm of the Tractarians who had a particular interest in relations with eastern churches to illustrate their own theological agenda, and into the realm of the general public. Simultaneously, within this wider context, there was a growth in the knowledge of Syriac language and culture, and an interest in pursuing closer relations with the Syriac Churches, Syrian Orthodoxy included.

⁶ Anglican and Eastern Churches Association Archives, deposited in Lambeth Palace Library, January 2008.

⁷ W. J. Birkbeck, ed., *Russia and the English Church*, 1844-1894 (London: Anglican and Eastern Churches Association, 1917).

This year of 2014, therefore, sees two important commemorations for the AECA – the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Eastern Churches Association, and the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Anglican & Eastern Churches Association in 1914, on the brink of the outbreak of the First World War. The AECA has continued to do its work faithfully throughout this period in promoting closer relations between Anglican and Orthodox Christians. On a personal note, I am proud to have served as its Chairman since 2001. Relations between our two families of churches have never been more important than they now are. Like all families, there are occasional disagreements – mainly about secondary church order questions, but the fact that we are rooted in the historic creeds and apostolic identities unites us in a continuing way, and for that we thank God. The details of the picture are changing all the time. The past 18 months have been a good illustration of this. In this short period, we have seen a new Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace Justin Welby, a new Coptic Pope of Alexandria, H.H. Pope Tawadros, a new Ethiopian Patriarch H.H. Abuna Matthias, and a new Syrian Orthodox Patriarch, H.H. Patriarch Aphram II Karim. I was privileged to represent AECA at the very moving funeral of H.H. Patriarch Zakka of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Beirut. Behind the scenes, the AECA has continued to promote closer relations between our church leaders, and a small sign of this was received with favourable mention of the AECA from His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew when the Archbishop of Canterbury visited Constantinople/Istanbul earlier this year.

This article has given some historical context to our work, but we are not an antiquarian or backward looking association.⁸ The AECA Executive Committee now has a majority of young members, both Anglican and Orthodox, and has a growing and significant presence in the electronic media, especially on Facebook and Twitter. Anglicans and

⁸ Much of the historical research included in this paper has been published in my *Narratives of Identity: The Syrian Orthodox Church and the Church of England, 1895-1914* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2013)

Orthodox continue to work together in tackling many of the sharpest contemporary issues which face us all, amongst them a creeping secular fundamentalism in western societies and liberal democracies, the threat from political Islam and expansionist Zionism in the Middle East – leading to the current exodus of Christians from that region, and the challenge of adapting our faith to new realities while remaining true to the “faith once received.” An entirely different situation pertains now from that of 1864, as Orthodox Churches all have large Diasporas outside their historic homelands (especially in the UK) and the Anglican Communion is now a global phenomenon, with the largest number of Anglicans now in Nigeria. Globally, all of us face the growing challenges of the increasing divide between rich and poor, and the consequential degradation of the environment and de-humanising labour conditions brought about by economic globalisation. Our Communion continues to meet formally through the Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue and the recently re-activated Anglican-Oriental Orthodox Commission. This Commission will next meet in Cairo in October, hosted by the Coptic Orthodox Church, and amidst the tension between proponents of different visions of society in Egypt. Equally importantly, an increasing daily involvement in pastoral cooperation characterises our churches at the local level. Pilgrimage has been and is one of the significant activities of the AECA and this year has seen the launch of a new venture, Holy Britannia, designed to bring Russian Orthodox Christians to the holy places of the British Isles.⁹ I believe it true to say that our relations have never been better or closer.

So in this year of 2014 we are marking, and will mark and celebrate this achievement in several ways. Earlier in the year, we launched a very successful travel award for ordinands and students of theology to mark the 1700th commemoration of the Emperor Constantine’s Edict of Milan, with the winning student, Dr Catherine Reid, going to an Orthodox Convent in Minsk, Belarus. In October, we hold our 150th anni-

⁹ See the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pilgrimageholymbr>

versary celebration dinner at Lambeth Palace in the presence of our Anglican and Orthodox Presidents, the Bishop of London and His Eminence the Archbishop of Thyatira, and the annual Constantinople Lecture will be given in November at St Mellitus College in London, and will be given by Fr John Behr, the Dean of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Academy in New York. The title of Fr John's Lecture is "Take Back Death! Christian Witness in the Twenty-First Century", underlining Metropolitan John of Pergamon's assertion that the primary question for all the churches in the twenty-first century will be "What is the Human Person?" This theme of Christian anthropology shaped and framed the most recent meeting of the Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue in Novi Sad, Serbia in 2013. Anglicans and Orthodox can respond to that question with Irenaeus's statement that the glory of God is the human person *fully alive*. As we celebrate 150 years of Partnership in the Gospel between Anglicans and Orthodox, and look ahead to the future, the words of John the Evangelist will carry us forward "Behold, I make all things new." Laus Deo!

Anglican-Orthodox Relations: A Dead-End or a Way Forward?

DIMITRIS SALAPATAS

Relations between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion have been an ongoing phenomenon since the 17th century. However, the 20th century has taken the relations to a new level, resulting in the establishment of the Official Dialogue between the two churches. This century will be known as the Age of Ecumenism, “the age in which Christians of all denominations became aware of the scandal of disunion, and attempted to do something to bring it to an end.”¹ We live in a globalised, digital world and epoch; it is inevitable that this would have affected the relations between the churches on a global level, taking us away from the past, isolated state within which the churches and the people existed. It is crucial to understand why this has happened now, i.e. the dialogue between Eastern and Western Christianity, whether it is a dead-end or a way forward for all of Christianity.

The number of Anglican-Orthodox groups which exist, primarily in the West, and more specifically in Britain, have contributed immensely towards the establishment of the current dialogue. The first group to be founded in Britain was “The Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom”² which was founded in 1857, whilst the Eastern Church Association came into being in 1864. The ECA’s purpose was to

“inform Anglicans of the state and position of the Eastern Christians; to make the doctrines and principles of Anglicanism known in the East; to take advantage ‘of all opportunities which the providence of God shall afford us for

¹ Bonner, Gerald, “Divided Christendom: The Contemporary Background”, *Sobornost*, Series 5: No. 7, Autumn 1968, p. 511.

² Young, Ivan, *The Relations of East and West since the Great Schism*, (London, SPCK, 1935), p. 19.

intercommunion with the Orthodox Church, and also for friendly intercourse with the other ancient Churches of the East'; to give financial assistance to the Orthodox bishops to assist in their efforts to promote the spiritual welfare of their flocks."³

The ECA's importance is evident, since it was the first endeavour within the United Kingdom to find an organisation with a sole purpose the promotion of Anglican-Orthodox Relations. On the whole, discussions before this point were products of individuals, existing on the periphery of the church's interest, in both East and West. Nevertheless, the ECA altered this practice. It persisted that its members were representing a church; consequently giving it an official position within the relations of the two churches. This organisation is currently known as 'The Anglican and Eastern Churches Association' (AECA). It eventually amalgamated with 'The Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches Union', in 1906, forming finally the existing AECA, based in London. It is significant to identify its goals; the Association has the following aim:

"To advance the Christian religion, particularly by teaching members of the Anglican and Orthodox Churches about each other, in order to prepare the way for an ultimate union between them, in accordance with our Lord's prayer that 'all may be one'. All its members are urged to work and pray constantly to this end."⁴

The second important society promoting Anglican-Orthodox Relations is the Fellowship of Saint Alban and Saint Sergius. It is an unofficial body; "it numbers among its members some eminent theologians and Church leaders"⁵ and therefore it is considered to be "one of the

³ Brandreth, Henry, "Anglican Eastern Associations: A Sketch", *Sobornost*, No. 31 (New Series), June 1945, p. 10.

⁴ A.E.C.A., <http://www.aeca.org.uk/>, accessed 08/01/12, 14.57.

⁵ Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius Booklet, Fellowship Archives, p. 4.

most important international forums for Orthodox theology.”⁶ It does not “conduct any official negotiations; its members are not committed to any particular scheme of reunion. Its purpose is to help Christians to acquire mutual trust and understanding”⁷, and thus prepare the way for the future union between East and West. “The Fellowship shows the one life of the Church overcoming division;”⁸ it is a sign of the future unity, wished by everyone who is involved in the Ecumenical Movement.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew stated, during the Archbishop of Canterbury’s recent visit to Constantinople (January 2014) that: “These two societies have fostered countless ecumenical friendships; and without such ecumenical friendships, on the direct and personal level, we cannot hope to build a firm foundation for Christian unity.”⁹

The Inter-Christian relations between the Orthodox and the Anglicans have been an ongoing reality, since the 17th century, where for the first time the West wished to study the Eastern Church. However, the first years of the relations were a result of individual and personal friendships that existed and that were cultivated on an academic interest between members of the two churches and not so much an initiation from the whole body of either church. Nevertheless, since the seventeenth century the idea had haunted Anglican minds from time to time that there should be much less difficulty in bringing closer Anglican Churches back into fellowship and unity with the Eastern and Orthodox Churches, than in attempting a similar objective with the Roman Catholic Church.

⁶ Gallaher, Anastassy Brandon, ‘*Great and Full of Grace*’: *Partial Intercommunion and Sophiology on Sergii Bulgakov*, in William C. Mills (ed.), *Church and World*, (Orthodox Research Institute, Rollinsford, 2013), p. 81.

⁷ Zernov, Nicolas, *The Reintegration of the Church*, (London, SCM Press, 1952), p. 118.

⁸ Thompson, Patrick, “The Prayer of the Fellowship”, *Sobornost*, No. 17 (New Series), March, 1939, p. 20.

⁹ Archbishop of Canterbury, <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5227/archbishop-of-canterbury-meets-ecumenical-patriarch-bartholomew>, accessed 30/01/14, 14.24.

