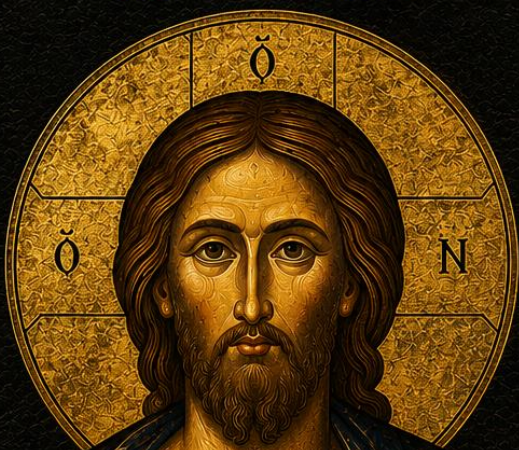


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Во Единой Святой Соборной
и Апостольской Церкви

THEOLOGY AND LIFE

in the Holy Orthodox Church

Archbishop Basilio
Archbishop of Santiago and All Chile



Theology and life in the Holy Orthodox Church

FIRST EDITION
Basilio Bishop of Santiago

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Theology and life in the Holy Orthodox Church

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Foreword

I asked him to give me strength, peace and love for God, and he gave me weakness to teach me what humility is, restlessness so that I learn to combat fear, poverty so that I understand what compassion is.

God educates us by making us, especially in this time of Lent, walk with the Lord and go up to Golgotha, he polishes our lives "like gold in the crucible" and invites us to grow in faith, so that we can be true followers of Christ .

We are privileged, because we can rediscover ourselves and find in ourselves that flame of life that the Holy Spirit gave us at our Baptism, that flame that day by day the world tries to stifle, that force that those who govern the world try to weaken in order to dominate us.

Our beloved Panagia Theotokos shows us how to follow her beloved Son in her image, in silence, prayer and dedication.

How great is the Love of God, who gave us His Son so that we would find salvation and our beloved

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Theotokos so that we would understand that it is possible to follow Him.

Growing up in the life of the Holy Orthodox Church, after having been educated and having lived for more than 40 years in the Roman Church, is like being born again and in fact it is a return to the true Church of Christ, because it is a total change from what was to what should be. Orthodoxy is much more than a simple church life, it is a way of living, thinking and a commitment to God and to ourselves.

The Holy Orthodox Church is a whole life, which is born with Holy Baptism, and the sure path to salvation, there is no other. To be Orthodox is to live as the Lord taught the Holy Apostles to live, it is to be consistent with the teachings contained in the Apostolic Rules, the holy canons that arose from the illumination of the Holy Spirit to the Council Fathers of the 7 Ecumenical Councils and of the holy tradition.

These pages are an ambitious attempt to transmit what God in his great Love has given me, it is a mixture of

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experiences and knowledge, it is an attempt to do theology by making life out of theology.

I thank God and my very beloved Theotokos for the great gift of having discovered this path and I hope that these lines will help those who have the patience to read them to discover the wonder of living it.

Archbishop Basilio

Archbishop of Santiago and All Chile

True Orthodox Church of the Diaspora

THE SCHISM OF 1054, some HISTORY.

The Church of the first millennium was divided along doctrinal, theological, linguistic, political, and geographical lines. In 1054, Pope Leo IX of Rome and Patriarch Michael I Cerularius of Constantinople mutually excommunicated each other. This act led to the great schism between East and West.

One summer day in 1054, after a heated argument with the Patriarch of Constantinople, the pope's representative, Cardinal Humbert, entered Hagia Sophia, the city's main place of worship, placed a document on the altar, and left. from there quickly. It was a libel of excommunication aimed at members of the Orthodox Church of which, until then, the Roman church was a part. There is a general consensus that this radical gesture marked the beginning of the Great Schism, the moment when the Church, united in the first 1,000 years of Christianity, divided, giving rise to the Roman Catholic Church.

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The story, of course, is more complicated. At the end of the first millennium, the unity of the Church was already broken. Five hundred years earlier, complex disputes over the nature of Christ had led to a break after the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

But even the moment commonly considered a turning point was, the product of Cardinal Humbert 's big ego , the breakdown of the original Pentarchy.

THE TRUE ORTHODOXY

At the end of the Greco-Turkish War in 1922, a militarycontrolled totalitarian regime was established in Greece, whose provisional head of government was the Greek General Nikolaos Plastiras , which would follow months later with the founding of the Second Hellenic Republic, during this hiatus the charter under which the

Greek Orthodox Church operated its synods independently and freely had been abolished; the then Archbishop acting as primate was deposed by a new regent, Archimandrite Crisóstomos Papadopoulos now promoted to the rank of archbishop.

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To achieve its goals, the new government required the concordance that the Church should have with the state, and this included a statement to the Greek synod in December where it was ordered that the civil and ecclesiastical calendars be matched, thus forming a same calendar. Consequently, the Archbishop of Athens, having the task of reforming the calendar, with the influence of the ministries of the new government, managed to persuade the Patriarch of Constantinople, of that time, to accept the reformed calendar. Receiving immediate opposition from the Patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria, who wisely feared that this change would threaten the unity of the Orthodox Communion in the world. A short time later the position of the see of Alexandria would change in favor of the reform, when Meletios was elevated Metaxakis , an Orthodox prelate identified with Freemasonry and Scientism, to the patriarchal throne in Alexandria (Egypt) who unilaterally promotes this "scientifically revised" calendar in a "pan-Orthodox" council, thus forcing other Orthodox hierarchs to follow it. However, it should be noted that previously, the Patriarchs and hierarchs of all the Orthodox Synods had condemned

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with anathema and excommunication anyone who used the Gregorian calendar or the "new calendar". The origin of this "new calendar", known as the "revised Julian calendar", is due to the studies carried out by a Serbian astronomer named Milutin Milankovich due to the gradual lag of the old calendar.

Thus, for the Orthodox communities that remained in the original ecclesiastical calendar or old calendar, the Churches that fell into serious canonical consequences had been: The Orthodox Church of Constantinople, The Orthodox Church of Greece, The Romanian Orthodox Church and the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. Not in the same case, today there are several other jurisdictions that continue to use the original calendar, but some of them are in communion with the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, such as the Moscow Patriarchate, the Church Russian Orthodox outside of Russia, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, among other autonomous Orthodox jurisdictions.

THE OLD- CALENDARISM

Old-Calendarist Orthodox, we are known by this name or as "Paleomerologitis", "Old-calendarists" or "Traditional Orthodox" to a branch of faithful Orthodox Christians who, since 1924, have manifested their disagreement with some jurisdictions of the Orthodox Church, which after said date, abandoned the use of the original ecclesiastical calendar of Julian foundation or the Calendar of Julius Caesar, to use the calendar known as the Gregorian (originally approved by Pope Gregory XIII) or the "revised Julian Calendar" of the As I spoke about earlier in this book, those Orthodox Churches that accepted such a change were condemned by the true Orthodox as "heretical", not in itself because of the use of such a calendar, but because of the ecumenical consequences that this caused.

In 1925 the best-known event occurred: A large luminous cross appeared in the sky over an old-time calendar church (the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian in Hymetus, Athens) hidden because of persecution, which was admired by hundreds of people

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in the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, many of the witnesses were notable figures of society and even the police who went to arrest the tumult caused by this event, and many of those present converted that night.

The characteristics that distinguish the True Orthodox, is the respect and total acceptance of the Holy Canons and the rejection of pan-ecumenism or false ecumenism.

First steps.

To talk about liturgy is to talk about icons and eschatology, Christology and in general the relationships are always in both directions, the completeness is in the experience of our Theology and that can be summed up as "unlived theology it is not theology", what that automatically converts life into theology and source of spirituality, there is no theology without life and in the same way there can be no life that does not become theology. The simplicity of this statement hides a profound experience of what our holy fathers wanted to bequeath to us: prayer, a deep life of faith, dedication, that is the paradigm they lived

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by, as such they first secluded themselves as hermits and then they opened up to deliver what they had achieved in their period of hesychia or asceticism in the spiritual direction.

The importance of monasticism in our history of faith marks a path of introspection and prayer that comes to life in the Divine Liturgy, this implies that only in the experience of the Risen Christ is where we find the strength to overcome any adversity and in the community where there is the support of the brothers and the helping hand (at least that's how it should be).

I think that all of us, and I want to emphasize all of us, are called to live, to a greater or lesser extent, the search for interior silence where God speaks to us, to be hesychasts, thus being men with a heart full of desire for God, and, because of that, seek how to free our hearts from their passions to find our God and the beauty of all this is that God is here, the Kingdom is here, we do not have to wait to live it, we do not have to die to be holy, Christ marked us the way. To live our faith is to bring the Kingdom to life, it is to enter an internal temple and encounter a world of life and light

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that leads us to adoration and contemplation. Icons make us pray, they move us into praying, because in them we contemplate the purity of love, the light of God, the experience and reality of the Holy Spirit, who becomes present and lives in each one of them and in each one of us.

Our temples, are a mixture of heaven and earth, thus teaching us that the experience of faith is something of every day, that the Word is our bread and our guide, that it is not going only one day to share with our brothers a Divine Liturgy on Sundays and then do what we want, but that life is a continuum of what has been learned and received in that time of encounter and that the Body and Blood of the Lord that we have received in Holy Communion is the beginning of a journey and not for a moment, it is to make theology become our life, by turning life into theology and theology into life itself, based in the image of Christ. We are living sources of the Holy Spirit, we are therefore called to catechize by example, words are seeds that may or may not fall on good soil and germinate, but the example marks and even if we do not want to accept it, it leaves

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its mark. Each one of us, having been baptized, is called to live the faith and deliver it as the Church has done for years, faith is not something that we must keep and keep hidden, it is a lamp and cannot be hidden, it must shine. The history of our faith says it, for centuries it was transmitted from one to another through preaching and example, the death on the cross of Our Lord was an example of dedication and a catechesis of life, the humility and silence of the Theotokos were examples of how we should live our dedication, making God-Man shine and dying to us so that He lives and moves the world.

The silence of Mary was, I believe, the prime example of the life of the hesychast, contemplation of her Son, listening to his Word and total surrender to Him. Isn't that how we should live? History shows us that our Church has lived and grown in persecution. The Old Testament as well as the New Testament and the Apostolic Letters say it, Christ was persecuted and his Church could not live something different, persecution and death have marked the path and growth of our Church. Our Orthodox faith has always followed this

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path, the persecutions and deaths of priests and faithful men have marked the path, the internal attacks, the problems that have separated paths within Orthodoxy, are nothing other than the path Initiated and marked by the example of Christ and the Apostles, it is written in Paul when he calls for unity, to live as true brothers, not to separate communities, when he says: "1 The Corinthians still carnal And I, brothers, *could* not speak to you as spiritual, but as carnal, as infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not food; Well, you still couldn't. But not even now can you; 3 because you are still carnal. Well, where between you, jealousy and contention - are you not carnal and walk according to man? 4 Well, when someone says: "As for me, I belong to Paul"; and another: "I, of Apollos," are you not men?" (1 Cor . 3:1-4), likewise calls for unity by saying: " 5 Well, what is Apollos? And what is Paul? Ministers for whom you have believed, and to each one as the Lord gave. 6 I planted; Apollos watered; but God increased; 7 So neither the one who plants is something, nor the one who waters, but the one who increases: God ." (1 Cor . 3:5-7), sadly the human being is a sinner by nature and power is a great issue, the ambition of power is one of

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the sins where satan rejoices and perhaps the one that explodes the most because he knows that it is the engine of humanity, who has power can do everything is the motto of the society.

