

# HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Parish Newsletter

New Parish Center: 20937 Ashburn Rd., #110, Ashburn, VA July 2019

## JULY—DAY 14 HOURS, NIGHT 10

- 7 Sun<sup>3•II•Mt3</sup> **Coffee Hour: Matyuf**
- 14 Sun<sup>4•III•Mt4</sup> **Coffee Hour: Morrow**
- 21 Sun<sup>5•IV•Mt5</sup> **Coffee Hour: Mosholder**
- 22 Mon 27th anniversary of the sudden exodus of Fr. John Meyendorff
- 28 Sun<sup>6•V•Mt6</sup> **Coffee Hour: Smith**

## AUGUST—DAY 13 HOURS, NIGHT 11

- 4 Sun<sup>7•VI•Mt7</sup> **Coffee Hour: Tarassova**
- 6 Tue ↑ *Transfiguration of the Lord (Bless grapes)*
- 11 Sun<sup>8•VII•Mt8</sup> **Coffee Hour: Warden**
- 15 Thu ↓ *Dormition of the Theotokos (Bless flowers)*
- 18 Sun<sup>9•VIII•Mt9</sup> **Coffee Hour: Wayland**
- 25 Sun<sup>10•I•Mt10</sup> **Coffee Hour: Adams**

## SEPTEMBER—DAY 12 HOURS, NIGHT 12

- 1 Sun<sup>11•II•Mt11</sup> **Coffee Hour: Belinsky**

**A note to coffee-hour hosts.**—Please include some half & half along with your coffee-hour contribution. And please remember, something gluten-free. And NO nuts.

### Remember, O Lord, those who bring offerings and do good in your holy churches, and those who remember the poor....

Over these next weeks please shop for the following groceries — and similar items — as opportunity allows, and bring them to church with you.

- Cereals, apple, cinnamon, etc.
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Pancake Mix
- Graham crackers
- Granola bars
- Apple sauce (shelf stable)
- Pasta and Sauce
- Tuna
- Macaroni and cheese
- Canned corn, etc.
- Canned chicken noodle soup, etc.
- Canned ravioli
- Supermarket gift cards

For additional information, please ask our coordinator Pamela Wayland.



Archbishop Elpidophoros reading his Enthronement Address 22 June 2019.

### Perhaps the most momentous event of recent days in North American Orthodoxy was the enthronement of Archbishop Elpidophoros of the Greek Orthodox Archepiscopate on June 22–23.

*Orthodoxy in Dialogue*, 29 June

By all accounts, the Archbishop has a winsome personality. Yet the concerns that *Orthodoxy in Dialogue* raised in our Editorials: “Orthodox Popery Comes to America?” or “Time for a Greek Orthodox Revolt in America?” of May 12 remain, namely:

The hierarchy, clergy, monastics, and laity of the GOA had no rôle whatever in the election of their Archbishop — a rôle which the Archdiocese

expressly requested. This top-down imposition of bishops without consultation stands in marked contrast with how the OCA selects its first hierarch and eparchial bishops.

The Archbishop has no discernible pastoral experience and no experience of life in America.

The Archbishop has distinguished himself as the apologist for a notably neo-papist understanding of Phanariot primacy in the Ecumenical Patriarch: “First without Equals,” which finds no resonance anywhere in modern Orthodox ecclesiology.

The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America—once again—has no rôle whatever in the election of its president. The presidents of this and the other multijurisdictional “episcopal assemblies” around the world are *ex officio* the senior ranking hierarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in each given region. This seems to be predicated on the long outdated premise that the Ecumenical Patriarchate has sole authority over “the barbarian lands” [*referring to the Council of Chalcedon’s dubious canon 28—Ed.*] and the outright ecclesiological heresy of an “Orthodox diaspora” enshrined at the 2016 Council of Crete.

The Archbishop’s relative youth (early 50s) and his birth in Turkey make him a prime candidate for Patriarch Bartholomew’s successor on the Ecumenical Throne. It seems plausible that Elpidophoros’s appointment (called an “election” in Phanariot parlance) was motivated in part by a power play to tighten the Phanar’s grip on the North American Church. If he becomes the next Ecumenical Patriarch, by his own admission he will consider himself to be the “first without equals.”

Numbers 3, 4, and 5 suggest yet another nail in the coffin of American autocephaly. As we noted a year ago in *Orthodoxy in America: “Broken Promises and Shattered Dreams?”*, the core purpose for which the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops was formed was to take concrete steps toward the creation of an autocephalous American Orthodox Church inclusive of all the present “jurisdictions”—and yet, the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s own “Archons” consider any talk of American autocephaly to be treasonous. In this context the following stands out from the Archbishop’s Enthronement Address:

“I sincerely pledge to devote myself—with all my heart, soul and mind—to the reaffirmation and reinvigoration of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in order that we may collaborate with greater unity, while witnessing with greater conviction and credibility to the broader American society.”