The Anglican Communion, since its separation from Rome, demonstrated a sporadic interest in the Orthodox, “who had succeeded in retaining their catholicity without being papalist.”¹⁰ It was important for the Anglicans to verify their existence through an ancient church, which was not Rome, papalist, and this could only be found in the Eastern Christian Church. Anglicans easily observed that the Orthodox Church had “preserved the Creed, the Sacraments, the Hierarchy, and the life of Catholic devotion, in spite of the most protracted dangers and difficulties, without Roman addition and Protestant subtraction.”¹¹ Thus, it was the Church of England that initiated the matter of reunion between the Churches, feeling the need of reinforcing her Catholic and Apostolic traditions through closer communion with Orthodoxy, and of attaining, if possible, a recognition by the Orthodox Church of the validity of Anglican Orders, contested by the Latin Church. Archbishop of York, Michael Ramsey, during an Anglican-Orthodox Conference, on September 1st, 1960, expressed the Anglican sentiments towards the relations with the Orthodox, paraphrasing them as follows:

“Hurray, we are not alone in maintaining on this globe the existence of a non-papal Catholicism...There is another in another part of the globe, and this it is all the more apparent that non-papal Catholicism is a reality and not an English device invented by John Henry Newman...Non-papal Catholicism is something that exists in its own right, doubly attested by the existence of another great Church in Christendom which, like us maintains a continuity with the ancient, undivided Church.”¹²

¹⁰ Zernov, Nicholas, Zernov, Militza, *Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, A Historical Memoir*, (Oxford, Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, 1979), p. 1.

¹¹ Moss, C.B., *Our debt to the Eastern Churches*, (London, Published for the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association, 1935), p. 16.

¹² Ramsey, Michael, Archbishop of York, “Holiness, Truth and Unity”, *Sobornost*, Series 4, No. 4, Winter-Spring 1961, p. 161-162.

The Orthodox Church identified a positive factor in the future relations between the two especially within Anglicanism, specifically the Anglo-Catholic movement, since it “is persistently devoted to reestablishment of ancient tradition and thus flows into the stream of Orthodoxy.”¹³

In 1616, Patriarch of Alexandria Cyril Lucaris began contacts with Archbishop Abbot. This first correspondence resulted in a priest, Fr. Metrophanes Critopoulos from Veria, being sent to England in order to study at the University of Oxford, at the invitation of Archbishop George Abbot and King James I. This priest eventually became Patriarch of Alexandria. Inevitably this exchange created the perfect ground for visits from East to West and vice versa. However, the mutual interest was also cultivated due to non-religious factors. An important contribution was the presence of the British Embassy in Constantinople, where the Ecumenical Patriarchate resides. Globalisation and commerce played their role. An imperative phase in the relations was the foundation of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in 1698, which began and continues doing so till this day, publishing books on Orthodoxy.

Appropriately a fantastic opportunity occurred, with the establishment of the first Greek community and hence the first Greek Orthodox Church in London, especially due to the arrival of Metropolitan of Samos, Joseph Georgerinos,. However, this was not realised only because of the certain priest or the Greek community, which was already based in London for various reasons, including commerce and publishing their work, but this endeavour was assisted by Bishop of London, Dr. Henry Compton, “who was ultimately responsible for enabling a church to be built for the Greeks in Soho,”¹⁴ showing thus the importance of the relations and the contacts between the two Christian Worlds, as will be the case during the 20th century with the establishment of the Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain.

¹³ Bulgakov, Sergius, *The Orthodox Church*, (New York, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1988), p. 191.

¹⁴ Young, Ivan, R., *The Relations of East and West since the Great Schism*, (London, S.P.C.K., 1935), p. 12.

“The Church was erected in 1677”¹⁵ and was dedicated to the Assumption of the All-holy Mother of God. The costs for the new Orthodox Church were assumed by King Charles II, the Duke of York, the Bishop of London and other bishops and nobles.

During the same century, another great project was achieved, i.e. the establishment of a Greek College for Greek students. Its objectives were principally religious. This was realised with the help of the Bishop of London, “who seemed to be a special patron for the Greeks.”¹⁶ But, due to the irregular provision of Orthodox students from the East and numerous misuses owed to propaganda, the Greek College had a short life (1699-1705). This issue produced a letter, written by the Registrar of the Greek Church in Constantinople claiming that, “the irregular life of certain priests and laymen of the Eastern Church, living in England, was a matter of great concern to the Orthodox Authorities. Wherefore the Church forbids any to go and study at Oxford, be they ever so willing.”¹⁷ Nevertheless, from the above events it is easily identifiable that it was the Anglican Communion and its members who facilitated and helped immensely the Orthodox from the East to establish themselves in the West and specifically in Great Britain, but also to increase the relations between the two traditions.

A new chapter opened, when the Non-Jurors¹⁸ wished to turn to the Eastern Orthodox Church and begin relations with them. Despite exchanging four letters (1716-1725) the gulf separating the two sides was too great, which resulted in the failure of this attempt.

The last decades of the 18th century, until the first decades of the 19th century, were a period of apathy in the relations between the An-

¹⁵ Bakalis, Theonas and Savvas David, Vasileiadis (editors), *The Holy Wisdom of God – St. Sophia*, (Athens, Athina A.E., 2012), p. 4.

¹⁶ Emhardt, William, Chaynecey, *Historical Contact of the Eastern Orthodox and the Anglican Churches*, (New York, Department of Missions and Church Extension of the Episcopal Church, 1920), p. 4.

¹⁷ Dowling, Theodore, E. and Edwin W. Fletcher, *Hellenism in England*, (London, Faith Press, 1915), p. 69.

¹⁸ The Non-Jurors were a group of Anglicans who refused to swear the oath of loyalty to King William of Orange. They broke away from the Church of England, breaking communion with them, forming thus a separate faction.

glicans and the Orthodox. This was due to the proselytistic attitude the Anglicans had towards the Orthodox in the East, hence the latter remained cautious towards the West, especially towards the American Episcopalians. Proselytizing was eventually forbidden by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in a letter sent to Hatherly (27 February 1873). However, this whole atmosphere resulted in the increase of polemics against the West, especially towards Anglicanism and Protestantism.

The 19th century saw a revival of an interest towards the Orthodox Church, which was sparked by the Oxford Movement, having as one of its main objectives Christian reunion. Nevertheless, it was also facilitated due to the Greek Independence that commenced in 1821 against the Ottoman Empire, resulting in the flea of countless Greeks to the West, mainly England. However, the Oxford Movement had a serious longing for the unity of all Christendom; hence it directed its efforts towards Rome and the Eastern Churches. It was a preparation for the modern ecumenical dialogue and movement. The Oxford Movement was, therefore, the “true ecumenical vocation of Anglicanism.”¹⁹ The protagonists of the Movement, such as Newman, stressed the Anglican Communion’s link with the “Primitive Church, Episcopacy and the Apostolic Succession, the external forms and rituals of Worship,”²⁰ looking also forward towards missionary work and monasticism, which was not only an Eastern tradition but also a forgotten Western practice. According to many within the movement, this objective was significant since they believed that the Latin, Greek and Anglican churches comprise branches of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Many visits from West to East and vice versa were initiated in order to achieve a better understanding of the other. However, it is apparent that “to this great Movement, so far as human history can measure, the Church of England owes her very existence.”²¹

¹⁹ Fairweather, Eugene, R., (ed.), *The Oxford Movement*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 13.

²⁰ Istavridis, V.T., *Orthodoxy & Anglicanism*, (London, S.P.C.K.1966), p. 8.

²¹ Bishop, Frank (ed.), “Editorial, Notes & Comments”, *Journal of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius (New Series)*, No. 20, June-July 1933, p. 3.

William Palmer, a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and deacon of the Church of England, was one of the first to dedicate his life to this cause, by travelling to Russia (1840) in order to defend and explain the position of the English Church, whilst publishing various books on both Churches. He is a significant figure within the Ecumenical Movement, “he was probably the first Englishman to come to the Orthodox Church and ask as a simple right and duty to be admitted to Holy Communion,”²² not because he wanted to join the Orthodox Church, as he later wished, but because he was a faithful who belonged to a branch of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; a view not accepted by the Orthodox, who do not consent to the branch theory. During this period, as is the case even today, despite having an official dialogue and a number of official statements, there were certain misconceptions and ideas, which affected the way monks, priests and the laity thought, in order to justify past events and theological conclusions.

After countless talks and meetings with Orthodox bishops and priests in Russia he wished to join the Orthodox Church and receive communion. This, however, created a problem; the Russian Church did not necessitate that the Anglicans have to be re-baptised, hence there was no impediment in him becoming Orthodox. On the other hand, the Greek Church did have an obstacle. The problem that arose was that, despite his wish, he eventually did not become Orthodox, due to the fact that he could not comprehend how two Churches which existed within the same body, the Orthodox Church, had two very different views on this topic.

A number of reasons contributed towards the failure of these first attempts, such as the reluctance of the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion, the highlighting of dogmatic differences, the “excuse”²³ for schism in the introduction of the Filioque in the Creed and the unreadiness by both parties to achieve the important goal of

²² Ridley, Katharine, “A Pioneer in Reunion – William Palmer”, *Sobornost*, No18 (New Series), June 1939, p. 9.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

unity; however, the reluctance of Palmer's successors to take up the task of his methodology and attempt reunion through intercommunion has been one of the key elements contributing towards a slow advancement in this field.

The 20th century saw a massive increase in communications, conferences and visits between representatives of both Churches. This was the case, not only for theological and ecclesiastical reasons, but also and mainly for political purposes, especially from the Orthodox side. The Orthodox states were under major political and social difficulties, being either under Communism, the Ottoman Empire, oppressive governments or Muslim rule. Any help from the West was needed and desired, in order to obtain peace and freedom, in the ecclesiastical and social fields. This was of course a time when the Anglican Church and its hierarchs had political power and could intervene in Foreign Affairs or Government policies. Nevertheless, a theological basis existed in the talks and conferences that took place, showing therefore an ecclesiastical and doctrinal interest between the two distinct groups; conversely, it is more likely that the theological matters were discussed in order to achieve political and economic gains from the West.

Despite the theological interest, it is significant to see why we have this interest and why it has increased especially during and after the two World Wars. It seems that "the Orthodox had good reason to seek rapprochement with the Anglicans."²⁴ In 1907 Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III assigned Archimandrite C. Pagonis as his official representative to the Archbishop of Canterbury. This action has been regarded as an indirect recognition of the Anglican Church and the validity of Anglican Orders.