Power and wealth are what move many to fight for nothing, to meaningless deaths, but they are what man wants and what he desires intensely, the Church is not immune to this, the Schism, as we mentioned before, was the product of ambition and being able to share a Divine Liturgy with our brothers on Sundays and then do what we want, but rather that life is a continuum of what has been learned and received in that time of encounter and that the Body and Blood of the Lord that we have received in Holy Communion it is the beginning of a journey and not a moment, it is to bring theology to life by turning life into theology and theology into life, into the image of Christ. We are living sources of the Holy Spirit, we are therefore called to catechize by example, words are seeds that may or may not fall on good soil and germinate, but the example marks and even if we do not want to accept it, it leaves its mark.

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Each one of us, having been baptized, is called to live the faith and deliver it as the Church has done for years, faith is not something that we must keep and keep hidden, it is a lamp and cannot be hidden, it must shine. The history of our faith says it, for centuries it was transmitted from one to another through preaching and example, the death on the cross of Our Lord was an example of dedication and a catechesis of life, the humility and silence of the Theotokos were examples of how we should live our dedication, making God-Man shine and dying to us so that He lives and moves the world. The silence of Mary was, I believe, the clear example of the life of the hesychast, contemplation of her Son, listening to his Word and total surrender to Him. Isn't that how we should live?

The history of our Church in countries where globalization is its *raison d'être*, is another example of the above, materialistic men, blinded by absurdities, without a vision of the future and who lived and unfortunately live (there are still a few) breathing and eating false theories. Those who idealize man and leave God aside, wanted to destroy all traces of the Church,

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due to their obstinacy and short-sightedness they did not realize that faith was not in the temples, but that it was life and that no one could ever end it , not even killing some people, they committed and continue to commit massacres that only increased the search for God and the commitment to faith of the simple people who knew that everything was possible when God is with us and that without Him we can do nothing. As we said before, ambition and the desire for power mark history, within the Orthodox Church it has been lived, there were Patriarchs who simply sold themselves to communism and played a role in defending the indefensible, lied to the brim and set an example of how not to live faith. Fortunately and as divine action there were Bishops and Metropolitans who left their homeland and came to America bringing the Orthodox faith and tradition.

In a chaotic society, which has disrupted values, has lost identity, has plunged into degeneration and depravity, it is good to stop and look back to find the source that allows us to make a radical change in our time, and I am talking about looking towards the source, because only

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in tradition can we find valid answers. That tradition that is based on the teachings of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, on the teachings of the Holy Apostles embodied in the Apostolic Rules and in the Holy Canons emanating from the first seven Ecumenical Councils where, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, our holy fathers They clearly defined the route that the Holy Church of Jesus Christ should follow.

Our Holy Church has followed the true path for centuries, which the Lord bequeathed to us. Sadly, in the last two centuries the great patriarchates have acted like Judas, the false ecumenism that Bartholomew I has advocated for and the aberrations that he has committed in favor of his deranged position, have reached a point where the Holy Canons are simply just a nonsensical text, his ego has covered up for everything that another egomaniac, head of a church lost in degeneration and depravity, named Francis is trying to achieve by uniting all the churches under his government, in which even satanism has a place, this union can only be inspiration from the devil. It is simple to accommodate everything so that it is the

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most comfortable for me, to interpret the Holy Canons "according to the times", to convince ourselves that what I do is in accordance with the "will of God" knowing that it is clearly our will the one we are following

The change that our Holy Orthodox Church has undergone, for some time now, has been truly worrying, we have lived trying to avoid the heresies that arise from the heart of the church and that merge with those that come from other pseudo-churches misnamed Christians and that they really are satanic, in the last century Sergianism and Cyprianism are two clear signs of the sinister influence of the devil in our church and that persist to this day. We could see a clear integration of the two greatest heresies of our times today in what happens with the so-called "modern ecumenism or pan-ecumenism", in this so-called union of churches that leads to the false union of churches that they are antagonistic in their essence, in the new world order, where it is claimed that we are all saved regardless of the faith we profess and that seeks to have only one head, that of Francis, as the only guide,

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we can see the aforementioned heresies in action, Sergianism with another nuance, since now it is papism who rules and to which many pseudo-patriarchs have unfortunately attached themselves, and Cyprianism that is clearly seen in the acceptance of heretics as part of a whole and the concelebration with them, Advocating the salvation of all regardless of what they believe or think, as long as they obey the orders emanating from the Vatican.

We are facing very difficult times, times of spiritual misery and a total loss of values where those of us who seek fidelity to the teachings of Our Lord will be persecuted and accused of treason against the Church, we will be outlawed as in the times of Sergianism since the followers of Francisism will initiate a "second holy war" to erase from the face of the earth the holy tradition, which already began under papism, satanism will reign, false idols will be adored, attempts will be made to destroy the foundations of Christianity and all in the name of modernity, the temples will bring together multiple religions in joint celebrations and under this new concept of "ecumenism" there will be

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no heresy, because all will be brothers under the same faith, which in itself is a heresy.

Our beloved and Holy Orthodox Church will thus return to its origins, we will become once again a church of catacombs, of the persecuted, of martyrs for the faith, but this, which is the True Church of Christ, will never die and will last until the end of time, it will not matter what this "new alliance" of religions does, because, as Saint Matthew 5: 11-12 says, "*11 Blessed are you when they insult and persecute you and say all that is bad against you, lying because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven; for thus they persecuted the prophets, those before you.*"

The atrocities that we see today in the world are repeated in the church and all the degeneration and depravity are integrated into the so-called "Christian churches", practicing homosexuals and lesbians are accepted as part of the clergy and even made bishops, a patriarch who is supposed to be the first among his peers in the custody of the holy tradition and faith, lifts an excommunication that could only be lifted by a Holy Ecumenical Synod, with the participation of all the

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Orthodox churches, this despicable act and which reveals the immense ego of the Patriarch of Constantinople and how he seeks to lead the Holy Orthodox Church to a great schism, this patriarch has become, without a doubt, the greatest Cyprianist today, because he has taken heresy to levels that nobody could imagine.

The path has always been the same, to achieve salvation, it is that of Mount Calvary, there is no other, the holy fathers repeat it over and over again in their texts, the Holy Church was founded as communities in the catacombs or in the clandestinely, the Holy Apostles and our beloved Holy Mother founded the first community and the Holy Spirit came to it, to gave it strength and courage so that they could go out and preach the Teachings of the Lord, this has been and must be our way. Only in God Triune and One, in our Holy Mother and in the rich inheritance that the Lord left us and that is the very essence of our Holy Church is that we can aspire to the Kingdom, totally rejecting ecumenism and everything that threatens the True

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Church of Christ, which is none other than the True Orthodox.

May the Good Shepherd bless us and protect us from falling into heresy and may our Blessed Mother cover us with her maternal love.

THE GREAT HERESIES OF THE LAST CENTURIES

Sergianism weighs like a rock on the Russian Patriarchate from Sergius I to Alexis II. Sergio I was a collaborator of the atheist communism of the USSR applauding its anti-Christian measures. Many priests became KGB agents, even using the secret of confession to expose opponents. Until Alexis II (1990-2008), he would have been a former KGB informant.

born ivan Nikolayevich Stragorodsky on January 23, 1867, Sergius I was Patriarch of Moscow and all the Russias, from September 8, 1943 until his death. Before that he had been de facto head of the Russian Orthodox Church (1925-1943). But his Declaration of

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Allegiance to the Soviet Union (29.7.1927) provoked a fierce controversy among Russian churchmen, many of whom (including not a few notable and respected bishops in prisons and in exile) broke communion with Sergius. Some reconciled later, others continued to oppose it until the election of Alexis I in 1945.

After the Soviet Union was invaded by Germany in 1941, Stalin began to reduce the anti-religious campaign, seeking the moral support of the Church during the war. In the early hours of 9.5.1943, he met with the three main hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church and promised, in exchange for loyalty, to open the Moscow Theological Seminary and Academy, release imprisoned clergymen and return some property, including the famous Laura de la Trinidad and San Sergio.

The most important concession was, without a doubt, being able to endow himself with a patriarch. So, on 9/8/1943, a Council of Bishops elected Sergio, who, enthroned on September 12 of the same year, already 76 years old and in poor health, would die in Moscow on 5/15/1944.

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The Soviet state used the Russian Orthodox Church for propaganda purposes. The Patriarchate was criticized for conceding so much and, above all, subjecting to itself all the Orthodox communities of the regions annexed by the Soviet Union, including the GreekCatholics, who were forced to do so in the PseudoSynod of Lviv (1946). , whose sad events are inscribed, therefore, in the time of the famous Major Archbishop Joseph Slipyj (1944-84), who arrested all the bishops of his Church and himself in concentration camps. He was then Russian Patriarch Alexis I (1945-70), an absolute Sergianist.

On March 7, 2016, an intrepid group of Russian Orthodox Christians made public -a gesture that honors them- a statement in which they affirm, among other things:

« It is urgent for Orthodox Christians to recognize the terrible truth of 10.3.1946. On that day, in Lviv, the Russian Orthodox Church forcibly integrated the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church under the pressure of Soviet power [...] Archives reveal that it was Stalin himself who decided to eliminate this Greek-Catholic

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Church. Ukrainian Catholic in February 1945, twelve days after the Yalta conference (4-11/II/1945) by "ally of the Vatican", that is to say, of an enemy power [...].

Orthodox authorities , in Russia, in the Ukraine and elsewhere, to recognize the nullity of the tragic decisions of the Lviv council. The Russian Orthodox Church as a whole cannot be held responsible for decisions made by church authorities manipulated or terrorized by the NKVD-KGB. We, however, Orthodox Christians, living 70 years after those events, feel responsible for the guilty silence surrounding the destruction of this Church by the Soviet regime with the participation of the Moscow Patriarchate [...]