The Assembly’s new president, appointed in Turkey without the consent of its member hierarchs from multiple jurisdictions, frames the organization’s purpose as one of “collaboration.” Yet its own About Page describes its ultimate goal as not mere collaboration, but the creation

of an autocephalous American Church:

The purpose of the Assembly of Bishops of the United States of America is to preserve and contribute to the unity of the Orthodox Church.... To accomplish this, the Assembly has... as an express goal... the organization of the Church in the United States in accordance with the ecclesiological and the canonical tradition of the Orthodox Church....

[T]he Assembly is a transitional body. If it achieves its goal, it will make itself obsolete by developing a proposal for the canonical organization of the Church in the United States.... [T]he Assembly of Bishops will then come to an end, ultimately to be succeeded by a governing Synod of a united Church in the United States.

We would like to hear how the Archbishop plans to advance the cause of American autocephaly, or if he too considers any such talk as treasonous to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Or rather, we would like to see the Assembly reject the Phanar’s ecclesiastical hegemony in American Church affairs and elect its own president from any of the 50+ canonical bishops in the U.S.

The accession of Archbishop Elpidophoros to his *de jure* and *de facto* primatial position in American Orthodoxy has repercussions far beyond the GOA. His appointment by the Phanar is far more consequential than a merely internal GOA matter.

### **One City, Four Bishops: The Ukrainian Case**

*Oriente Lumen XXIII Conference. One City, One Bishop: Church Boundaries—Past, Present and Future. June 17–20, 2019. Washington Retreat House, Washington, DC*

Your Eminences, venerable Fathers, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ!

It’s a big joy and honor for me to be with you now at this exciting gathering, where we not only share our thoughts and ideas but also respect each of our Christian traditions and share our own experiences. I am addressing you now as a member of the newborn Orthodox Church of Ukraine. It’s a newborn Church with a thousand years history. On December 15, 2018, a Unification Council was held at the Holy Wisdom Cathedral of Kiev. The former Kievan Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and two bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate merged to create the new local Orthodox Church of Ukraine. On January 6, 2019, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew granted his Tomos of Autocephaly to Metropolitan Epiphany, the first primate of this new autocephalous Church of Ukraine, the 15th sister Church in the Diptych.

A year ago we could not ever have imagined that we would celebrate the next Resurrection of the Lord as an autocephalous Church. But it happened. After hundreds



Saint Michael of the Golden Domes, Kiev—blown up by the Bolsheviks, now recently rebuilt—center for the Orthodox Church of Ukraine

of years, the expectations of millions of Ukrainians were thus fulfilled. We received autocephaly from the Mother Church - the Church of Constantinople. But the Orthodox flock in Ukraine is still divided.

Now we have four Orthodox canonical bishops ruling on the same territory in the Region of Kiev. There are two primates who bear the title “Metropolitan of Kiev” - Epiphany Dumenko of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and Onufry Berezovsky of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Moscow Patriarchate, who are not in communion with each other. There are also two bishops in the Orthodox Church of Ukraine with their dioceses within the same area. The first of them is the Patriarch emeritus of Kiev Filaret Denysenko with his dioceses including almost all the former Kievan Patriarchate parishes within the borders of the city of Kiev. I said “almost” because at least one of these parishes, which has the dean of the Kiev Orthodox Theological Academy as its head, already voted for changing its subordination and joined the diocese of His Beatitude Epiphany. The other ruling bishop of the same Church is Metropolitan Alexander Drabynko, with his diocese of Pereyaslav and Vyshneve within the borders of Kiev region, including the city of Kiev, for the parishes that joined the United Church from the Moscow Patriarchate.

Mr. Jack Figel asked me to give you “a balanced presentation on the situation and how the overlapping jurisdictions of Moscow and Constantinople are affecting the clergy and people.” I will try to do my best and to be as balanced as possible. As a shepherd of one part of the divided flock, I can hardly avoid some personal and sometimes painful issues. But I will try to be fair.

### **Recent background of autocephaly**

Let me start with a brief overview of the recent background of the movement for autocephaly. The movement

started in Ukraine more than a hundred years ago, at the beginning of the 20th century or even earlier. This first period is well described in the recent book of Metropolitan Alexander Drabynko *The Ukrainian Church: The way towards Autocephaly*. The first attempt to proclaim autocephaly took place at the Pan-Ukrainian council of 1918. As Metropolitan Alexander noted, that council would be a council of true Christian universalism, or better to say, catholicity, that would reject the nationalism of both churches, Russian as well as Ukrainian. But the council failed. “Ukrainophiles” were de facto pushed out of the council. Historian Andriy Starodub wrote: “The Pan-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council of 1918 is the only Council of undivided Ukrainian Orthodox Church until today.” He wrote this in 2012 but it continues to be true.