The relations in the beginning, but also during a big part of its history, between the Orthodox and the Anglicans, were directed primarily towards two key centres within the Orthodox World, i.e. Constantinople, where the Ecumenical Patriarch resides, and Moscow. Then

²⁴ Geffert, Bryn, *Eastern Orthodox and Anglicans, Diplomacy, Theology, and the Politics of Interwar Ecumenism*, (Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), p.4.

again, during this time, a massive and constant emigration of Orthodox populations was taking place, towards Africa, Australia, America and Western Europe, creating thus unprecedented problems and opportunities for the progression of the relations between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion. These issues were of course discussed at the Lambeth Conference of 1908, explaining:

“The Conference is of opinion that it should be the recognised practice of the Churches of our Communion:

1. At all times to baptise the children of members of any Church of the Orthodox Eastern Communion in cases of emergency, provided that there is a clear understanding that baptism should not be again administered to those so baptized;
2. At all times to admit members of any Church of the Orthodox Eastern Communion to communicate in our churches, when they are deprived of the ministrations of a priest of their own Communion, provided that
 - a. They are at that time admissible to communion in their own Churches, and
 - b. Are not under any disqualification so far as our own rules of discipline are concerned.”²⁵

It is evident, through this Resolution, that Anglican terminology is used in order to express Orthodoxy, which is not a Communion, as is the case with Anglicanism, but a Church, despite being found under numerous jurisdictional spheres, expressing various different traditional aspects, such as music, iconography, calendar, it is however united in theology and doctrine. This Lambeth Conference also included a

²⁵ The Lambeth Conference, Resolutions Archive from 1908, Published by the Anglican Communion Office, 2005, Resolution 62.

Committee on Reunion and Intercommunion, showing thus a will by the Anglican Communion for the progression of Ecumenical Relations.

At the end of World War I Britain had control of Orthodox holy places in Palestine. On the other hand, Britain also protected the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople after the Great War, thus the Orthodox set eyes on Britain as their main hope against the dangers and difficulties they had to go through in the East. What they wanted was money, yearning for the political might that the Archbishop of Canterbury had through his power to intervene in government decisions. On the other hand, the Orthodox Church showed through its talks that it is reluctant in accepting new ideas swiftly, taking into consideration two millennia of theology, practice, tradition, ecclesiology and church life.

A momentous event took place in 1920, whereby, after the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Ecumenical Patriarchate sent representatives to the Lambeth Conference of the same year for the first time in its history. This of course was understood as being a major progression in the relations between the two Churches. This started a tradition whereby from this Conference onwards Orthodox representatives were invited to Lambeth, "either to take part in official or unofficial joint theological discussions or simply to be present as observers."²⁶

After the Great War, which brought West and East (in ecclesiastical terms) closer, we have the establishment in 1922 of the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain in London, as an Exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople making it the first Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in the West where Germanos Strenopoulos was appointed as its first Archbishop (1922-1951). This was, of course, achieved with the help and assistance of the Anglican Bishops in Britain, especially the Archbishop of Canterbury. Without the good relations between the Anglican Communion and the Orthodox Church, the first Orthodox Archdiocese in the West could have been established in

²⁶ Istavridis, 1966, p. 15.

Berlin or Paris or New York. However, the success of the dialogue and relations between the two brought the Archdiocese to the British capital. Archbishop Germanos “worked hard for nearly 30 years on matters concerning Church Relations”²⁷. This ongoing cooperation has brought us to the current established and flourishing Archdiocese, which “now embraces 115 churches, communities and monasteries, with new communities in the process of being created to meet the needs of the Faithful.”²⁸

Strenopoulos’ work was of great importance, being ‘the best man for the job,’ remaining always “an optimist in regards to Anglican and Orthodox Re-Union.”²⁹ His ecumenical work before and during his time as Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain is what formed his relations on a theological and political level, whilst his ideas on union between the churches also contributed towards these aspirations, being “one of the pioneers of the Movement and one of the greater Ecumenists”³⁰. He achieved countless objectives set out not only on a theological and ecclesiastical basis but also on a diplomatic one.

Through this small abstract of the history of the relations between Anglicanism and Orthodoxy, it is apparent that the Ecumenical Movement was unofficially forming its foundation. The relations had an academic character, showing that on the ground there existed a lack of knowledge of the other tradition and ecclesiastical body, a reality which is evident, unfortunately, even today, where relations have been established for decades. Nevertheless, despite the ignorance, there existed a tremendous interest in each other. The fact that serious questions were raised, such as Anglican Orders, the validity of the Sacraments, Inter-

²⁷ Istavridis, V.T., *Το Διορθόδοξον και Διαχριστιανικόν Έργον του Γερμανού Στρηγόπουλου προ της Αννψώσεως του εις την Μητρόπολην Θυατείρων*, (Istanbul, Πατριαρχικού Τυπογραφείου, 1959), pp. 3-4.

²⁸ Grigorios, Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain, “The Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain and Orthodoxy in the British Isles” in *Ημερολόγιο 2012, Αρχιεπισκοπή Θυατείρων και Μεγάλης Βρετανίας*, (London, Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, 2012), p. 475.

²⁹ Anglican History, http://anglicanhistory.org/orthodoxy/jad_germanos1929.html, accessed 21/09/11, 12.21 pm.

³⁰ Istavridis, 1959, p. 4.

communion and many more, show the curiosity and concern that existed in both East and West.

The World Council of Churches³¹ plays a significant role within the Ecumenical Movement. The WCC was inaugurated in Amsterdam (1948), bringing the Ecumenical Movement to a new chapter in its history, taking the relationships and the dialogues between the denominations into an official status. Initiating a novel investigation on the Ecumenical Movement, one can easily identify in it a “biblical renewal, a liturgical renewal and renewed understanding of Christian social responsibility.”³² The WCC came at a time when all Christians wished to preserve and reinforce the sense of unity³³, which had been felt due to World War II, where countless people moved around the European continent. It also came as an answer to previous concerns that the reunion process depended on individuals, lacking “proper organisation”³⁴, gaining at the same time the support and the awareness of other Christian faithful. However, it also came at a time when the Orthodox nations were still at war (for instance Greece had a civil war, 1946-49) whilst other Balkan nations were under authoritarian regimes, making the work of the Orthodox Church difficult, if not impossible. Nevertheless, the presence of the Orthodox in a number of great conferences and the WCC, reminded the Western Christians of “the larger perspective”³⁵ of Christianity.

³¹ It is important to state that the WCC was not the first of its kind. In 1846, the World Evangelical Alliance was founded as the Evangelical Alliance. However, the non-Evangelicals and non-Anglicans in general would not agree with many of their practices and beliefs, such as intercommunion.

³² Allchin, A.M., “The Revival of the Religious Life and Christian Unity”, *Sobornost*, Series 3, No. 12, Winter 1952, p. 543.

³³ This unity could be felt within the movement of ecumenism, which was seen as “a new and miraculous gift of God” to Christianity. *Student Christian Movement*, Fellowship Archives, 1937.

³⁴ Zernov, Nicolas, *A Memorandum on the Relations Between the Anglicans and the Eastern Orthodox Churches*, Fellowship Archives, 1945.

³⁵ Dunelm, Michael, ‘Message from the President’, *Sobornost*, Series 3, No. 18, Winter 1955-56., p. 274.

The objective of the WCC “is not to build a global ‘super-church’, nor to standardise styles of worship,”³⁶ as is believed by the ‘enemies’ of Ecumenism, but more accurately it aims to deepen the fellowship and the relationship of the Christian churches in order to identify the true manifestation of what we all claim in the Creed, i.e. ‘one, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church’. The churches that took part in this new organisation “were animated by a sincere desire to serve the cause of Christian unity and to resolve their fellowship with Christians of other confessions”³⁷.

Currently the Anglican Communion is in an Official Dialogue status with the Orthodox Church, where three Agreed Statements have been produced (Moscow, Dublin and Cyprus). The Moscow Agreed Statement was the first of its kind, opening a new chapter in the official relations and dialogue between the two ecclesiastical groups. It was an important example, of how hierarchs and ecclesiastical representatives were able to come together, despite deriving from varied backgrounds, and talk together frankly, in an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding. Many topics were discussed, including the knowledge of God, the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture, Scripture and Tradition, the authority of the councils, the filioque clause, the Church as the Eucharistic community and the invocation of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist. Moreover, during the Moscow meeting the topic of women priests was also discussed, concluding in the passing of a resolution by the Orthodox members, explaining:

“The Orthodox members of the Commission wish to state that if the Anglican Churches proceed to the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate, this will create a very serious obstacle to the development of our relations in the future. Although the Anglican members are di-

³⁶ World Council of Churches, <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/whoarewe/background.html>, accessed 26/02/2013, 16:11.

³⁷ Zernov, Nicolas, “Enterprise and Encounters – The First Assembly of the World Council of Churches”, *Sobornost*, Series 3, No.4, Winter 1948, p. 145.

vided among themselves on the theological principle involved, they recognize the strength of Orthodox convictions on this matter and undertake to make this known to their Churches”.³⁸

This later became a reality within the Anglican Communion. Nevertheless, the Official Dialogue continued and continues to this day, showing the conviction both sides have in respect to the continuation of the dialogue.

The Commission met again in 1980, resuming its work in Llandaff. This new period is known as the “second spring.”³⁹ The Dublin Agreed Statement (1984) is the product of eight years of discussions, echoing the prominence in regards to spirituality and prayer. It is, moreover, a friendship that has been “costly and demanding;”⁴⁰ maintaining its key objective, i.e. the unity of the Church. Here various issues were analysed, including The Mystery of the Church, Faith in the Trinity, Prayer and Holiness, Worship and Tradition.

The third phase of the dialogue was initiated in 1989. During that year, the commission was reorganised as the International Commission for Anglican – Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ICAOTD). This third phase reached its conclusion with the Agreed Statement, which was completed at the Holy Royal and Stavropegic Monastery of Kykkos (Cyprus), where the last chapter of this statement was accomplished (2006). The commission was assigned to deliberate “the doctrine of the Church in the light of the doctrine of the Trinity, and to examine the doctrine of the ordination ministry of the Church.”⁴¹ Specific consideration was given to the issues of ordination to the presbyterate and episcopate. Ecclesiology and Trinitarian theology and doctrine were also

³⁸ Ware, Kallistos, Colin, Davey (eds), *Anglican Orthodox Dialogue, The Moscow Agreed Statement*, (London, SPCK, 1977), p.38.