Likewise, on this commemorative day of 3.10.1946, and on the eve of Sunday 3.13.2016, Forgiveness Sunday in the Orthodox liturgical calendar, we assure the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church of our solidarity, our prayer for all the innocent victims of this Church, who were imprisoned, tortured, deported and murdered by the Soviet government with the complicity of the Moscow Patriarchate. We humbly ask your forgiveness

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for all the injustices of which you have been victims under the protection of the authority of the Orthodox Church, and we bow before the martyrs of this Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church " (Cf. Peter Langa, "The Pseudo- Synod of Leópolis (10.III.1946). I. The terrible truth"

Cyprianism or Cyprianism . Metropolitan Cyprian taught that: 1) the ecumenical churches of world orthodoxy that have been anathematized for their ecumenism still have the grace of God in their mysteries, 2) apply the label "sick" or

"sick" heretics, which are terms only applicable to sinners who are members of the Church, and 3) teaches that councils, not heresies, separate one from the Church.

Thus he justifies his ecclesiology of receiving communion and accepting the mysteries of heretics, regardless of whether they have fallen into ecumenism, modernism, or even papism. Because he taught that until an Ecumenical Council, assembled from all Orthodox groups, be they heretics or schismatics,

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declares the churches of world Orthodoxy invalid, he considers these organizations to be part of the Church.

This convoluted ecclesiology denies the existence of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and puts one in communion with heresy. Therefore, Cyprianism/Cyprianism is rightly called cryptoecumenism. Therefore, the Cyprianites are heretics and schismatics.

The heresy of ecumenism This is an anti-Christian doctrine, which states that “all religions worship a single “creator god” and all believers in “god”, regardless of their membership in a particular religion or jurisdiction, can be saved (have communion with God in everything). In particular, in Christianity, the heresy of ecumenism is affirmed in the “theory of the branches of a single divided Church”, the recognition of the grace of heretical mysteries/sacraments, joint prayers and services, and allows salvation of the heretics.

The purpose of ecumenism- the unification of followers of all religions into one "universal family", overcoming

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the "wrong" division for the sake of "peace and unification". In many ways, ecumenism reflects the views of the heresy of millenarianism, is part of the imposed anti-Christian current of the new age; the heresy of ecumenism is a spiritual type of globalism, the result of which is the establishment of the "kingdom of the beast" - the Antichrist and the final spiritual death of humanity.

The heresy of ecumenism originated at the beginning of the 20th century in a Protestant environment, one of the prominent representatives of the ecumenical movement being the Freemason J. Mott . Under the guise of "dialogues" with the heterodox, ecumenism penetrated the orthodox milieu. In Catholicism, the ecumenical movement intensified after the Second Vatican Council of 1962-1965.

We must confess that an essential boost to the creation of the ecumenical movement has also been given by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, especially with the message of 1920, where, as it was demonstrated, it constituted the base and the Map of

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the participation of the orthodox in the movement. ecumenical.

This message was something that was known for the first time in the Church, because for the first time an official orthodox text qualified all the heterodox Communities of the West as "churches", "as relatives and relatives in Christ and also co-heirs and of the same body of God's promise." Thus he repealed Orthodox ecclesiology . And not to refer to ancient times, it is enough to remind us a few years before (1895) the same Patriarchate, in a circular put popery out of the Church, because it introduced heretical and novel teachings. That is why he called on Western Christians to return to the bosom of the one Church, that is, to Orthodoxy.

Some ancient heresies.

Docetism (from the Koiné Greek δοκεῖν / δόκησις , dokeĩn "to appear, appear", dókēsis "appearance, ghost"), in the history of Christianity, designates a set of heterodox Christological tendencies present in the first centuries of Christianity regarding the true nature

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of Jesus Christ, his historical and bodily existence, and above all his human form, which was a simple appearance without any carnal nature. It is generally taken to mean the belief that the sufferings and humanity of Jesus Christ were apparent and not real, his human form a mere illusion.

Gnosticism (from ancient Greek: γνωστικός gnōstikós , "to have knowledge") is a set of ancient religious ideas and systems that originated in the 1st century among ancient Jewish and Christian sects. These various groups emphasized spiritual knowledge (gnosis) over Orthodox teachings and traditions and the authority of the church. Viewing material existence as flawed and malevolent, Gnostic cosmogony generally draws a distinction between a hidden, supreme God, and a malevolent, lesser deity (sometimes associated with Yahveh (Jehovah) in the Old Testament) who is responsible for creating the universe. material.³ The Gnostics considered that the main element of salvation was the direct knowledge of the supreme divinity in the form of mystical or esoteric intuitions. Many Gnostic

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texts discuss not the concepts of sin and repentance, but those of illusion and enlightenment.

Manichaeism is the name given to the universalist religion founded by the Persian sage Mani , who claimed to be the last of the prophets sent by God to humanity, following Zoroaster, Buddha and Jesus.

Manichaeism is conceived from its origins as the definitive faith, since it intends to complete and invalidate all the others. By competing in this sense with other religions, such as Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Gnostic Christianity and Islam, numerous phenomena of doctrinal fusion were derived from their contacts with them.

Patripassianism (from the Latin pater , patris , father, and passus , to suffer) was a monarchian Christian doctrine of the 2nd and 3rd centuries that denied the dogma of the Trinity by considering it as three manifestations of a single divine being, maintaining that it was God the Father himself who had come to Earth and suffered on the cross in the guise of the Son.

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This doctrine, considered heretical after being condemned in 261 by the Council of Alexandria, is also known as Sabellianism as its main defender is Bishop Sabellius .

Arianism (Greek: Ἀρειανισμός, Areianismós) is a Christological doctrine attributed to the Alexandrian priest Arius (4th century). Arianism held that Jesus is not properly God, but the first creature created by the Father, which did not enjoy divinity, and was used for the creation of the world. With this, Arianism postulated the existence of God alone, and that of a single principle, the Father. On the other hand, the Word could not be linked to God-Father since it is not consubstantial with the Father, nor the Three Divine Persons, and therefore differences arise between them. In principle, this heresy was supported, and the doctrines were spread throughout the Roman Empire, North Africa, Palestine, Asia Minor, Syria. Despite the fact that Arianism was considered heresy, condemned at the First Council of Nicaea (325), and declared heretical at the First Council of Constantinople (381), it remained a religion in some Germanic towns until the

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reign of Reccared I, who established Catholicism as the official religion of his kingdom. This heresy is absolutely contrary to what constitutes one of the pillars of faith and that is Theosis .

An extreme form of this doctrine is that of Eunomius , who held the total dissimilarity between the Son and the Father.

Apollinarianism is a doctrine that takes its name from Apollinaris the Younger, bishop of Laodicea , who in the fourth century denied the human nature of Jesus Christ.

This doctrine, considered heretical by Christian orthodoxy and arose as a reaction against Arianism, affirmed that in Christ the spirit or intellect was not human but divine when incarnated in a body without a rational soul that was replaced by the Word itself. With this budget, the human nature of the Redeemer was mutilated, since, by denying him a human mind, his figure was reduced to a kind of puppet manipulated by God.

NESTORIANISM OR DIPHYSITISM (FROM THE GREEK δύς , DYS

, 'two', and φύσις , physis, 'nature') is a religious doctrine within Christianity that considers Christ radically separated into two natures, one human and one divine, both complete with in such a way that they make up two independent entities, two persons united in Christ, who is God and man at the same time, but made up of two different persons (prosopōn).

Pelagianism is a Christian theological position exposed between the 4th and 5th centuries and which was considered heretical by the Council of Carthage in 418.

He held that original sin did not stain human nature and that human beings, by divine grace, have free will to achieve human perfection. Pelagius, an ascetic and philosopher from the British Isles, taught that God could not command believers to do the impossible, and therefore it must be possible to fulfill all of God's

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commandments. He also taught that it was unfair to punish one person for the sins of another; therefore, in his opinion, children should be born without guilt. Pelagius accepted no excuse for sinful behavior and taught that all Christians, regardless of their station in life, should lead blameless and sinless lives.

Monothelismo was a religious doctrine of the seventh century that admitted in Christ two natures, human and divine, and a single will. Monothelitism tried to be a compromise solution between Trinitarian Christianity and Monophysitism.

Preached by Patriarch Sergio of Constantinople, he was condemned at the third council of that city, held between 680 and 681, in which the Catholic doctrine of the two wills was established.

Iconoclast or Iconoclasm (Greek: Εἰκονοκλάσμος [Eikonoklasmos], “Rupture of Images) is a rejection of religious images (paintings, icons, statues). It is also the name of the heresy that disturbed the peace of the Eastern Church in the eighth and ninth centuries, causing the last of many breaches with Rome that

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paved the way for the Photian schism. An example of iconoclasm was the Byzantine tradition, especially Leo III (the most weighty legislative reform carried out by Leo was related to religious issues: specifically iconoclasm. After an apparently successful attempt to force the baptism of all the Jews and Montanists of the Empire (722), León decreed a series of edicts against the cult of images that was called the "iconoclastic reform" or "iconoclastic reform" (726-729)), which ordered the destruction of all representations of Jesus, the Virgin Mary and, especially, the saints (Leo III the Isaurus (Greek: Λέων Γ' ὁ Ἰσαυρός [Leōn III ho Isauros]; c. 680–June 18, 741), also known as the Syrian, was Byzantine Emperor from 717 until his death).

Catharism is the doctrine of the Cathars (or Albigensians), a Christian religious movement of a Gnostic nature that spread through Western Europe in the mid-11th century and managed to take root around the 12th century¹ among the inhabitants of southern France, especially in Languedoc. , where it had the protection of some vassal feudal lords of the Crown of Aragon.

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Influenced by Manichaeism in its Paulician and Bogomil stages, Catharism affirmed a creative duality (God and Satan) and preached salvation through asceticism and strict rejection of the material world, perceived by the Cathars as demonic work.

There are many heresies to which the Holy Church has been and is exposed, I have tried here to expose the ones that I consider most relevant.

The Theosis or Theosis .

Theosis, theosis (in ancient Greek: θεώσις), deification, is a transformative process *whose* purpose is the likeness or union with God, as taught in the Orthodox Church. As a process of transformation, theosis is produced by the effects of catharsis (purification of mind and body) and theoria (contemplation, or 'illumination' with the 'vision' of God). According to Eastern Christian teachings, theosis is the purpose of human life. It is considered achievable only through the synergy (or cooperation) of human activity and the uncreated energies (or operations) of God.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

Apostolic succession is the succession of bishops, in unbroken lines, going back historically to the original twelve apostles. It can be understood as the authorization given by Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Holy Apostles to work in His Holy Name and that they, in turn, were leaving as a legacy to the Holy Church.

Foundation of the Apostolic Succession.