The next attempt to proclaim autocephaly – a political attempt – was made on January 1, 1919. The civil authorities of the Ukrainian People's Republic issued an act creating the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Conciliar Church. This law actually subordinated the church to the state. But this attempt had no support in the Church body and soon failed.

The next and best-known attempt to proclaim autocephaly took place at the Pan-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council on October 14-30, 1921, when the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was established. Its first Metropolitan, Vasyl Lypkivsky was ordained by presbyters and laity according to the so-called “Alexandrian” order, which has been strongly criticized by some theologians. It is beyond my task now to analyze its canonical validity. I would like only to agree with Metropolitan Alexander that despite private opinions, certain canonical and ecclesiological innovations of UAOC substantially discredited it in the eyes of world Orthodoxy, making its recognition by

ancient Patriarchates and other local Churches impossible.

The history continued with the Soviet occupation of Ukraine, the emigration of some leaders of the UAOC to the West, the Second World War, and the restoration of apostolic succession to UAOC's hierarchy by the Church of Poland, but let me jump to the recent decades.

Restoration of the UAOC in Ukraine was proclaimed in 1989 in Lviv. This attempt was broadly accepted by the people, especially in western Ukraine, but was strongly opposed by the then-current Metropolitan of Kiev (Moscow Patriarchate) Filaret Denysenko. In 1990, a year before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Orthodox Church renamed its Ukrainian Exarchate as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. This new quasi-autonomous structure was given what was termed "independence in government" and "the right to broad autonomy".

The next year, November 1-3, 1991, the Council of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church was held, with all the bishops plus representatives of the clergy and lay people. Metropolitan Filaret presided. The members of the Council addressed an appeal to the Moscow Patriarchate for the full autocephaly of the Ukrainian Church. All the bishops, as well as the other participants, signed the document. Bishop Onufry, who is now Metropolitan and head of the UOC Moscow Patriarchate, and, also signed, though he now avoids supporting canonical autocephaly. On the following January, all the bishops confirmed their appeal for autocephaly by signing the letter to the Moscow Patriarchate affirming their free will and the fact that they were not under pressure in asking for the church independence.

But the appeal was never accepted by Moscow. Instead, a Council in Kharkiv was held on May 27, 1992, to which Filaret was not invited, and a new Metropolitan of Kiev was elected. The new Metropolitan was Volodymyr Sabodan, probably the most respected figure in recent Ukrainian Orthodoxy. Metropolitan Filaret didn't give up and proclaimed unification of the existing Ukrainian church under Moscow with UAOC and establishing of the Kievan Patriarchate. He was immediately excommunicated and soon anathematized by Moscow Patriarchate for creating a schism. Actually, only part of the UAOC joined Kievan Patriarchate; the rest continue to exist independently.

This resulted in the long period of three Ukrainian Orthodox Churches co-existing with each other on the same territory but not together. One of them, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church ruled by Metropolitan Volodymyr Sabodan, was a self-governed part of Russian Church, slightly moving towards its Ukrainian identity. It included a wide range of faithful, from a minor group of Russian nationalists, on the one hand, to the pro-Ukrainian party, on the other. The other two were pro-Ukrainian oriented with certain amount of nationalists, but not the majority.

Metropolitan Volodymyr himself was not a revolu-

tionary. He preferred an organic way of evolution. In his Memorial museum, located in our Holy Transfiguration Cathedral, you may read an article he wrote in 1993, a year after his coming to Kiev, and published in the official church newspaper. The conflict was very hot then, but the Metropolitan still argued that our Church was moving toward full independence. But, he added, this process, in any case, should not be artificially accelerated. Autocephaly, Metropolitan Volodymyr stressed, should be grounded on a strict canonical base.

The way toward canonical autocephaly was very long indeed. During Metropolitan Volodymyr's rulership, he allowed those who were in the church administration and in the synodal institutions to have a gentle but consistent policy of development of Ukrainian identity. Metropolitan Volodymyr once said in an interview, that the autocephalous status "should cap all our efforts" towards the Church unity. During this time, a joint commission for preparing a dialogue between the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate and the Kievan Patriarchate was created and then gathered. This gathering gave a big hope for the reconciliation of the Church in Ukraine. But because of strong interference and pressure on the part of Moscow, the process was interrupted at the very beginning.

Metropolitan Volodymyr gave us one important lesson: the Eucharistic communion with the local Orthodox Churches is the matter of high importance. Autocephaly is only a means, unity and communion are the goal.