³⁹ Hill, Henry and Methodios, Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain (eds.), *Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue, The Dublin Agreed Statement 1984*, (London, SPCK, 1985), p.5.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. v.

⁴¹ Wybrew, Hugh, Constantine Scouteris, James, M, Rosenthal, Ian, Harvey, Terrie, Robinson (eds.), *The Church of the Triune God*, (London, The Anglican Communion Office, 2006), p. 11.

dominant concerns within the discussions. Agreements were reached; however, the question of the ordination of women remained unsettled.

Currently, the Official Dialogue is entering a new phase, preparing the Fourth Official Statement on Anthropology and the understanding of the human person, proposed by the Orthodox co-chairman of the Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue since 2008 Metropolitan Kalistos. This is an interesting topic, which could explain many of the differences between the two traditions, on issues such as women priests.

Taking the above facts in consideration, how do we answer the question posed in the title? Are the relations a dead end or a way forward? In Britain we can all see the results of the Anglican-Orthodox relations; due to the relations of the two peoples the Ecumenical Patriarchate established the first Orthodox Archdiocese in the West in London and not in any other metropolis. The fact that there are more than 150 Orthodox communities in the UK is significant and an evident result of these dialogues and relations. Only five, out of 115 Greek Orthodox Churches, have been built by the Orthodox. Most Orthodox Communities have bought their Church buildings from the Anglicans, showing that cooperation exists on all levels. Co-inhabitancy is also evident. For example, St. Dunstan in the West, Fleet Street, London, is an Anglican church, which also hosts the Romanian Orthodox community, thus showing that collaboration is key in furthering good relations.

Another significant consequence of the relations is the fact that many Anglican churches have at least one icon, an important change which has been increasing over the last 80 years. Icons are not a new reality for the West, introduced by the Orthodox Church. They are a revival of the ancient tradition of iconography in the West, as is evident in many Cathedrals in England, such as St. Albans and Winchester Cathedral.

Many question the dialogue and the relations, due to their slow pace in taking and applying decisions. However, the results of the Ecumenical Movement will not be evident immediately. Whoever is involved in the Ecumenical Movement can understand what Fr. George

Florovski claimed, that “the highest and most promising ‘ecumenical virtue’ is patience;”⁴² patience is imperative for all sides in order to take small steps and achieve our goals, salvation and unity between mankind and God. A good example is given from the Greek world; the Greeks are known for smashing plates when celebrating. Christianity could be considered to be a plate. It is easy to smash this plate in many pieces. It happens in an instance. However, putting these pieces back together is a long process, which needs patience and understanding. And again, some cracks will be evident. Therefore, we should all take small and careful steps in order to progress towards the main objective of the relations, i.e. to receive Holy Communion from a Common Cup.

The Anglican-Orthodox dialogue should and can continue. There are a number of difficult points; however, we should endure in a dialogue status. The wisdom of the people involved in the relations (on an official and unofficial level) has shown that, even when obstacles occurred, the dialogue continued. Archbishop Justin Welby, during his visit to Constantinople (January 2014) claimed that: “There is much that unites us and as we continue to strengthen the bonds of friendship our understanding of each other’s traditions will grow”⁴³. Are the relations, therefore, a dead end or a way forward? The answer we can give is that they are a way forward. This is evident through the examples and the history expressed above. However, we need patience, understanding; all of us need to pray for Christian unity.

The Ecumenical Movement is a mystery for those who do not comprehend the fact that “repentance is the driving force behind it.” Therefore, we need to try and achieve what the Orthodox proclaim in the Divine Liturgy: “For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of God’s holy Churches, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.”

⁴² Ware, Timothy, *The Orthodox Church*, (London, Penguin Books, 1997), p. 307.

⁴³ Archbishop of Canterbury, <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5227/archbishop-of-canterbury-meets-ecumenical-patriarch-bartholomew>, accessed 30/01/14, 14.24.

The Cult of Relics¹

MATTHEW DUCKETT

HERE WE are in 2014 – well into the 21st century and the third millennium, in a society that many describe as secular, post modern or even post Christian. But in this society, this year as every year, on the Saturday nearest to St Alban's day, thousands of people will descend on St Albans for the festival of the patron saint, the first martyr of England. There will be pageantry in the streets, puppets, wonderful music, and celebration all round. And one of the highlights of the day will come at choral evensong – nothing could be more Anglican! – when a silver reliquary containing a shoulder blade of Saint Alban will be placed on the altar, censed and venerated, and then carried in a triumphant procession to the shrine where the saint had been buried more than 1700 years before. This great Christian festival and pilgrimage, in modern England, centres around the veneration of a grave and the celebration of a human bone. The militant atheists must be fuming.

And this is not all. In this post-modern world relics are still enormously popular. A few years ago some of the relics of St Therese of Lisieux were sent on tour round the world, drawing large crowds wherever they went. And relics from Mount Athos, such as the gifts of the Magi and the belt of the Mother of God, have toured the Orthodox world in recent times.

But, we might ask, where did all this begin? How did it develop? Does it have a proper foundation in Christian doctrine?

I suppose I would argue that it all began in Nazareth. The crypt beneath the church there is one of the traditional sites associated with the annunciation, the place where the Virgin Mary received the message from the Angel Gabriel that she was to be the Mother of the Lord. In

¹ Adapted from a talk given to the London Branch of the Fellowship of St Alban & St Sergius at St James's Church, Paddington, on 19th February 2014

the limestone cave is an altar with the inscription “Verbum caro hic factum est” – “Here the Word was made flesh”.

The incarnation of the eternal Word in Jesus of Nazareth marked a new beginning for the human race. Human nature is deified in Christ by its union with the Divine in one person. But all human nature is called to become one with Christ by grace. This is the meaning of baptism – we are joined with Christ in his death and resurrection. As St Paul says in Romans, “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ will all be made alive”². In the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ we are able to say something new about human nature. This is the birth of a Christian anthropology. Human nature is redeemed and made new in Christ the new Adam; humanity is being transformed into the image of Christ. And human nature includes bodies. In Christ, human bodies are destined for glory.

Saint Paul returns to this theme many times, for example:

“God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?”³

“He will transform the body of our humiliation so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.”⁴

“All of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”⁵

“Those whom God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”⁶

This transformation into the image of Christ is shown in the scriptures in the lives of believers, and in particular in those who suffer for Christ. The martyrdom of St Stephen, as described in the Acts of

² 1 Corinthians 15:22

³ 1 Corinthians 6:14-15

⁴ Philippians 3:21

⁵ 2 Corinthians 3:18

⁶ Romans 8:29

the Apostles, mirrors the passion of Christ. We are told in Acts that, “Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people”⁷ – just as Jesus is described in the Gospels. Stephen, like Jesus, is arrested and brought before the Council; like Jesus, he is accused by false witnesses. At the conclusion of his trial he cries out “I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”⁸, just as Jesus, at the end of his trial, said “from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God”⁹. Like Jesus, Stephen is taken outside the city to be killed, and like Jesus he prays for his murderers to be forgiven. Stephen in his witness and death becomes an enacted icon of Christ, conformed to his image.

So already in the New Testament the martyrs become the type and pattern of Christian sanctity. The accounts of the martyrdoms of Saints Polycarp and Ignatius, immediately after the apostolic age, continue this pattern. Saint Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, was thrown to the lions in the Coliseum, in 117. After his death his followers wrote, “Only the hardest bits of his holy remains had escaped the jaws of the beasts... These pieces were carried off and put into a coffin. Because of the grace remaining in the martyr they were an inestimable treasure for the holy congregation of the faithful.”¹⁰ In other words, his bones had become holy relics. And these remains were carried back to Antioch in a triumphant procession, like that of a conquering hero.

Saint Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was burned at the stake in the year 156. Witnesses recorded that his body seemed untouched by the flames until he was killed by a spear thrust, and then, afterwards, “taking up his bones, more precious than the richest jewels and tried above gold, we placed them in a spot worthy of them. There with joy and gladness we shall be permitted by the Lord to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom.”¹¹ And that anniversary celebration would undoubt-

⁷ Acts 6:8

⁸ Acts 7:56

⁹ Luke 22:69

¹⁰ James Bentley, *Restless Bones – the Story of Relics*, Constable, 1985, p37

¹¹ *Ibid*, p38

edly have included the celebration of the Eucharist, in the place where the relics of the saint were deposited.

Similar observances were also being held in Rome at round the same time. The Apostle St Peter had been martyred in the Vatican circus around the year 64 or 67, and had been buried in a neigh-



The Basilica of St Praxedes, Rome. These marble urns, in a crypt beneath the high altar, contain some of the relics of 2300 martyrs brought here from the catacombs by Pope Paschal I in the year 817.

bouring cemetery. In the mid second century Pope Anicetus built a monument called a *tropaion* or trophy over the grave. This was discovered during excavations beneath St Peter's Basilica in the 1940s. It consists of a stone shelf set against a wall, supported on two pillars at the front, with the grave beneath¹². It resembles an altar for celebrating the Eucharist, and although this interpretation would be anachronistic it could still have been used for that purpose. Roman law was very conservative when it came to burial of the dead, and even executed criminals usually had a right to an undisturbed burial. Moreover, Romans had a right to form burial societies to tend graves and carry out cultic activities in cemeteries. Under paganism this included the holding of a refreshment meal, the *refrigerium*, at the grave site. The Christians continued this. But for them the refreshment meal was the Eucharist, celebrated over the tombs of the martyrs.

¹² Engelbert Kirschbaum, *The Tombs of St Peter and St Paul* (J Murray, trans), Secker & Warburg 1959, p133; see also John Evangelist Walsh, *The Bones of Saint Peter*, Fount Paperbacks 1984

Of course the tomb of Christ was the most greatly venerated trophy of martyrdom, as being also the place of the resurrection. In fact it became so popular as a place of pilgrimage and prayer that the emperor Hadrian attempted to suppress it in 140 by piling a mound of earth over it and building a pagan temple on top. Which happily served to mark the site indisputably when the Empress St Helena came along to recover it, after the conversion of her son the emperor Constantine. His conversion was a turning point in the history of the church. Great churches were built in the Holy Land at the sites associated with the birth and death of Christ, and rich basilicas were built in Rome over the tombs of the apostles and martyrs.