We can find more clearly in the Bible where it shows the apostolic succession in Acts 1, 15-26. In verses 15-19 Peter explains the death of Judas and in verse 20 he says " *For I tell you, unless your righteousness abounds more than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.* » ". In verse 21-23 Peter is explaining what requirements a person must have to take the place of Judas and in the final verses Acts 1, 24-26 is read " *And praying they said: «You, Lord, knower of all, declare to who have you chosen of these two: one, ²⁵ to take the place of this ministry and apostolate, from which Judas strayed to go to the place, to his own.»* 26 *And they gave lots to them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he elected numbered was with the*

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eleven apostles ." So very clearly we see that the apostles had ministries that were to be succeeded. Saint Paul instructs Timothy on apostolic succession in 2 Timothy 2, 2 " *and what you have heard from me, by many witnesses, this commends to faithful men, the that they must be suitable to teach others also ."* So in this last verse we have 4 generations of apostolic succession. Beginning with Paul to Timothy, from Timothy to faithful men, and from faithful men to others.

To verify the need for apostolic succession it is useful to look in the Holy Bible.

Saint John 20, 21-23 " *So Jesus said to them again: «Peace to you; just as the Father has sent me, so I send you. ²²And, saying this, he breathed(j); and said to them : «Receive Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven him; if you retain any of them, they are retained ."* the Lord gives authority to forgive sins.

Saint Matthew 16, 16-19 on confession.

Saint Matthew 18, 18 on confession.

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Saint Matthew 28, 18-20 authority to teach and baptize

Saint Luke 10, 16 *" He who hears you hears me..."* and
1 John 4, 6 *"We belong to God; he who knows God
hears us; He who is not of God does not hear us. In this
we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error "*
authority is given to speak in the name of the Lord.

Jesus gave authority to the apostles, which we can see
in Acts 15, 24-29 *" Since we have heard that some of us
have troubled you with words, ruining your souls, to
whom we have not entrusted, ²⁵it seemed to us,
unanimously agreed, chosen men to send to you, with
our beloved Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶men who have
surrendered their souls for the name of our Lord Jesus
Christ. "*

What do the holy fathers tell us?

Saint Ignatius of Antioch

It is necessary, therefore - and that is what you already
do - **that you do nothing without the bishop**, and that
you also be submissive to the presbyterate, as if it were

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to the apostles of Jesus, our hope, in which we will be found, supposedly that we live with Him... In the same way, that all respect the deacons as they would respect Jesus Christ, in the same way that they respect the bishop as an image of the Father, and the priests as the council of God and the college of the Apostles. Without these, it cannot be called a “church”. I am sure that you will understand these things, since I have received the good example of your love, and I have it with me in the person of your bishop...

Eusebius of Caesarea

Testimony of Aegesippus (ca. 180 AD.): Aegesippus , without a doubt, in the five books of Memoirs that have come down to us, has made it clear what his opinion was. In these books he shows that he traveled to Rome, and met many bishops, and that he always heard the same and unique doctrine from all of them. It is interesting to see what he says, after making some comments on Clement's letter to the Corinthians; He says: And the church in Corinth has continued in sound doctrine until the time of Primus, who is the bishop of Corinth, and with whom I have conversed at length on

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my way to Rome, when I spent a few days with those of Corinth; during these conversations we encouraged each other in the true doctrine. **When I arrived in Rome, I made a list of the succession (of bishops of Rome) up to Anicetus**, whose deacon was Eleuterios. And after Aniceto Soler succeeded him, and after him Eleuterio. **In each succession and in each city, there is a continuation** of what is proclaimed in the Law, the Prophets and the Lord.

Saint Cyprian of Carthage

The Church is one, and just as she is one, one cannot be inside and outside the Church at the same time. Because if the Church is with the doctrine of the (heretic) Novatian, then it is against the (Pope) Cornelius. But if the Church is with Cornelius, who succeeded the Bishop (of Rome) Fabian by **legitimate ordination**, and to whom the Lord, in addition to the honor of the priesthood, granted the honor of martyrdom, then Novatian is outside the Church. ; he cannot even be considered as a bishop, since he did not succeed anyone, **and disregarding the evangelical and apostolic Tradition, he arose on his own account.**

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Because we already know that **whoever was not ordained in the Church does not belong to it in any way.**

Firmilian of Caesarea, Letter to Cyprian (around the year 256)

" So the power to forgive sins was given (by Christ) to the apostles, and to the churches founded by them, and to the bishops who succeeded them by being ordained in their place (qui iis ordinatione vicaria successerunt)
".

Irenaeus of Lyons [120-180 AD] Adversus Haereses (Book IV, chapter 26)

" It corresponds to obey the priests who are in the Church, those who, as I have shown, possess the succession of the apostles; those who, together with the succession of the episcopate, have received the infallible charisma of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father But [it is also appropriate] to suspect others who deviate from the primitive succession, and gather anywhere, either as wickedminded heretics, or as puffed-up and self-

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indulgent schismatics, or else as hypocrites, acting thus for cause of profit and vainglory. For they have all fallen from the truth ."

Jerome, Letter 14:8 (year 396)

Far be it from me to speak against just one of these clerics who, belonging to the succession that comes from the apostles, make up the Body of Christ by their holy words, and by whose efforts we have become Christians.

It is through apostolic succession that the Orthodox Christian Church is the spiritual successor to the original body of believers in Christ which was made up of the Apostles. This succession is manifested through the uninterrupted succession from its bishops to the apostles.

The continuity of apostolic succession is significant because of Jesus Christ's promise that the "gates of hell" (Matthew 16:18) will not prevail against the Church, and his promise that he himself will be with the apostles until "the end of time." world". (Matthew 28:20). On this interpretation, a complete interruption

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or end of such an apostolic succession would mean that these promises were not fulfilled as would an apostolic succession which, while formally intact, completely abandons the teachings of the Apostles and their immediate successors; as, for example, if all the bishops of the world agreed to abrogate the Nicene Creed, repudiate Holy Scripture, or go over tradition by violating the Holy Canons.

A GLIMPSE OF ECCLESIOLOGY

According to Orthodox ecclesiology, the Church and Orthodoxy are identified. Without a doubt the Church is also Orthodox, it is the One Church, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, the Body of Christ. And since the Christ is One, then also the Church is One. That is why division in the Church is never understood. We only have separation from the Church. That is to say, at specific historical moments, heretics and schismatics separated from it and thus ceased to be its members.

The Church contains the fullness of the truth, but not an abstract truth, but a way of living that heals and saves man from death and makes him "God by charis

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(grace, uncreated energy)." On the contrary, heresy constitutes a total or partial denial of the truth, a division of it, and thus takes on the character and pathology of an ideology. It separates man from the form of existence that God has given to His Church and spiritually kills him.

Dogmas also contain the transcendental truths of our faith, they are not conceptions of intellectual concepts, far from it, an obscurantism of the Middle Ages or theological scholasticism. They express the life and experience of the Church. Therefore, when there is a difference in dogmas, there is undoubtedly also a difference in the way of living. And he who underestimates the accuracy of faith cannot live the fullness of life in Christ.

The Christian must accept everything that Our Lord Jesus Christ has revealed. Not a portion, but the whole. Because in the totality and integrity of the faith the catholicity-universality and orthodoxy of the Church are saved and maintained.

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This explains the struggles, even with blood, of the holy fathers for the preservation of the faith of the Church, as well as their effort, through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, for the formulation of the "terms" of the Ecumenical Synods. . These "terms" do not mean anything other than the borders, which are borders of truth, so that believers can discern the Church as Orthodoxy from heresy.

The heterodox, by denying the fullness of the truth, separated from the Church. That is why they are heretical. Therefore, they are deprived of the sanctifying jaris (grace, uncreated energy) of the Holy Spirit, and their sacraments are invalid. Well, the baptism they perform cannot introduce the Church of Christ.

Canon 68 of the Holy Apostles tells us: "...because it is not possible for those baptized and ordained by heretics to be believers or clergy." And St. Nicodemus the Aghiorite adds: "The baptism of all heretics is impious, blasphemous and has no kinoniacommunion, connection with that of the Orthodox".

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The Holy Orthodox Church is the Unity of Faith and Love (Saint Ignatius of Antioch). of all (local) Churches, which have preserved Orthodoxy, the tradition of Faith, Order, Liturgy and Devotion, as it was confessed in the beginning "everywhere, always and by all."

Even though historically its territories have been oriental, after the Great Schism, the Holy Orthodox Church emphatically rejects the idea of being a "partial" or oriental expression of the Christian faith. On the contrary, he confesses his faith, full, universal Catholic. She is the Church, One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.

The Tradition of Faith: It comes from the Divine Revelation registered in the Sacred Scripture and interpreted by the Church in the continuity of its magisterium; by their councils, Fathers, Doctors and Saints; for his liturgy and for his entire divinely inspired life. Of fundamental normative character are the normative and canonical decisions of the seven Ecumenical Councils, the local Councils, the writings of the Holy Fathers, the testimony of the liturgical and

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iconographic tradition and the universal consensus of doctrines and practices.

Orthodoxy is presented as an optimistic solution to conflicting ideologies and creeds in the 20th century. The West suffers from a series of dilemmas such as the opposition between nature and grace, works and faith, Holy Scriptures and Tradition, Clergy and Laity. , etc. Our Church does not have such dilemmas and confusions. She emphasizes a natural revelation in harmony with revealed grace, faith, and good works.

On the other hand, in contrast to the pessimism and false anxiety, widespread in some regions, Orthodoxy shows its optimism by its conception of the dignity of man, by its doctrine of the deification of human nature under God, by its belief of God's love for humanity, and of man's love for man. The Gospel of our Church is of resurrection, triumph and victory. In Orthodoxy, man is not alone.

The Christian teaching system is based on God as a supreme being of life and existence, on man as the image and likeness of God, the masterpiece of his

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creation, and on Christ, who united the divine with the human.

The Christian Doctrine is a guide and orientation for man, showing him the true path.

Christianity is a spiritual way of life, but this does not imply the denial of the body or the absolute neglect of material needs. Rather, it is about placing each element in its proper place. Material progress must be properly channeled so that good achievements can be achieved and do not lead to violence or the dehumanization of man and society. neither to its ruin nor to its spiritual misery, but rather to the progress of the human race, to a healthy and peaceful coexistence; and to the Kingdom of God. Eternity is the foundation of the values that human life requires to exist. The human being must, therefore, revive within himself the eternal values, for which it is necessary to have faith in them and above all in God.

*The meaning of BODILY and
PHYSICAL FASTING*

It can be rooted in only one thing: "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*" (Deut . 8:3; Matt. 4:4). The bread itself, from a formal and canonical perspective, is a fully appropriate food for fasting—it is not meat or a dairy product, both of which are excluded in fasting. It is clear that, in a broader sense, bread can be understood as any food. It is another matter whether the food can be fatty and tasty--clearly undesirable for fasting--or it can be frugal and plain; the bread itself undoubtedly corresponds to the latter. But when an Orthodox person puts all five senses on the permissible and sweet during fasting, indulging in all sorts of delicacies from the "Lenten menu", and at the same time even managing to gain weight, obviously something is wrong with the fast. Ascetic fasting addresses the spiritual side, which presupposes a partial overcoming of bodily needs! So that the human being, who bears the image

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and likeness of God, surpasses himself, even if it is in something small, and for a single goal: to hear and listen better to the Word of God!

The fasting period is the most appropriate to try to overcome various types of dependencies, and not only in terms of some types of food. If someone feels within himself not one, but several different hobbies, make the maximum effort possible to overcome what worries him the most! Because as the proverb says, “if you chase two hares, you won't catch any”.

What does "fasting" mean? On the external plane, fasting involves a physical abstinence from food and drink: without this external abstinence, the fast is not preserved: however, these rules of eating and drinking cannot be understood as an end in themselves because fasting ascetic always has a more relevant inner purpose. Man is the union of a body and a soul, “a living creature made up of visible and invisible natures”, as the book of the Triodion describes it, and our fast must involve both natures. The tendency to emphasize external rules about food in a legalistic way, and the opposing tendency to make sense of those rules and

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call them unnecessary, are deplorable when one is looking for a true orthodox meaning of fasting. In both cases the proper balance of both fasts is necessary.

The first objective of fasting is to make us aware of our dependence on God. If we are serious about it, abstinence from food during Lent, especially the first few days, means a considerable measure of real hunger in addition to a feeling of tiredness. The purpose of this is to bring us to the inner sense of contrition, that is, to bring us to the point where Christ's words come true "without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). By constantly eating and drinking, we easily trust our abilities and acquire a false sense of autonomy and selfsufficiency. The observance of a physical fast touches this complacency that is being created in our lives. The inner meaning of fasting is best summed up in the triple practice of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Divorced from prayer and from the reception of the Holy Sacraments and without acts of compassion, our fasting becomes self-righteous or even demonic. This type of fasting does not lead us to contrition or joy but to pride, internal tensions and irritability. Fasting is

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worthless and can even be counterproductive when not combined with prayer. In the Gospel, the devil is driven out not only by fasting but by " *prayer and fasting* " (Mt 17:21). The first Christians, the Acts of the Apostles tell us, " *fasted and prayed* ". In both the Old and New Testaments, fasting is seen not as an end in itself but as an aid to a more intense and lively prayer. Fasting is always seen as preparation for a decisive act or for a direct encounter with God. In the same way that our Lord fasted for forty days in the desert as a preparation for the beginning of his public ministry. " *Then Jesus was led into the desert by the spirit to be tempted by the devil. 2 And having fasted forty days and forty nights, at the last he was hungry. 3 And approaching the tempter, he said to him: "If you are a son of God, say that the stones make these breads." from the mouth of God."* 5 Then the devil took him with him to the holy city, and put him on the eaves of the sanctuary 6 and said to him: «If you are a son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written that he will command his angels over you and in their hands they will carry you lest you bruise your foot with a stone.» 7 Jesus said to him: "Again, it is written: "You shall not

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tempt the Lord your God." 8 Again the devil take him with him to a great high mountain and show him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, 9 and say to him: "This I will give you everything, if you prostrate yourself and worship me."

10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go away, Satan, for it is written: The Lord your God you shall worship and him only you shall serve." 11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came near and ministered to him ." (Mt 4:1-11), we also fast like this. The mission in the Orthodox Church was inseparable from the life of those who preached, for example, throughout the Christian East, monastic communities were agents of evangelization. This applies to the early Christian missions, still in the 4th and 5th century in Ethiopia, to the Byzantine missions of the 8th and 9th century, and to many of the Russian missions in later periods. Their success was not the work of well-paid missions on a contract basis, preaching something and then going home, but men who loved God and the people they wanted to teach their faith to. This testimony of brotherly love is the true solution for our day and age

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in which we constantly see the failure of organized "professional" Christianity.

Precisely because the mission is inseparable from life, it is also inseparable from the progress of theological thought, of Christian thought and of life. The missionary, the theologian, the Christian must then understand what the Holy Fathers taught in relation to the fact that the Lord himself can proclaim the Good News in a way that is clear to the people of the whole world, in his own time.

Finally, a fundamental aspect of how the Orthodox Church understands mission was expressed by the great Russian saint Saint Seraphim of Sarov: "Save yourself and thousands around you will be saved." I think that, to a certain degree, personally, the experience of coming closer to the knowledge of God, to the Christian faith, is the key to a Christian approach to mission.

Paradise and Hell.

The general teaching of the holy fathers of the Church is that heaven and hell do not exist according to God,

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but according to man. It is true that both heaven and hell meet as a way of life, but it is not God who made them. It is very clear in the patristic tradition that there are two ways, but God himself is heaven for saints, and he himself is hell for sinners.

This is closely related to the teachings of the fathers on the reconciliation of man with God. Nowhere in the Bible does it speak of God's reconciliation with man, rather it mentions that Christ reconciled man with God. Likewise, the entire patristic tradition shows that God was never against man, but on the contrary, man turned against God for not participating with Him or being in communion with Him. This is how man makes God his enemy , but God never makes man his enemy. Man, through the commission of his sins, sees God with an image of anger and enmity.

Saint Isaac the Syrian , who talks about what is paradise, and what is hell. When he refers to Paradise, he says that he is the love of God; and it is normal that when we talk about love, we refer mainly to the uncreated forces of God. He writes: "Paradise is the love of God, where there is the enjoyment of all

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blessings." But also when he mentions hell, he says more or less the same thing; that hell is the scourge of love and writes: "I also assure that those who are punished in hell are whipping themselves with the whip of love; Well, is there more bitterness or more sorrow than what the pain of love gives?"

Hell then is the torment of God's love. Furthermore, according to what Saint Isaac says, the pain that occurs in the heart due to sin against the love of God "is more serious than any fear of punishment." It is a true punishment when we reject and oppose each other's love. It's horrible to be loved while acting inappropriately. By comparing that to the love of God, we can understand the torment of hell. This is also related to what St. Isaac says, that it is a painful thing for a person to think that "sinners in hell are separated from the love of God."

According to the interpretation of Theophylact of Bulgaria, this is related to the nature of man and not to the handiwork of God. Saint Theophylact says : "Just as the sun softens the wax, but hardens the clay, not out of preference, but because of the difference between

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wax and clay. So also God mentions that He hardened Pharaoh's heart of clay." Then the grace of God, which is his love, which is going to shine on everyone, is going to work according to the spiritual condition of man.

Saint Basil the Great agrees with this opinion. For he explains the words of the psalm: “ φωνή Κυρίου δι ἀκόπτοντος φλόγ α π υρός ” “The voice of the Lord divides, cuts down flames of fire” (Psalm 29:7), and says that this miracle occurred with the three young men in the fiery furnace. In this case, the fire was divided in two, since it was burning for those who were outside, and it was cool for the three young people as if they were in the shade of a tree. Saint Basil notes that the fire, which was designed by God for the devil and his angels, "is cut off by the voice of God." Fire has two forces: the one that burns and the one that illuminates, and this is what makes the fire burn and give light. Those who deserve the fire, feel for their nature that it burns, and those who are worthy of the light, enjoy for its illuminating nature. This is how Saint Basil ends his explanation saying in a very expressive way: “The voice of the Lord divides and cuts flames of fire, and in this

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cut and division, the fire of hell is left without light, and the light of peace continues without being burning."

Paradise and hell are not two different places. This appreciation is idolatrous. They are two situations or ways that arise from the same uncreated source and are lived as two different experiences. Or rather, it is the same experience lived differently by man, according to his interior conditions. This experience is the vision, expectation of Christ in the uncreated light, within in His uncreated glory. From the Second Coming and throughout endless eternity, all men will be seeing Christ in His uncreated light. And then "*and those who have done good will come out, to the resurrection of life; those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment*" (Jn 5,29). Before the Christ men separate, "«And when the Son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him; then he will sit on the throne of his glory; ³²and all the nations will be assembled before him; and he will separate them one from another, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; ³³and he will put the sheep on his right; the kids, to the left." (Matthew 25:31-33).

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Based on all of the above, it is good to offer a small definition of what the Holy Orthodox Church is. It is the correct doctrine, contained in Holy Scripture without adding or subtracting anything, in Tradition and in the 7 Ecumenical Councils. It is the doctrine taught and preached by the Orthodox Church to glorify God and save souls, according to the will of Christ. It is Orthodox who follows the doctrine of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Orthodox Church. More exactly, the one who follows the correct doctrine of Jesus Christ.

The sources from which we extract our Orthodox faith are two: Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition. The revelation made by God to man about what he must believe and practice to please God and achieve his eternal salvation can only be found in these two sources. The only one that interprets and teaches this revelation is the Church, as it was established by Our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is a sure proof that we are in the truth, since Jesus Christ promised his assistance to his apostles and his Church. The Bible is the word of

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God, revealed to man through the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and found written in it.

The sin

Orthodoxy's approach to sin and how to deal with it eschews the perception of Western "legalism." Strictly following the rules without this being a heart motivation does not help the believer in his salvation. Sin is not fundamentally about transgressing a divine law; rather, it is a label attached to any behavior that "misses the north," that is, fails to meet the higher goal of conforming to God's nature.

Therefore, in the Orthodox tradition sin is not seen as a reprehensible stain on the soul that must be removed, but rather as a pervasive disease or failure to achieve the goal of truly human life, fulfilling our divine design and function as creation in the image of God. Sin, therefore, does not merely imply the guilt of disobeying a commandment, but rather the impetus to become something other than what we really are. Because each person's experience is unique, conquering sinful habits requires individual attention

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and correction. The ultimate goal of this salvific process is to become divinized, to reflect the Divine likeness by becoming Christlike in both behavior and thought.

A traditional practice of Orthodoxy is, as in other Apostolic Churches, to have a spiritual director and guide to whom one confesses and who deals with sin on an individual basis. An experienced and spiritually mature spiritual director (geronta (Greek), starets (Russian)) will know how and when to apply rigor in dealing with sin and when to administer mercy. It is this director who directs our steps through daily life, obedience being the great task of the “spiritual children”.

Confession is the expression of the penance carried out beforehand in the soul. The man repents in the depths of his being, and this stimulates him towards full confession. Saint John the Evangelist says: «If we say: “In the same way, in truth, these also, dreaming, flesh certainly stain, sovereignty, however, they reject; glories, however, they blaspheme; 9 when Michael, the archangel, with the devil contending, disputed over the

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body of Moses; He did not dare to file a lawsuit of blasphemy, but said: "Increpete, Lord." (1Jn 1: 8-9).

In the early Church, confession was practiced before the entire assembly; but, later and for reasons of a pastoral nature, from an order of the patriarch of Constantinople Nectario, the community practice of confession was diminished in said city, and gradually in the other patriarchates; and it was definitively concluded that the confession of sins should be made before the priest individually, because the priest, in addition to hearing the Confession, guides and instructs in a way that makes the confession a renewal or prolongation of holy Baptism. . «I dare to say that the spring of tears that arises after Baptism is even more important than Baptism: we, who received Baptism from infants, return to taint it; however, through tears we return it to its original purity”, says Saint John Climacus.