Rome remained very conservative and up to the time of Pope Gregory the Great in the 6th century there was a marked reluctance to dig up or move the remains of the martyrs. Instead churches were built directly over the graves, leaving them intact, sometimes in very inconvenient sites. The Basilica of St Peter, for example, was built on the side of a hill by heaping up an enormous mound of earth to make a level site, enclosing the earlier *tropaion*¹³.

But in the East it was a different story. Constantine founded his new capital, Constantinople, which had not been a place of importance during the ages of persecution, so had no or few martyr's graves. But Constantine wanted it to be the equal of Rome, which meant splendid churches and holy relics. So the relics had to be got from elsewhere. And so the practice of translation began, taking relics out of their tombs and carrying them to other places where they were needed. Constantine acquired the relics of Saints Andrew, Luke and Timothy for his new church of the Holy Apostles¹⁴, and at the same time more portable relics, such as Holy Nails and fragments of the True Cross, started to be spread throughout the Christian world.

The practice of translation also started to be seen in the West, outside Rome itself. Milan became a centre of administration of the

¹³ Kirschbaum, *op. cit.*, p 146

¹⁴ Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones, Holy Dust*, Yale University Press, 2011, p 37

Roman Empire in the late 3rd century, but didn't have nearly as many martyrs as Rome. When St Ambrose became Bishop of Milan he wanted to build churches that would impress the faithful and be suitable for an Imperial capital. And this meant acquiring relics. For the Basilica of the Holy Apostles, modelled on the one in Constantinople, he obtained portions of the relics of the Apostles and enshrined them beneath the altar. The reliquary containing them is really quite small, about the size of a tea caddy, which indicates that it was considered perfectly proper to consecrate an important church with small pieces of holy bones, where a whole body could not be obtained. The division of holy relics into small portions allowed the cult of the saints to spread and develop in many places at once. Elsewhere Ambrose built churches to commemorate the local martyrs Saints Gervase and Protase, and Nabor and Felix, and caused their bones to be dug up from the cemeteries and carried in to the city to be enshrined in their new churches. These translations were carefully managed as public celebrations to help establish orthodox Christianity in the minds of the people.¹⁵

Later on Milan also acquired the relics of the Magi, which were enshrined in the Basilica of Sant' Eustorgio. This was an example of what was also happening in Constantinople, of important relics being brought into centres of political power, as a sign of the blessing and protection of heaven and almost as it were as an endorsement of the reigning emperor. The bones of these holy kings (as they were thought to be) afforded a blessing to the Christian monarch who possessed them. We might recall that even today, in England, we have the relics of a canonised King, Edward the Confessor, enshrined in Westminster Abbey, the place where each new monarch is crowned.

The desire for rulers to own politically important relics did however lead to some dubious actions, as when the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa stole the bones of the Magi and took them to Cologne to boost his own reputation, and there they still remain. Of

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp 15-17

course Milan protested furiously but it was not until the 20th century that small portions of them were returned.

Relics also became an important tool in evangelism. As missionaries were sent into different part of the world, along with the scriptures, liturgical books and holy images, they took with them relics. Saint Gregory the Great, writing in 601 to the missionary St Mellitus, who became the first Bishop of London since the Roman period, gave him instructions on how he was to convert the heathen English:

“The temples of the idols ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let holy water be made and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed... And because they have been used to slaughter many oxen in the sacrifices to devils, some solemnity must be exchanged for them on this account, as that on the day of the dedication, or the nativities of the holy martyrs, whose relics are there deposited.”¹⁶

So the cult of the saints spread, with their relics.

The veneration of relics was endorsed by the Second Council of Nicea in 787, which ordered that relics must be placed in all churches. This led to further translations and divisions of relics as the demand increased.

In Rome itself the reluctance to dig up and move the relics of saints was eventually overcome, partly by the fact that the rest of the world was doing it, and partly from the fact that the cemeteries of Rome, outside the city walls, were no longer secure from invasion. Many of the relics of martyrs were removed from the insecure catacombs and brought into the city to be enshrined in churches¹⁷. In many cases the relics were enshrined beneath the altar, in a crypt or *confessio*, a practice which became the norm, so that the Eucharist was always celebrated in connection with the remains of saints. This makes the same

¹⁶ Bede, *History of the English Church and People*

¹⁷ Freeman, *op. cit.*, p76



A portable altar stone as used in the western Church. The small square of marble beneath the cross seals up a cavity or sepulchre containing relics.

connection in the liturgy as is made in the scriptures: the deaths of the saints, whose bodies are placed beneath the altar, become an icon and a type of the death of Christ, who is sacramentally made present on the altar.

This is the case even with portable altars. In the West consecrated altar

stones came into use, which can be carried from place to place. Relics of saints are sealed into a small cavity called a 'sepulchre' and the whole is consecrated by a bishop¹⁸. These were required in Roman Catholic use until the reforms after the second Vatican council, and because of their convenience were often used even in large fixed altars, laid flat into the surface instead of consecrating the whole structure. In the Byzantine Rite the place of the altar stone is taken by the antimimension, an altar cloth, also consecrated by the bishop, in which the relics are stitched into a pocket of the material.

Alongside the official liturgical cult of relics there was also personal devotion. When the faithful visited the shrine of some saint they wanted to carry away some tangible reminder of their visit, an enduring connection. Many kinds of so-called secondary relics developed. Oil from lamps that burned before holy relics was popular, as is shown by

¹⁸ David Sox, *Relics and Shrines*, George Allen & Unwin, 1985, p8

the many surviving examples of “St Menas flasks”. St Menas was a martyr and wonder-worker whose shrine was near Alexandria in Egypt, and flasks containing oil from the shrine were given to pilgrims. These have been found as far afield as England, Germany, Italy, France, Sudan Turkey and Jerusalem. In Rome, pilgrims would lower pieces of cloth, called *brandea*, into the tombs of the saints and carry those away as relics¹⁹.

As the practice of pilgrimage grew people would sometimes travel long distances to visit a saint’s tomb. And this created new routes of communication and therefore trade. Fairs were held on saint’s days around the churches enshrining their remains, and trade was often brisk. The cult of relics changed the economic geography of Europe.

Along with the cult of relics there came the art of the reliquary. The British Museum exhibition, “Treasures of Heaven”, held a couple of years ago, was hugely popular and assembled many splendid examples of containers for holy relics from different centuries.

The demand for relics led of course to a trade and some abuses. As early as the Fourth Century St Augustine of Hippo denounced some monks who travelled around selling dubious relics²⁰, a problem which has resurfaced in every age. The desire to possess relics led to rivalry, fraud, and theft. Even the greatest relics were not immune; the reliquaries containing the heads of St Peter and St Paul in the Lateran Basilica, the cathedral of the Bishop of Rome, have been stolen and recovered many times.

There were also completely indefensible acts such as the sack of Constantinople, in which hundreds of relics and other sacred treasures were looted and brought into the West. Some of the looted objects have been returned in recent years in gestures of reconciliation, but the crimes of the past still cast long shadows over the present relationship between the churches.

In the West, the golden age of relics and reliquaries was the calm before the storm. The currents of thought that led to the Reformation

¹⁹ Bentley, *op. cit.*, p 44

²⁰ Sox, *op. cit.*, p 8

were beginning to circulate, questioning among other things the whole cult of relics. Mediaeval writers such as Chaucer and Boccaccio had poked fun at spurious relics such as a feather of the Angel Gabriel's wing or a piece of the sail of St Peter's Barque. When the Reformation broke out relics were a particular target for the scorn of the reformers. John Calvin was scathing in his denunciation of what he regarded as fraudulent and superstitious objects.

In places that adopted reformed teaching waves of destruction broke out against churches, shrines, images and relics, and the bare and empty churches of Holland or Geneva bear witness to what was lost. And England of course did not escape the destruction. Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries and seized their wealth, which meant the destruction of any shrines and the seizure of their gold and jewels. But the bones inside often were just buried rather than destroyed, as for example with St Cuthbert's shrine in Durham. And shrines which were poorer or in outlying places sometimes were left relatively undisturbed.

The Roman Catholic authorities mobilized against the offensive, and the Council of Trent met to reform the Church. There is no doubt that some Protestant criticisms had hit home, and the Council was aware that toleration of abuses had left the church open to criticism. In the area of relics, this led to codification and regulations. From now on, relics would have to be sealed in reliquaries and accompanied by proof of authenticity approved by the bishop. No new relics were to be venerated on the basis of dreams or supposed revelations. The miraculous was less emphasized. Although it was allowed that God *could* work miracles through relics if he so willed, the emphasis shifted. Relics were explained as a means of stimulating faith and encouraging the faithful to follow the examples of the saints²¹. It was all becoming a bit rationalized. And this is still very much the approach in the Western church today.

²¹ Catechism of the Council of Trent, Part III

At the same time as this extra regulation, the Counter-Reformation acknowledged that the cult of relics was one of the distinctive marks of Catholicism, a key point of difference from the Protestants. As the Jesuit Cardinal Bellarmine put it, “there is nothing they shudder at and abhor more”²² than relics. And if relics were a sign that distinguished you from Protestantism, you wanted as many as possible. This was the age of the baroque, of demonstrative piety and extravagant ornamentation. It was no longer enough for churches simply to have relics, buried invisibly beneath the altar; seeing was believing, and ostentation was the order of the day. Displays of relics became a point of pride, and important Catholic churches were enriched with glass cases displaying dozens or hundreds of relics, even whole saintly skeletons.

But large displays of relics introduced a problem of supply and demand. There just weren’t enough saints to go round, especially in those countries where relics had been lost in outbursts of protestant zeal. So the rediscovery of the catacombs must have seemed like providence.