Confession should not be viewed from the perspective of punishment and justification, but rather as relief and healing. Man alone is incapable of achieving salvation

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(justification) through his own effort – call it "confession" or any other name -, so penance will never be a means of expiation but rather a medicine, and confession a surgical operation that seeks to lead the sick to full healing. It is about, then, positive and not negative attitudes: not about breaking down the wall that separates the sinner from God, but about building a bridge that communicates him with Him.

What is the foundation of the Orthodox faith ?

We have a compendium of our Orthodox Faith in the Constantinopolitan Nicene Creed, from the year 381, where our main beliefs are listed. We also find a magnificent compendium of all our Orthodox Theology in the Holy and Divine Liturgy, which is sung in the language of the people and which has served as the best preaching throughout the centuries.

- ✝ I believe in one God, Almighty Father, Creator of heaven and earth, of everything visible and invisible.
- ✝ I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, born of the Father before all centuries:

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- ✠ God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not created, of the same nature as the Father, by whom everything was made;
- ✠ who came down from heaven for us men and for our salvation,
- ✠ and by the work of the Holy Spirit he was incarnated of the Virgin Mary, and became man;
- ✠ and for our cause he was crucified in the time of Pontius Pilate; suffered and was buried,
- ✠ and he rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
- ✠ and he will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.
- ✠ And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and Lifegiver who proceeds from the Father and who with the Father and the Son is jointly adored and glorified, who spoke through the prophets

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- ✝ I believe in the Church, which is one, holy, catholic and apostolic.
- ✝ I confess that there is only one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
- ✝ I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the future world.

Amen.

In these twelve points our faith is summarized, the teachings that are contained in it arise from the Revelation, that is, the manifestation of an unknown truth. Revelation is the illumination of understanding. Revelation has three phases or manifestations that form three degrees of supernatural revelation: 1) primitive revelation: it is the revelation made by God to the first parents and patriarchs and which was transmitted by tradition to their descendants. Also called patriarchal. Later, Moses recorded it in writing in the Pentateuch; 2) the Mosaic revelation: it is the revelation made to the Israelite people through Moses and other prophets. It lasted until the promulgation of Christianity; 3) Christian revelation: it is the revelation made by God to men through the ministry of Jesus

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Christ.

The divine revelation among men spread in two ways: 1) by oral transmission from father to son, known as Sacred Tradition; 2) By the Sacred Scripture that receives the name of the Bible. By the Sacred Tradition we must understand everything that, regarding the true faith, the mysteries, etc., our ancestors transmitted to their children; These, in turn, told those truths to their descendants and so it continued, reaching this way to the present day. All true believers, united by the Sacred Tradition of the Faith, in perfect union and inheritance, in accordance with the Divine Laws, form the Holy Church, which is precisely the eternal conservator of the treasure of the Sacred Tradition: "*and, if I delay, so that you may know how to converse in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth*" (1 Tim. 3:15). Saint Irenaeus says: "Truth should not be sought in other means, since it is so easy to find it within the Church. For, like a very rich treasure box, the Apostles had deposited in all its fullness everything that belongs

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to the Truth; anyone who desires it can obtain the Water of Life" (Treatise Against Heresies — Book 3:c. 4).

The oldest means of spreading the Divine Revelation was the Sacred Tradition. From the time of the first man, Adam, until Moses, there was no Holy Scripture. The Savior himself, Our Lord Jesus Christ, transmitted his divine teachings to the Apostles through words and examples and not through books. The Holy Apostles proceeded in the same way in the beginning, who disclosed the Truths verbally, thus building the foundations of the Holy Church. The need for the existence of Sacred Tradition is evident, since a much larger number of people can benefit from it than from Sacred Scripture, since not everyone knows how to benefit from it.

The first and fundamental truth of Christianity is the existence of a single eternal and infinite God, creator of everything that exists: the angels, the world and men. It is the uncreated and first cause of all things. God is one in essence, plus Triune in person. In God there are three divine persons, different in terms of persons, but who have the same essence or nature: Father-Son-Holy

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Spirit. Its explanation is an unfathomable mystery to human reason, but this mystery is not in opposition to reason itself. The Son, the second person, is born of the Father, and also from him proceeds the Holy Spirit, plus each one is God. God created man in the Terrestrial Paradise, totally happy, composed of a mortal and material body, and a spiritual and immortal soul. Every human soul is created directly by God.

The drama of sin, described in the first chapters of Genesis and interpreted by Saint Paul and by the Fathers of the ancient Church, provides the solution to the enigma of Pain and Death, just as it is found in man, yesterday as today. Adam and Eve have sinned and this sin has brought their death, as well as the death of all their descendants. The Fathers of the East, who read Saint Paul in the original Greek, have never tried to prove the responsibility of Adam's descendants for the sin of their ancestors: they only state that all men have inherited, by inheritance, corruption and death and that they all committed sin. They interpreted this de facto state, inherited from Adam, as a slavery to the Devil who, after the absence of Adam and Eve,

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exercises a usurped, unjust and merciless tyranny over humanity. God, on the contrary, throughout the history of Israel sought to direct men towards salvation, progressively preparing them to freely and consciously receive the Messiah, Liberator. After the "fullness of time," this Messiah, the very Word of God, became incarnate of the Virgin Mary and of the Holy Spirit-out then of Adam's corrupt inheritance-has defeated the Devil on the Cross, has risen to the third day and has restored the human race to life.

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, God as the Father and the Son, in whom is the sanctification of souls through his 7 gifts: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Strength, Knowledge, Mercy and Fear of God. (Holiness). "And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and Lifegiver who proceeds from the Father and who with the Father and the Son is jointly adored and glorified, who spoke through the prophets" (Creed). The Holy Spirit manifested itself visibly in the form of a dove at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River and on the day of Pentecost in the form of tongues of fire over the Apostles. The Holy Spirit will remain with the

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Church to guide and assist her on the path of truth and holiness.

The Life-giving God, the Holy Spirit, and his origin from the Father, is manifested in the Church and in souls through his seven gifts. To Him is due all the work of Sanctification of souls, and without which there is no possible sanctification.

Jesus Christ, son of God, true God and true man, as God consubstantial with the Father and with the Holy Spirit, neither made nor created, begotten from all eternity, proceeds from the Father as the eternal Word. Eternal and equal to the Father, eternal and equal to the Holy Spirit, eternal and equal in essence, different in person, born as a man in space, in time and in a determined place, by the work and grace of the Holy Spirit in the bosom of a Virgin Mary, without the work of any man. Identical in essence to the Father and Holy Spirit distinct in person, God at the same time as Man, infinite and finite, eternal and temporal, immortal and mortal, all in one person.

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The greatest proof of the divinity of Christ and of the truth of his Doctrine and of his Church, is constituted by his Resurrection from the dead on the third day. It is widely attested and proven in the Holy Gospels. After his Resurrection he was seen by the Apostles, disciples and by many people. 40 days after his Resurrection, he ascended to heaven by his own virtue in body and soul, from where he will come in glorious form to judge the living and the dead at the end of the world. Saint Paul tells us: "Vain is our faith if Christ has not risen."

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Orthodoxy proclaims that the Father is the eternal source of the Godhead, from whom the Son is eternally begotten, and also from whom the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds. Unlike the misnamed Roman (Papist) Catholic Church and Western Christianity in general, the Orthodox Church does not adopt the use of the Filioque ("and the Son") in describing the procession of the Holy Spirit. The Filioque was mentioned for the first time at the III Council of Toledo in 589 and was added by the Catholic Church to the Creed in the 11th century. It is believed that the Holy Spirit proceeds eternally

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from the Father, as Christ says in John 15:26 " *But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will testify from my.* ", and not of the Father and the Son, as the Catholic and Protestant Churches affirm.

SOMETHING ABOUT PATRISTICS

Orthodoxy interprets the truth based on three witnesses: the consensus of the holy fathers of the Church; the continuous teaching of the Holy Spirit who guides the life of the Church through the nous, or mind of the Church (also called the "Universal Conscience of the Church"); and the praxis of the church (including, among other things, asceticism, liturgy, hymnography, and iconography).

Some of the greatest theologians in church history come from the fourth century, including the Cappadocian Fathers and the Three Holy Hierarchs. However, we Orthodox do not consider the "patristic era" to be a thing of the past, but continues in an unbroken succession of enlightened teachers (the

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saints, especially those who have left us theological writings) from the Apostles to the present day.

HOLY WRITINGS

Many modern Christians regard the Bible and its interpretation as the sole authority for establishing their beliefs about the world and its salvation. From the Orthodox point of view, the Bible represents those texts approved by the church with the purpose of transmitting the most important parts of what was already believed. The Church more or less accepted the pre-existing Greek Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures handed down to them by the Jews; but the texts of the New Testament were written for already existing members or congregations of the Church. These texts were not universally considered canonical until revised, edited, accepted, and ratified by the church in 368.

The Greeks, who had a highly sophisticated and philosophical language, always understood that certain sections of Scripture, while containing complex truths and moral lessons, do not necessarily have to be

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interpreted literally. The orthodox also understand that a particular passage can be interpreted on many different levels simultaneously. However, interpretation is not a matter of personal opinion (2 Peter 1:20). For this reason, we depend on the consensus of the Holy Fathers to provide reliable guidance for the accurate interpretation of Scripture.

Our Orthodox Church is a strongly biblical church. Much of the Divine Office is made up of direct portions of Scripture (Psalms, readings) or allusions to passages or themes of Scripture (hymnography such as that contained in the Octoechos, Triodion, Pentecostarion, etc.). The entire Psalter is read in over the course of a week (twice during Great Lent). The entire New Testament (with the exception of the Book of Revelation) is read during the course of the year, and numerous Old Testament passages are read at Vespers and other services.

The Gospel is considered an icon of Christ, and is placed in a position of honor on the Holy Table (altar). The Gospel Book is traditionally not covered in leather (the skin of a dead animal) because the Word of God is

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considered life-giving. Traditionally the Gospel is covered in gold or cloth.

OUR BELOVED MOTHER OF GOD AND OUR

Theotokos (Ancient Greek: Θεοτόκος) is a Greek word meaning Mother of God (literally, 'she who gave birth to one who was God'). Theotokos is the title given to Mary by the early Christian Church in reference to her divine motherhood, a title that was dogmatically defined at the Council of Ephesus in 431.

The Council of Ephesus was held between June 22 and July 16, 431, in Ephesus, an ancient Greek port, in present-day Turkey, and is considered the third of the first seven ecumenical councils.