Incredible as it may seem, the Roman catacombs, hundreds of miles of galleries lined with burial niches, had been almost completely lost for centuries. It wasn’t until 1578 that they were found again when workers in a vineyard came across a collapsed area of ground leading down to mysterious underground chambers. This was just after the Council of Trent, and when excavators began to discover bodies dating back to the early years of Christianity it was all too easy to imagine that they were handling relics of martyrs. Soon whole skeletons were being exhumed, identified as martyrs on the basis of often quite flimsy evidence, issued with identity papers, and shipped to Catholic churches all over Europe. Many of these can still be seen in splendid shrines; in Italy it was the fashion to enclose the bones in recumbent models of the saint’s body beneath an altar, but in Germany the skeletons themselves

²² Koudounaris, P., *Heavenly Bodies – Cult Treasures and Spectacular Saints from the Catacombs*, Thames & Hudson, 2013, p 30



Catacomb saints – an altar displaying bones believed to be those of martyrs from the Roman catacombs. Valetta, Malta.

were put on display, encrusted with gems and dressed in fanciful interpretations of ancient Roman costume. In his lavishly illustrated book, *Heavenly Bodies*²³, Paul Koudounaris recounts the histories of some of these extraordinary remains.

At the same time small relics were distributed in huge numbers, always in sealed reliquaries as required by Trent. Churches amassed large collections, but many also went to individuals for personal devotion. Well-to-do Catholic families and members of the aristocracy would usually have a private chapel in their houses, and no private chapel was complete without a collection of relics to sanctify the space and, perhaps, to keep up with the neighbours.

²³ *Ibid*

In the East however the cult of relics continued much as it always had, with no reformation or counter-reformation to cause any disturbance. Eastern churches to this day generally don't have permanent displays of relics. The everyday devotional focus is the iconostasis, and the relics tend to be brought out and venerated on their feast days, a living tradition that can be seen on Mount Athos, and in many other places such as Corfu, where the body of St Spyridon is taken in procession round the streets on his feast day.

To overstate somewhat, it could be said that in the West relics were about proving a point – they showed that you weren't Protestants, and that you were keeping the rules of Trent. In the East it was much more about the devotion of the faithful, their communion with the saint. Relics were places where heaven came close to earth and the saints were available as intercessors and protectors. Unlike the more cerebral approach in the West, the East had no problem in talking about the grace that inhabited relics, and in expecting the miraculous²⁴. Devotion to relics was less controlled, more spontaneous, and perhaps a bit more down to earth.

A remarkable example of the spontaneity that was still possible in the East is St Evdokimos²⁵. In 1840 a crack was noticed in a wall in the Vatopaidi monastery on Mount Athos, and behind it was found a forgotten ossuary, full of the bones of monks from former times. But in the middle of all these decayed bones there was one body that was intact and incorrupt, kneeling upright with his hands crossed on his breast, and exuding a sweet fragrance. It was decided that this monk must have been a saint, but had been so humble that he had not been noticed while he was alive. Only now, unknown ages after his death, was God revealing his sanctity by the miracle of incorruption. As no one knew his name, he was called Evdokimos, meaning "pleasing to God", and

²⁴ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (trans), James Clarke & Co, 1957, p 191

²⁵ Story related on the *Mystagogy* blog,

<http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2009/10/saint-evdokimos-newly-revealed-of.html>

accepted in the Monastery as a saint. Under the regulations of Trent, in theory at least, that would not have been possible in the West.

Incorruption is one of the physical phenomena that have from time to time been noticed in the bodies of saints. Not all by any means, but some holy bodies have shown a remarkable reluctance to decay after death²⁶. Other phenomena sometimes observed with holy relics include fragrance, the exuding of a liquid called manna or myrrh, lights seen over tombs, and so on. And indeed there could be a whole separate talk on such phenomena.

After the Reformation it was of course the Roman Catholic church in the West which principally continued the cult of relics. What of the Church of England? In spite of the rigours of reforming zeal the Reformation in England was not uniform in its impact, and in theory at least did not go as far as on the continent. Some shrines and relics did manage to survive the Reformation. St Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey is the best known, but also some less well known saints such as St Candida in Whitchurch Canoniconum, and St Melangell in Wales. St Erkenwald's shrine remained intact in St Paul's Cathedral until the Cathedral itself was destroyed in the Great Fire of London. Other saints were hidden to be recovered later, such as St Eanswythe in Folkestone.

In Winchester Cathedral numerous shrines and relics remained intact until the Civil War, when Crowell's troops broke them open and scattered the bones. But Anglican faithful secretly saved what they could find, and at the Restoration the relics were put pack in feretories on the choir screen. They are all mixed up together, but at least they are still there.

The attitude of some Anglicans was by no means hostile. John Evelyn, in his diary for 16 September 1685²⁷, records a meeting with the King, James II, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Thomas Ken, and some others. The subject of discussion was relics and miracles. The Bishop

²⁶ For a discussion of many examples see Joan Carroll Cruz, *The Incorruptibles*, Tan Books 1977.

²⁷ *The Diary of John Evelyn*, Globe Edition, MacMillan & Co 1908, p 379

related a miracle wrought by means of a relic of King Charles I's blood, which healed someone who was blind, and King James passed round a gold crucifix containing a relic of the True Cross, which had been found in the coffin of St Edward the Confessor. The fact that a Roman Catholic King and an Anglican bishop could discuss such a subject on sympathetic terms shows I would suggest that the Church of England at this time was far from being a continental style reformed church.

In the 19th Century the Tractarian movement sought to re-emphasise the Church of England's continuity with the pre-reformation church, and renewed a consciousness of holy England, with its many saints and shrines. To contribute to this reawakening, in the 1840s John Henry Newman edited a series of *Lives of the English Saints*. The anonymous author of the 'Legend of St Bettelin' was able to console himself that even though much had been destroyed the relics of the saints were still present, even if their locations were unknown. "It has before now happened that profane or fanatical violence has broken in upon the relics of the Saints, and scattered them over land and water, or mixed them with the dust of the earth... Yet could it not destroy the virtue of the relics; it did but disperse and conceal them. They did *more*, they were seen *less*."²⁸

In the 19th Century movements such as the pre-Raphaelites, the gothic revival, and the vogue for antiquarianism, looked back to England's ancient past as an age with a sacred and mystical aura. Relics and shrines increasingly came to be seen as part of British heritage, rather than something alien. At St Pancras Old Church, where I was a curate, an altar stone of the seventh Century, possibly associated with St Augustine's mission, was discovered buried beneath the tower during restoration work in the 1840s, and was placed back in the altar where it belonged.

As the Oxford Movement progressed the later and bolder Anglo-Catholics wanted to imitate Rome, and make their churches look as

²⁸ John Henry Newman, Ed., *The Lives of the English Saints*, ST Freemantle, 1901, Vol II, p 65

non-Protestant as possible. To that end baroque fixtures and fittings were imported wholesale from the continent, including relics and reliquaries. Although ecclesiastical tastes have changed somewhat after Vatican II, many of these can still be seen.

In modern times a number of shrines have been restored or reconstructed. Sometimes the relics have been found and replaced, as with St Melangell in Wales. Elsewhere replacement relics have been obtained from sources on the continent. A relic of St Richard of Chichester now reposes in his restored shrine in Chichester Cathedral. A small part of the bones of St Pancras is now venerated at St Pancras Old Church, a gift from San Pancrazio in Rome in 2010. The shrine of St Alban was reconstructed from fragments in the 19th Century and restored again in the 20th. And it now, once again, has and celebrates a relic of its patron saint – a gift from the Church of St Pantaleon in Cologne, where part of the saint's relics had been taken some time in the middle ages.

So here we are back in the 21st Century. It seems to me that relics of the saints have an enduring fascination, and their veneration is something that still has an important place in the life of Christians, east and west, uniting us with the earliest Christians and the Church in every age. We may be living in an age that some call secular or post-modern, but relics remain as popular as ever, part of a living tradition which Christians of many different Churches can and do own and celebrate in common.

Welcome by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to His Grace Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

PHANAR, 13 JANUARY 2014

Your Grace Archbishop Justin, Beloved Brother in Christ:

‘Christ is in our midst! He is and shall be!’

It gives us the greatest joy to welcome Your Grace as the honoured guest of the Ecumenical Throne, on this your first pilgrimage to the Patriarchate. We hope that Your Grace will be very happy during your time in Constantinople, and that your visit will strengthen the bond of mutual love that exists between our two Churches, the Orthodox and the Anglican.

The friendship between our Churches is not new, but has deep roots in past history. As long ago as the early 17th century Cyril Lukaris, Patriarch first of Alexandria and then of Constantinople, had many contacts with the English Church and State. As a token of his esteem, he sent to King James I the Codex Alexandrinus, one of the three most ancient manuscripts of the Greek Bible, which is now one of the greatest treasures at the British Library in London. Personal contacts between our two communions have been promoted more recently by the Eastern Church Association, founded in 1864 – now known as the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association – and by the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, founded in 1928. These two societies have fostered countless ecumenical friendships; and without such ecumenical friendships, on the direct and personal level, we cannot hope to build a firm foundation for Christian unity.

Since 1973, as Your Grace will be well aware, there has been an official dialogue, world-wide in scope, between our two ecclesial families. The International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue has so far produced three weighty reports: the Moscow

Agreed Statement (1976), the Dublin Agreed Statement (1984), and most recently the very detailed Cyprus Agreed Statement (2006), entitled 'The Church of the Triune God'. The International Commission is now preparing a fourth agreed statement on the Christian understanding of the human person. This will consider, among other topics, the Christian teaching on marriage, and also our human responsibility for the environment, a matter to which we personally, throughout our time as Patriarch, have always attached particular importance. We are fully confident that, under the inspiration of Your Grace, our Anglican-Orthodox dialogue will continue to flourish and to make positive progress.

In its formal title, this dialogue is entitled 'theological'. But it is of course essential that our theology should always be a living theology. Doctrinal discussion must never be separated from a practical interest in social and philanthropic issues. At this present moment, as Anglicans and Orthodox, we share in particular a joint concern for the situation of Christians in the Middle East, who are confronting increasing problems and, in many places, are undergoing a veritable persecution.