The main text of the Council's decision is as follows:

“Well, we are not saying that the nature of the Verb, transformed, became flesh; but neither that it was transmuted into the entire man, composed of soul and body; but, rather, that having united with himself the Word, according to hypostasis or person, the animated

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flesh of a rational soul, he became man in an ineffable and incomprehensible way and was called the son of man, not by will or pleasure alone, but neither by the assumption of the person alone, and that the natures that come together in true unity are different, but that from both results a single Christ and Son; not as if the difference of natures were destroyed by the union, but rather because divinity and humanity constitute for us one single Lord and Christ and Son by the ineffable and mysterious concurrence in unity... Because there was not first born a vulgar man, of the Holy Virgin, and then the Word descended upon Him; but, united from the maternal womb, it is said that he submitted to a carnal birth, as one who makes the birth of his own flesh his own... "In this way [the Holy Fathers] had no objection to calling the mother of God the Holy Virgin.

The Solemnity of Saint Mary, Mother of God (Theotokos) began in the Eastern Churches around the year 500.

The Virgin is also called Panagia, the "All Holy," indicating her closeness to God through her obedience.

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The deeper understanding of the mystery of the Theotokos deepens the understanding of the mystery of Christ, of the Church, and of the vocation of humanity. With regard to Mary, everything is relative to Christ; only in the mystery of Christ is his mystery totally clear. Instead, it can generally be said that knowing Mary illuminates our appreciation of the mystery of Christ and of the Church.

The paucity of theological reflection may seem to some to be a deficiency in Byzantine theology. How can the Byzantine Church, which never prays to God or Jesus Christ, without, at the same time, directing its prayers to Mary, and whom it constantly glorifies as "...more honorable than the cherubs and incomparably more glorious than the seraphim...", neglecting the theological work regarding it?

In the Byzantine mind, this apparent absence of theological study and reflection is seen as an integral part of the "mystery of Mary" in the experience of the Church. Byzantine scholars question whether theology as a rational investigation of the truths of faith is

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adequate to transpose into precise terms the real content of such a mystery. Perhaps the proper place of Mariology is in the liturgy and prayer, that is, in worship.

In Eastern Christianity, worship and liturgy are paramount. The liturgy is not seen as a community action. She is the procession or entrance into the eschatological reality of the Kingdom of God. It is the meeting place between this world and the fully realized Kingdom of God. The cult is not the commemoration of a past event; it is the participation in the same events of salvation, because, although these occurred historically, they also take place beyond the category of time.

In the Byzantine liturgy we find four main Mariological expressions: Marian liturgical prayers, Marian feasts, Marian iconography, and paraliturgical Marian piety.

Each cycle of prayers concludes with a special prayer addressed to Mary. For example, the group of hymns called *stijiras* , in the structure of the daily offices, always conclude with the *theotoky* , which follows the

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doxology: "Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever." of the centuries". This rule applies to all sets of liturgical prayers: daily, weekly, and the annual cycle, and also to the saintly cycle. Whatever the theme of the liturgical celebration, the seal and the last word will be for our beloved Theotokos.

Monasticism.

To be a monk is to live the path that the Lord made, it is to go up to Calvary every minute, every second of every day. It is to offer everything that is lived for the souls of those who do not know the path of salvation and who live "enjoying a life" that only leads them to perdition. It is to suffer with joy and cry with a contrite soul for one's own sins and for those of those who chose to follow the path of pleasure and do not know God and His Love. Being a monk is living in total surrender, it is living the Our Father and feel the pain of the world

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Being a monk is fasting with the joy of offering God that small sacrifice for a humanity lost in the false gods that the devil gives them.

To be a monk, is to live dying sure that the resurrection is the great prize, which awaits the chosen ones, to look death in the eye, because it is our friend.

To be a monk is to live in the fear of God, it is to know that we are sinful garbage and that if we do not repent every moment when the end comes we will be thrown into eternal fire.

Being a monk is living for, by and with Christ, embracing His Holy Cross and sure that only the denial of ourselves will lead us to humility and humility is the first step on the ladder to the Kingdom.

Being a monk is the greatest gift that the Lord can give us.

One of the great treasures of the Orthodox Church is monasticism. Though born in Egypt, it soon took root in Byzantine Christian communities, so that many of

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the Byzantine monasteries arose in the early centuries, especially in Palestine and Asia Minor.

Orthodox monasticism is based on the ancient rules of Saint Pachomius and Saint Basil. To this fundamental and basic scheme is added the founding charter of each monastery. This founding letter describes the uses and customs of each monastic nucleus.

The orthodox monk respects very strict hours of prayer, liturgical celebrations and work without stopping charity and helping others in most cases, but completely devoted to chastity, poverty and obedience. In some cases there is a stricter regime of visits, although not completely closed, as for example in the monasteries of Mount Athos. Individually, each monk or nun can also choose to withdraw completely from the common life of the monastery as a hermit, in prayer, fasting and penance, but always under the custody of the abbot and his confessor.

For the rest, each one has their tasks and obligations in the life of the monastery, doing various jobs for common subsistence.

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The clothing is black, symbolizing his death for this world and meat is missing from the recipe book of many monasteries, although generosity and hospitality are not lacking for anyone who visits them.

Art is in orthodox monasticism the exclusive work of monks and nuns. Generally very populated even today, the monasteries were always a strong nucleus and workshop for writing, painting or embroidery, in the same way that they housed theological seminaries, schools for boys or girls and residences for the sick and/or for the elderly.

Orthodox monasticism has, and has always had, a single monastic body, according to the spirit of the rules of Saint Basil. Unlike Western monasticism where there are various monastic orders, in Eastern monasticism there is unity, although there are multiple dedications between monks and monasteries, according to the peculiar circumstances of each monastery.

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The degrees of monasticism in the Holy Orthodox Church refer to the stages through which an Orthodox monk or nun passes in their religious vocation.

Unlike Western Christianity, in which different religious orders and societies arose, each with their own profession rites, the Orthodox Church has only one type of monasticism. The profession of monastics is known as tonsure (referring to the ritual cutting of the monastic's hair that takes place during the rite) which, at one time, was considered a Sacred Mystery (sacrament). The Rite of the Tonsure appears in print in the Eucologio (Church Slavonic: Trebnik), as do the other Sacred Mysteries and rites performed as needed, such as funerals, blessings, and exorcisms.

Those who wish to join a monastery begin their lives as novices or novices (Greek: δόκιμος , dókimos , lit. "one under obedience"). Once the candidate or candidate arrives at the monastery and lives as a guest for no less than three days, the abbot or abbess can bless the candidate to become a novice. There is no formal ceremony for the clothing of a novice or novice; they simply receive permission to wear the robes of a

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novice. In the Eastern monastic tradition, novices may or may not wear a black undershirt.

If the novice continues on the path to becoming a monk or nun, he is clothed in the first degree of monasticism in a rite in which he receives the tonsure and is called a Rasophorus (Greek: ῥασοφόρος , rasoforos ; lit. "the one who wears a tunic or cassock"). Although no formal vows are taken at this point, the candidate is normally required to affirm his or her commitment to persevere in monastic life. The abbot performs the tonsure, cutting a small amount of hair from four points on the head, forming a cross. The novices receive the outer cassock.

The next level for Eastern monks takes place some years after the first tonsure, when the abbot feels that the monk has reached an appropriate level of discipline, dedication, and humility. He is called stavroforo (Greek: σταυροφόρος, stavroforos ; lit. "he who bears the cross"). This degree is also known as the Little Scheme or the

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Minor Scheme, and is considered as a "betrothal" to the Grand Scheme. In this stage, the nun or the monk makes formal vows of stability of place, chastity, obedience and poverty.

Monks and nuns whose abbots feel they have reached a high level of spiritual excellence reach the final stage, called the Grand Schema (Greek, *μεγ αλόσχημος*, *megalosquimos*). The tonsure of a schema monk (*schemamonje*) or schema nun (*schemamonja*) follows the same format as that of the stavroforo , and takes the same vows, and is tonsured in the same manner. In addition to all the garments worn by the stavrophore , upon reaching this degree they are issued the analavas , which are the emblematic monastic garment item of the Grand Scheme. The analavos themselves are sometimes called the "Grand Scheme." They fall on the shoulders and hang in front and behind, the front part being somewhat longer, and they are embroidered with the instruments of the Passion and the Trisagion.

Saint BASIL the Great

Saint Basil the Great (c. 330 - 379) is one of the most influential figures in both Byzantine and Western monasticism. Before forming his own monastic community, he visited Egypt, Mesopotamia, Palestine, and Syria, observing monastic life and learning from both the positive and negative examples he encountered on his journey. Later he wrote his *Asketikon* for the members of the monastery he founded around AD 356. C. on the banks of the Iris River in Cappadocia. Saint Basil's work included two sets of monastic regulations: the Lesser *Asketikon* and the Greater *Asketikon*. There is a degree of correspondence between Basil and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus that offers a better understanding of the type of monastic life that he established.

Before embracing the monastic state, Saint Basil the Great made a careful study of monasticism in Egypt, Palestine, Coelesyria, and Mesopotamia. The result was a decided preference for cenobitic life. He founded several monasteries in Pontus, one of which he himself presided over for a time, and monasteries modeled on

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his soon spread throughout the East. Its monks gathered for "psalmody" and "genuflections" seven times a day, in accordance with the "Septies in die laudem dixi tibi" (Ps. 119(118),164); at midnight ("Midnight surgebam" — Ibid., 62), in the afternoon, in the morning and at noon (Ps.55(54),18), at the third hour, at the hour of Pentecost, and at none, the sacred hour of the passion. To complete the total of seven, the noon prayer was divided into two parts separated by the communal meal.

The monastic ideal of Saint Basil is set forth in a collection of his writings known as the "Asceticon", or "Ascetica", the most important of which are the "Regulae fusius tractatae", a series of answers to questions, fifty-five in number, and the "Regulae brevius tractatae", in which three hundred and thirteen questions are briefly answered. It should not be assumed that the "Regulae" form a rule, although it would possibly be a good idea to make one out of them. They are answers to questions that would naturally arise among people who are already in possession of a framework of customs or traditions.

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Sometimes they deal with of practical questions, but not infrequently they deal with matters related to the spiritual life.

The authority of San Basilio was equal to that of San Antonio among the leaders of Palestinian monasticism; however, they took it as a matter of routine that life in Laura was the most perfect, although under normal circumstances one should not enter it before having received their apprenticeship in a monastery. The paradox is not as great as it may seem at first glance. The inhabitant of the Laura was under the rule of an archimandrite or abbot and thus was not exposed to the dangers of the purely hermitage state.

Monasticism had thus become part of the life of the Church, which was legislated for especially at the Council of Chalcedon. Monasteries could not be erected without the permission of the bishop; monks would receive due honor, but were not to meddle with the affairs of Church or State. They were to be subject to the bishop, etc. (Can. IV). Clerics and monks would not serve in war or embrace a secular life (Can. VII). Monasteries should not be secularized (Can. XXIV)

Saint THEODORE the STUDITE

Saint Theodore the Studite: 11th century mosaic from the Monastery of Nea Moni, Chios

As a rule, the monks enjoyed the favor of the emperors and patriarchs, but during the iconoclastic persecution they suffered terribly for the orthodoxy of their faith; their position on this aroused the wrath of the imperial powers and many were martyred for the faith. Monasticism itself (and not just individual monks) became the target of heretical emperors. Many of them were exiled, and some took advantage of this sentence to reorganize their religious life in Italy. Ironically, Saint John Damascene, living in a Muslim nation, was independent of the iconoclastic emperors and was therefore able to defend the faith from afar.

The second half of the eighth century seems to have been a time of very general decline; Around the year 800, Saint Theodore the Studite (c. 758 - c. 826), who was to be one of the most creative thinkers of Eastern monasticism, became abbot of the monastery of Saint John the Baptist, called "Studion" (founded in

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Constantinople in the fifth century). Theodore set about reforming his monastery and restoring the spirit of Saint Basil to its primitive vigour. To achieve this, and to give permanence to his reforms, he saw that a more practical code of laws was needed to regulate the details of daily life, as a supplement to the teachings of Saint Basil. Thus, he drew up constitutions, later codified, which became the norm of life in the Studion monastery, and which gradually spread from there to monasteries throughout the rest of the Empire.

Eastern Roman. At the same time, the monastery was an active center of intellectual and artistic life and a model that exerted a considerable influence on monastic practices in the East. Until today, Basil's Asketikon and Theodore's Constitutions, together with the holy canons of the Councils, constitute the main part of the Greek and Slavic monastic tradition.

Monastic life on Mount Athos began at the end of the 10th century with the help of Emperor Basil the Macedonian and the mount became the largest and most famous monastic center in the Eastern Roman Empire. The peninsula is in fact an independent

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monastic republic, ruled by twenty "Sovereign Monasteries", with their own elected president (protos) and governing council. Mount Athos is home to innumerable priceless cultural and spiritual treasures, and is considered to this day as the capital of Orthodox monasticism.

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The priesthood.

The Orthodox Church can ordain married men. Only monks are subject to celibacy and monastic vows. However, celibates can no longer marry after their

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ordination, and bishops are chosen only from among monks.

Through the sacrament of holy orders, the bishop performs an ordination to the priesthood. But this requires the consent of all God's people, so at one point in the service, the congregation acclaims the ordination with the cry of "Axios!" ("He is worthy!").

If a single, unmarried, or celibate man is ordained, he must remain celibate to retain his service. A celibate priest is not necessarily the same as clerics who are monastic, as celibacy does not automatically imply monasticism, although orthodox monasticism denotes a call to celibacy. A monk -priest is called a hieromonk .

The sacrament of Holy Orders has three stages: the diaconate, the presbytery, and the episcopate. Only bishops must be celibate, while priests and deacons can be married men, but only if their marriage precedes their diaconal ordination. They are not allowed to remarry if they are widowed.

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Orthodox priests are grouped according to a hierarchy: the patriarchs, archbishops or metropolitans are at the head; then come the bishops (from the Greek επ ίσκο πος, that is, overseer, inspector), the priests (from the Greek π ρεσ βυτέρους,), finally the deacons (from the Greek δι ακόνους, helper or assistant). The hierarchy also includes subdeacons, lectors, and cantors without a specific sacrament.

Women cannot be ordained, but the wife of an Orthodox priest is a παπα δία (papadía) in Greek and a попова or поповка (popova or popovka) in the Slavic languages.

When performing functions in the hierarchy, Orthodox priests wear cassock, epitrakelion and kamilavkion (from the Greek κα μιλ αύκιον: cylindrical headdress, usually black).

It is the doctrine of the Church that the priesthood should strive to fulfill the grace that has been given to it with the gift of the "laying on of hands" in the most perfect way possible. But the Church teaches that the reality and effectiveness of the sacraments of the

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Church, administered by priests, do not depend on personal virtue, but rather on the presence of Christ acting in his Church through the Holy Spirit. As with the bishops, it is Christ, through his chosen ministers, who acts as teacher, good shepherd, forgiver, and healer. It is Christ forgiving sins and healing the physical, mental and spiritual ills of humanity. The priest is an icon of Christ.

Priests normally perform the function of parish priests, a function normally carried out by bishops in the early days. They are rectors of local Christian congregations. They preside at the celebration of the liturgy and teach, preach, counsel, and exercise the ministries of forgiveness and healing.

ABOUT CANONICITY

Orthodox jurisdictions without communion with Constantinople

These are Jurisdictions that have their communion interrupted with most or all of the so-called "World of Official Orthodoxy", in the first place, they do not know the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople,

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BARTOLOMÉ I, whom they accuse of holding a neopapist position or Franciscist, or holding modernist positions that compromise the "orthodoxy" of the Church. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, in turn, refuses to recognize these Churches as canonical, even when they scrupulously comply with canonical provisions; For this reason, it is that on many occasions it usually recognizes the validity of the Mysteries and Orders dispensed by said jurisdictions.

Many of these Jurisdictions are not in communion with each other, and are managed in isolation from the Orthodox World, and others, on the other hand, such as the Synod in Resistance, try to federate or strengthen ties with other jurisdictions, as is also the case with the Synod of Milan, or the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile.

The misuse of canonicity must be treated as a very important point, because it is very often used by some Orthodox Churches: the so-called "CANONICAL" or "OFFICIAL" Churches, to discredit other Orthodox Churches which are firmly anchored in the Faith and in the apostolic succession, but whose presence is

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embarrassing for reasons that affect their particular interests. For this reason, such Churches try to "stigmatize" the Churches that respect the Holy Canons with the epithet "NON-CANONICAL" (giving it an implicit meaning of "FALSE CHURCH") without falling, or falling, that what they are saying it's a big mistake. Those brothers should first explain what the concepts of "CANONICAL" or "NON-CANONICAL" mean to them, and what is the reference point taken to define canonicity.

The word "CANONICITY" derives from the term canon, therefore, "canonicity" alludes, as we all know, to what is in accordance with the Holy Canons (the apostolic ones of the seven Ecumenical Councils). There are two types of canons: 1- Canons that deal with matters of faith, which are dogmatic pronouncements, and 2- Canons that deal with disciplinary and administrative issues. So when a Church perfectly observes the aforementioned canons, it is absolutely canonical. The only canon that doesn't really exist; it is the one that gives rights to an Orthodox Church to define another Orthodox Church as NON-CANONICAL; however, that

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some Churches attribute such a right to themselves is completely different, an absolutely anti-canonical matter.

Precisely the so-called "Canonical Churches" in the West (and not only there), create absolutely irregular situations with regard to the observation of the aforementioned canons, for example: they have bishops residing in western cities with titles of episcopal sees of the this, in "cohabitation" with one or more bishops belonging to other "canonical" jurisdictions. These are then, contradicting the canon that prohibits a bishop from residing outside his Eparchy, and what is even worse, contradicting those canons that prohibit overlapping jurisdictions. Another example is the famous "Episcopal Conferences" on the basis of what canon were they created?

More of these examples could be cited, to name a few: according to canon 36 (a rather forgotten canon) of the Council of Trullo, called the "quinisext", a council that all the so-called canonical Churches must or should observe on the basis of their Self-defined canonicity, it maintains that the patriarchates and the

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Autocephalous Churches that arose or had been recognized from the year 692 onwards, WERE NOT CANONICAL. Those Churches violate the famous canon that defines the principle of "PENTARCHY"; Indeed, the canonically correct way to define the existence of another patriarchate outside of the "Pentarchy" would be the necessary call to an Ecumenical Council, while history teaches us that all the Patriarchates and autocephalous Churches are born after the Great Schism (Moscow, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Georgia to name just a few).

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FINAL WORDS

I have tried, in these few pages, to give my vision of some theological and life aspects of my beloved Holy Orthodox Church. The beautiful thing about this is that, in Orthodoxy, Theology is life and therefore, life is Theology.

The coherence between what is preached and what is practiced is something that has an impact on this way of living the faith. God gave me the gift of discovering this source of grace when I had left the papist church. Thanks to the study of papist theology, I found the way , which, I am certain, is the one that Christ bequeathed to us for our salvation. It is not an easy path to follow, if you are comfortable and you live your faith only on certain days, because it is a permanent climb to Calvary accepting that, without God's help, we are nothing.

Being Orthodox is living the Divine Liturgy every day; always keeping death in mind, but without fear, but as a reminder that our fight against sin must be permanent so as not to hurt or offend Our Lord.

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It is sad to see how some churches have united under the so-called ecumenism and intend to form a church of men alien to what Our Lord Jesus Christ left us, leading the faithful to fall into error and heresy, they abandoned the teachings of the Saints Apostles, of the holy fathers and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they reject the tradition and proscribe it, thus turning their church into a modern Sodom.

To God, Triune and One, be all honor and glory now and forever.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Name Day: January 11

CONSECRATED TO THE
EPISCOPATE: JANUARY 13,
2020 (OLD CALENDAR)

His Eminence
Archbishop Basilio,
Archbishop of Santiago
and All Chile, was born
in Santiago, Chile, into a
devout Roman Catholic
family. Raised in the

faith by his grandparents, he received a solid spiritual formation from an early age. His education began at American schools in Santiago, where he learned English, and continued at local secondary institutions before entering university to study Law, along with coursework in Computer Science and Information Technology.

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At the beginning of his professional life, he worked as a legal assistant, but soon discerned that this was not the path God had prepared for him. Redirecting his vocation, he entered the field of Information Technology, where he advanced steadily, eventually becoming Technology Manager for Marriott Chile.

At the age of twenty-nine, feeling a profound call from God, he entered the Benedictine Monastery of Lliu-Lliu, beginning a period of monastic formation and theological study. However, after witnessing troubling situations within that environment, he became disillusioned and returned to secular employment, once again rising to senior management and executive positions in the Information Technology sector.

Yet God's call remained. Seeking the fullness of the Apostolic Faith, he embraced Holy Orthodoxy, receiving Holy Baptism and taking the name Basilio. He continued his Orthodox theological studies and was ordained first as a deacon, then as a priest, and subsequently received monastic tonsure. After years of faithful service, he was

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granted the Great Schema and elevated to the rank of Archimandrite.

On January 13, 2020, according to the Old Calendar, he was consecrated Archbishop of Santiago and All Chile, assuming the episcopal office with humility and a profound sense of responsibility for the spiritual care of the faithful.

CURRENT MINISTRY

Archbishop Basilio currently resides at the Monastery of Saint Basil in Curacaví, Metropolitan Region of Chile, where he serves as Abbot. His life is characterized by:

- Dedication to monastic discipline.
- Pastoral care for the faithful throughout Chile.
- Commitment to the integrity of Orthodox theology.
- Strengthening local communities through prayer, teaching, and spiritual guidance.

His Eminence continues to serve as a shepherd to those seeking the Ancient Faith, offering clarity, compassion, and steadfast adherence to Holy Tradition.