In the past, the rapprochement between our two Churches has been greatly assisted by the exchange of students, and we trust that this will continue. Our Theological School at Halki used to offer scholarships to Anglicans, and when it is reopened – as will happen in the near future (so it may be hoped) – we shall certainly wish to revive this tradition. These exchange students have frequently gone on to become leaders in their respective Churches, and their early inter-Church experience has enabled them to further the cause of Christian unity in highly constructive ways.

Dear Archbishop Justin: during the course of the visit of Your Grace we shall have the opportunity to speak further about these and other subjects. It is a great joy to us that, so soon after your elevation to Canterbury, Your Grace has found it possible to visit the sacred centre of Orthodoxy, the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Indeed Your Grace is more than welcome: please feel entirely at home. From our encounter during

these two days, may great benefit come to our Churches. In that spirit we conclude with words from the Divine Liturgy, proclaimed immediately before the recitation of the Creed: ‘Let us love one another, that with one mind we may confess the Trinity one in essence and undivided.’

*Archbishop of Canterbury’s response to welcome message by the
Ecumenical Patriarch*

Your All-Holiness, Beloved Brother in Christ,

I thank you most warmly for your welcome and greetings and at the outset bring the greetings from the Anglican Communion and the Church of England. I realise that this is an initial and very short visit, but it is a vital opportunity so soon after my enthronement for us to be able to share and be strengthened through this more personal visit. Your All Holiness has once mentioned that in a world “becoming smaller and smaller distance-wise, the need for personal communication has become imperative.” I see my short visit in that light. To be with you in this holy and historic place is indeed a great privilege. The warmth of your welcome adds to my deep sense of privilege at meeting you.

This city has left its mark in a diversity of ways upon Christianity as a whole. It was from this city that manuscripts of the Bible in the original languages were received in the West. This city (also renowned as the New Rome) is your seat as the Ecumenical Patriarch, and we continue to benefit from the insight of what the secular and Christian leadership through this link has taught the world church about the relationship between Christianity and the application of worldly power over the years. Your history is more and more important in the increasing confrontations of the world in which religion is used as a pretext for violence that in reality comes from greed and the pride of human beings.

You have demonstrated over the centuries the martyrdom to which we are called in scripture, the call to witness in word and life, a call more important than life itself. The cost of that martyrdom is seen



(Credit: Mr Nikolaos Maginas)

in so many places today. Closest to here we remember and seek the mercy of Christ and intercession of the Blessed Mother on Syria, especially for His Eminence Metropolitan Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo of the Syrian Patriarchate of Antioch, and His Eminence Metropolitan Boulos Yazigi of Aleppo and Alexandrette of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, for whom we pray daily. You yourself have been an example of peace and reconciliation, politically, with the natural world and in your historic visit for the installation of His Holiness Pope Francis I.

Istanbul is at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. It is the place where two great faiths meet. Its significance for trade is enormous and continues to remind us of Turkey's importance as an industrial and commercial nation. Commerce and trade may be objects of greed, but may in the Grace of God open the way to dialogue between nations.

Your All Holiness, my distinguished predecessors, Archbishop Robert Runcie in 1982, Archbishop George Carey in 1992 and Arch-

bishop Rowan Williams in 2003 all visited this holy place and have been blessed by the encounter and engagement. As Archbishop Rowan has emphasised during his last visit, our roots go back to the Christian missions of the days of Constantine. He furthermore expressed a particular concern for Eastern and Western traditions of the Church to be reconciled.

Such reconciliation is also very dear to my heart and is one of my key priorities. It is the call of Christ that all may be one so that the world may see. I will therefore be taking back with me the warmth of your hospitality and also, after our discussions today and tomorrow, a renewed and refreshed focus for greater unity and closer fellowship. We want to carry the cross of our divisions, but be filled with the hope and joy that comes from the grace and the love of Jesus.

This can be further developed through the ongoing conversations in the International Commission for Anglican Orthodox Theological Dialogue and through the more informal talks that happen. I can assure you that I will provide the necessary encouragement for our ecumenical journey together.

During the last years we have seen the world changing in a diversity of ways. We have had an economic crisis through a banking system which had lost its way, seeking its own good at the expense of nations and their peoples. There is conflict in many regions of the world, acute poverty, unemployment and an influx of oppressed people driven away from their own countries and seeking refuge elsewhere. In Southern Europe terrible suffering has seized the people, most especially the poor for whom we weep and cry to God. The churches are rising to the challenge, empowered by the Holy Spirit and filled with his compassion. Hence in standing with the poor in love, we may work together. How can we strengthen and help each other bear one another's burdens?

Your Holiness, I am aware that you are known as the 'Green Patriarch'. We are grateful for your energy and efforts to raise awareness for preserving and protecting our environment. You have been the leading voice expressing concerns and have initiated a number of seminars

and dialogues, also in co-sponsorship with His Royal Highness Prince Philip, to mobilise spiritual and moral forces to achieve harmony between humanity and nature. This third millennium has made us realise that environmental issues require our day to day attention. We are witnesses to global calamities. The Christian Orthodox theological understanding points us all to our natural environment as part of Creation and characterised by sacredness. This is a responsibility for all of us and your contributions will enable us to speak out more intentionally on environmental issues at an individual, national and international level. Abuse and destruction of the environment denies the grace of God. Economic crises tempt governments and people to look to the short term and forget the needs of the generation to come.

Finally, it is clear to me that our theological dialogues today do face new challenges and I do recognise that there are also some issues that raise difficulties, but I take courage from your words to one of my predecessors:

In spite of such obstacles, we cannot allow ourselves to congeal the love between us which is also manifested in dialogue so “let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us” with the good hope that the Lord of powers and mercy “will not let us be tested beyond our strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that we may be able to endure it” (1Cor. 10:13).

Your All Holiness, this is a vital visit for me and it would be my privilege to be able to welcome you in 2015 to London. I look forward to the remaining time with you and the Patriarchate. There is much that unites us and as we continue to strengthen the bonds of friendship our understanding of each other’s traditions will grow. It is therefore in this spirit that I greet you and ask for your prayers for our ministry.

AECA Travel Award

DR CATHERINE REID is the winner of the AECA Travel Award in commemoration of the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan. Catherine is currently an ordinand at Mirfield reading for an MA in Theology and Ministry. Her particular area of research is the Orthodox Liturgy and the Anglican Eucharistic rite. Below is a brief account her time in Belarus, and in due course we look forward to publishing her academic work in this journal.

St Elisabeth's Convent, Belarus

My name is Catherine Reid and I have almost finished training for ordained ministry at the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield. I am a Russian speaker and some years ago studied for my PhD in philosophy at St Petersburg State University in Russia, where I completed a doctoral thesis on the Russian thinker, Nicolai Berdyaev. Since coming back to England in 2008, and prior to entering training, I worked as a Russian interpreter and translator. Part of my current training at Mirfield has involved studying an MA in Ministry and Theology, which also includes a dissertation. The work of this dissertation was the purpose of my visit to St Elisabeth's. While wanting to simply experience the Divine Liturgy in a monastic setting, and have the opportunity to discuss any thoughts and questions, I also expected the visit to lead to further study and thought relating to our own Anglican Eucharistic Rite, which it has done, especially as regards eschatology and the Eucharist. Interestingly, the visit and discussions also made me aware of how the Anglican Church was being perceived and understood in that place. People, including Orthodox clergy, seemed very keen to talk and ask about recent events in the church and news!

I went to stay at St Elisabeth's Convent in Belarus during Great Lent (1st-9th April, 2014). St Elisabeth's is situated in a residential area just outside the city of Minsk on the ring road. The actual convent is



only ten years old but the scale of the complex is considerable. There were four churches (temples) on the site as well as three shops and a café. 110 nuns and 4 monks live on site as well as several lay brothers and sisters. The convent is the only one in the whole of Minsk and was very popular.

The first thing I would say about this visit is that it has made a deep impression on me. My experience of the liturgy during Great Lent was to be drawn up into something where I felt an integral part of all those around me, the living and the departed, in the continual praise of God. This perhaps seems a typical and familiar thing to say about Orthodox worship, but considering when I first arrived my question was ‘but can I enter this, can this become prayer for me?’, I would certainly say I’d moved on by the end of my stay. Once I’d let go of the need to pinpoint at what stage the liturgy was at and to generally consider the role of rituals, actions, and words in the liturgy the whole experience

really did become something else: it became prayer. I was particularly struck by two things. Firstly, at the convent, there was a genuine attempt by the priests and 'Ватюшка' Протоиерей (Archpriest) Andrey Lemeshonok to make an explicit connection for people between liturgy and life. This was ultimately about living a moral life, which Ватюшка Протоиерей (Archpriest) Andrey Lemeshonok made clear meant coming to the храм often, going to confession, receiving communion, praying for others, and having the assurance that God loves us more than our sins. How we relate to others was at the heart of all this, and the knowledge that it is not possible to live without God (нельзя жить без Бога). The other thing that particularly struck me in the liturgy was the way all the living and departed were brought together into the one present community. Certain actions helped this of course, for example, that the priests and deacons intoned lists and lists of names both living and departed, but every person present was also asked to say their name at a certain point in the liturgy. It was also very apparent how the nature of the liturgy, especially the Divine Liturgy, was to unfold and live in the present the whole story of creation, the fall, redemption and, ultimately, final things.

I really did have an extraordinary visit to St Elisabeth's Convent and I am very grateful to AECA for such an opportunity. I certainly left with many thoughts and questions as to the nature and character of our own Anglican liturgy, particularly the story it tells, especially how it draws worshippers into the worship of heaven, but also how do we, the Church, form a connection for people between liturgy and life.

AECA Grant Report

SUSAN MOBBERLEY received an AECA grant to learn the techniques of iconography. In this article she feedback on what this meant for her.

Icon Diploma Course

It was a very exciting experience to meet with others embarking on the Prince's School of Traditional Arts 3 year Icon Diploma Course in the autumn of last year. We began by listening to each other's stories of how we had found ourselves here. Often moving, what they each had in common was a genuine passion to explore further this sacred art form of iconography. The pace and standard of the course is rigorous, led by tutor Aidan Hart, himself an Orthodox iconographer. Beginning with practicing brush strokes, we soon progressed to painting faces, busts and full length monochromes. Woven in with these practical sessions are our daily prayers and lectures giving something of the history and theological grounding in which iconography is steeped. So far these have included the affirmations of the 7th Ecumenical Council, a talk on the development of the icon screen, and the 'Three stages of spiritual ascent and their relationship with iconography'. For myself, the growing awareness of the parity of word and image within Orthodoxy has particularly resonated. A lecture by visiting speaker Professor Peter Burman on 'The Creative Artist and the Church' gave further food for thought on the implications of commissioning and locating sacred art within our churches.

At a parish level, we are also trying to take on board these reflections as we consider more carefully how to make use of icons in our churches and in our liturgy. In particular a small group of us has been meeting weekly after being involved in other icon courses locally. We meet in the Lady Chapel of one of our churches to explore painting and prayer in a sacred context. In an attempt to increase awareness we are

also hosting an 'iconography week' this summer. Visitors and new members are welcome. Details below.

'Doorways' Exhibition Week

16-21 June 2014

St Laurence Church Rowington in Warwickshire.

This week the church will be open to host an icon exhibition, some of which was recently on display at Lichfield Cathedral. It will be a chance to see some pieces by iconographer Ian Knowles, Director of the Bethlehem Icon Centre as well as to learn a bit more about this fascinating art form. Members of the St Luke's Icon Centre who meet weekly to paint at Rowington will also be there to meet people and talk about their own work and experience. You will be able to see how icons are made as we will also be painting during this week. We hope that some people will join us in a workshop we are running, Monday to Thursday. On the Saturday from 10 am we will have two related talks with a bread and cheese lunch.

For more details, get in touch with Susan Mobberley.
sumob@tiscali.co.uk

Nenad Petrović

1925 – 2014

THE SERBIAN community in London suffered a grievous loss with the death of Nenad Petrović on 21st March 2014. He was born in 1925 in Zagreb in what was then the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. His father was an army officer and his mother a teacher. Nenad completed his high school education in wartime Belgrade in 1944 and having joined the royalist resistance movement he had to withdraw, like so many young men of his generation, first to Slovenia and then in May 1945 to Italy. He was only 19 at the time.

England became his home in 1947 when he arrived here as a penniless refugee from displaced persons' camps in Italy and Germany. After a brief spell as an agricultural labourer Nenad settled in London where he worked for the Lyons food company as an administrative officer. At the same time he studied political science and economics as an external student.

As a political émigré from communist Yugoslavia, Nenad's pre-eminent interest was to find ways of influencing political developments and encouraging democratic changes in his homeland. This meant joining forces with similar minded people in the Yugoslav emigration. They formed a political association called *Oslobodjenje* (Liberation) and started a monthly journal called *Naša Reč* (Our Word) which propagated the ideas of democracy in Yugoslavia. In the early sixties Nenad became a member of the Democratic Alternative, a grouping of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Bosnians who advocated a democratic alternative to the one party state in Yugoslavia.

But Nenad was not interested only in politics. He loved literature, history, art and culture in general and was the author of a number of books and many articles. After political changes in Yugoslavia two of his books were published in Belgrade and in 1989 he was made an honorary member of the Writers' Association of Serbia. In London he was active

in the Association of Writers and Artists in Exile founded in 1951 and became first its secretary and then president.

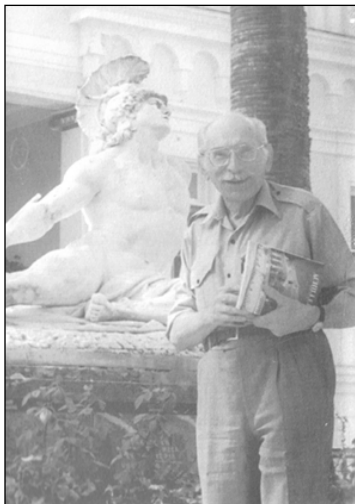
Nenad was very attached to the Serbian Orthodox Church and very active in its London parish. He was secretary of the London Parish Council for over 20 years and president from 1985 to 1988.

A man of liberal views Nenad was a great supporter of initiatives to bring people together for the sake of the common good. As a Serb he sought contact with representatives of Yugoslavia's other communities: Croats, Slovenes and Moslems. He respected their religion, history and customs. Greatly saddened by the break-up of Yugoslavia he was horrified by the bloodshed that accompanied it. The tragedy of Yugoslavia, however, only reinforced his liberal and democratic instincts and he continued to search for friends, both Serbian and non-Serbian, who shared his liberal outlook

Nenad's liberalism meant he was by nature a strong supporter of ecumenism Nenad was a member of the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association for many years and went on various pilgrimages organised by the Association. He would always warmly welcome AECA members whenever AGMs were held in the Serbian Church premises. He was also a member of the Friends of Mount Athos and had contact with various Christian denominations but his strongest links were with the Church of England.

Nenad Petrović was a modest and unassuming man, a real gentleman. A great Serbian and Yugoslav patriot. He never married.

Nenad will be greatly missed by his many Serbian and English friends.



George Novaković

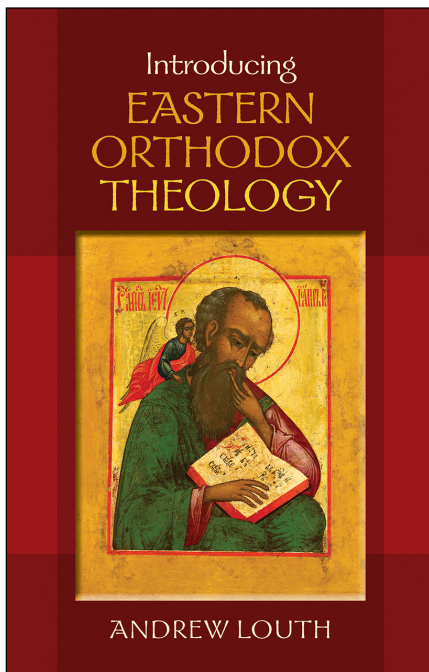
Book Review

STEPHEN STAVROU

Introducing Eastern Orthodox Theology. Andrew Louth. £12.99. SPCK Publishing, 2013. 192 pp; paperback. ISBN: 978-0281069651.

THIS BOOK is accessible, but at the same time, profound. It is certainly ambitious, seeking to outline the depth and richness of Orthodox theology in a few short chapters, but it achieves this without seeming hurried or curtailed. Andrew Louth, is of course a name that will be familiar to nearly everyone with an acquaintance with Orthodoxy in this country. As both priest and academic, this book displays his faith and scholarship in equal measure.

The introductory chapter on ‘Who are the Orthodox’ is extremely helpful in setting the scene on what is a complex state of affairs. Louth succinctly summarises key moments in the history of Eastern Christianity and the controversies of the Early Church. To some extent, this book could be used by anyone as an introduction to aspects of Christian theology in general. As a foundation, it is often necessary for Louth to outline much theology that is common to all Christians who have a high regard for Tradition and the Fathers. However, in each chapter we come to a point where Louth branches into subjects and issues that specific to Orthodoxy, and this is where the book becomes



particularly valuable. For example, we move from the doctrine of Creation to the distinctive Eastern concepts of Logoi and Sophiology.

I was taken with Louth's turns of phrase. There is a beauty in such phrases as 'what we should hear from the chorus of the Fathers is a rich harmony not a thin unison.' There is the memorable and helpful statement that 'The creed is part of our initiation into a life, not a summary of things to be believed.' And I enjoyed his point when he says that 'although the mysteries of the faith are beyond understanding, they are not beyond misunderstanding'. These are useful phrases that many would find useful to remember and repeat.

There is a fascinating chapter on Creation, and particularly the place of The Fall in Orthodox theology, which Louth characterises as being more broadly focused on the deification of the whole cosmos from creation to the end of time, and contrasts this with a western perspective that often takes the narrower perspective of the Fall to redemption in Christ. This idea is then important in the final chapter on eschatology, providing firmer ground for at least the possibility of universal salvation.

Familiar yet also different is how we might describe much of the theology outlined in this book. A distinctive Orthodox view permeates throughout. That is particularly true of the chapter on the Sacraments which moves seamlessly from Christian materialism to the language and symbolism of the Sacraments and finally to the significance of icons. It all fits together in elegantly written and well-argued chapters. I love the idea that the word 'mysterion' is onomatopoeic, that is, the pursing of one's lips to pronounce 'm' represents those things about the Sacraments which cannot be fully known or which are kept hidden.

Just very occasionally, one feels that Louth is a little unfair to the Western tradition. The idea that liturgy does more than re-enact past events but makes them present to us in the here and now, is not uniquely confined to Orthodoxy, although it is perhaps emphasised in the East. It is, for example, a key idea in any Catholic (whether Roman or Anglican) understanding of what is going on in the Eucharist. Having

said that, Louth does often legitimately challenge Western traditions and practices. His arguments for the Eastern view that there are potentially more than the seven Sacraments defined by Western Catholic theology are persuasive. Funeral Rites and the Divine Liturgy itself would seem to be candidates at least as likely as those usually included.

At the end of the book there is a helpful bibliography in which Louth points us to that still standard work 'The Orthodox Church' by Kallistos Ware. In that book Ware wrote, 'Christians in the west, both Roman and Reformed generally start by asking the same questions, although they may disagree about the answers. In Orthodoxy, however, it is not merely the answers that are different – the questions themselves are not the same as in the west.' This statement came to mind as I read Louth's book. It is a work that will itself become a standard introduction, helping many to break out of stale theological discussions and ways of thinking, and enable a broader and richer understanding of the Christian faith.

Pilgrimage Secretary

The Revd Andrei Petrine
The Rectory
52 Epping Road
Toot Hill
Ongar
Essex cm5 9sq
Tel: 01992 524 421
email: a.petrine@mac.com fds

Editor of Koinonia

The Revd Stephen Stavrou
St Paul's Vicarage
54 Kipling Street
London se1 3ru
Tel: 07801 551 592
email: stephenfrancisstavrou@gmail.com

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Erratum:

*The previous All Saintstide 2013 edition of Koinonia
was erroneously numbered 61 instead of 62.*

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The Ascension, stained glass window from Canterbury Cathedral