Things radically changed with the repose of His Beatitude in 2014. Metropolitan Onufry Berezovsky, who was elected his successor to the see of Kiev, started to conduct a different policy. Metropolitan Onufry took over the Church just after the Maidan protests (the 'Revolution of Dignity'), the annexation of Crimea, the Russian invasion of the Donbas, and the awful period of the war in the East of Ukraine, which has not stopped yet. He stressed the necessity of silence and prayer - definitely necessary Christian virtues, but society including the faithful looked to the Church authorities for words of truth and not ambiguity. "Our flock is on both sides of the conflict", - he used to say, but his rhetoric leads to simple questions: why are members of your flock killing their fellow Christians? Why were no canonical sanctions or restrictions imposed upon those clergymen of the Moscow Patriarchate who gave shelter to the hitmen and blessed the invaders, who allowed the use of church buildings for storing up weapons and ammunition, who helped with specifying the targets for multiple rocket launchers? We still have no answers.

### **The challenge of the past year**

Since Easter of 2018 until December we lived with the hope of resolving the problem of the schism and obtaining autocephaly. But until December 15, and even

in the midst of that day, it was unclear if the Unification Council would happen.

But it succeeded. Thanks to God, there are no more uncanonical churches in Ukraine. Probably, still there are not. While I am speaking these words to you, the situation might change and is changing very quickly. But let me go back a little bit.

October 11, 2018, had been a crucial point for the Church in Ukraine. On this day, at the Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Kievan Metropolis of the Church of Constantinople was restored and the appeals of the heads of Kievan Patriarchate and UAOC were accepted. The act of the Patriarch of Constantinople (dated 1686) granting permission for the Patriarch of Moscow to appoint the Metropolitan of Kiev was considered temporary. Terms of the agreement had been violated by Moscow. Now, Constantinople declared, in effect that Moscow's lease on the Kiev department "expired". Patriarch Filaret, the head of the Kievan Patriarchate, was restored into communion with the Mother Church as a former Metropolitan of Kiev, and the former leader of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church Metropolitan Makarios was restored as a former Metropolitan of Lviv.

The reaction from Moscow followed immediately. As all of you know, this was the reason for Moscow broke Eucharistic communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. A similar situation occurred in 1996 with the reestablishment of the Estonian Apostolic Church, when the communion was broken for several months.

This decision by Moscow was strongly criticized by Metropolitan Anastasios of Tyrrana and all Albania, who sent his letter to the Patriarch Kirill saying: "It is imperative that the Holy Eucharist, this mystery of unfathomable sacredness and unique importance, remains far removed from all ecclesiastical disagreements." This is a semi-schism because it runs only from the side of Moscow and not vice-versa. Soon we observed the paradoxical things that were happening. As we say: money triumphs over evil. At the beginning of 2019 Patriarch Kirill granted his permission for Russian pilgrims to visit St Panteleimon monastery on Mt Athos, the popular place of devotions of Russian business elites.

All this reminds me of a sad truth shared by Fr Alexander Schmemmann in 1960s. Dealing with the canonical problem in North America he wrote: "We live in the poisoned atmosphere of anathemas and excommunications, court cases and litigations, dubious consecrations of dubious bishops, [emphasis ours—we have men like +Brum in mind—Ed.] hatred, calumny, lies! But do we think about the irreparable moral damage all this inflicts to our people?"

It should be noted that there was the only current primate of the divided church jurisdictions to whom the Patriarch

of Constantinople reserved the prerogative to be elected as primate of the new Autocephalous Church of Ukraine on its first and foundational Council. It was neither former Patriarch Filaret nor former Metropolitan Makarios; they were asked to sign a formal refusal to be nominated to the post of Kiev Metropolitan. The prerogative was given to Metropolitan Onufry of the Moscow Patriarchate. But what did Metropolitan Onufry do with his prerogative? He simply returned the letter to His All-Holiness unopened.

Personally, I have been most struck by the fact that the churches who were the main players in the pre-assembly process – both those of Kievan Patriarchate and of Moscow Patriarchate -- mostly strived for their own corporate interests, and not for the sake of the Gospel. I witnessed this at various stages of the preparation for the Council, and had heard from the members of the Council the same thing over again. Consequently, it was frustrating that the churches, instead of being a Church of God who takes care of her flock, behave more like corporations, where corporate ethics prevail over Christian values.

But the Church consists not only of the top hierarchs. It is the body of Christ which, according to the Word of God, consists of all the royal priesthood, the people of God. I must witness to the fact that the need for church reconciliation and unity is very strong among the ordinary Ukrainian people.

Before seeking administrative unity, we need the reconciliation of church society: believers and clergy. During the years of schism within the Ukrainian Orthodoxy, a new generation of faithful came into being. They simply found God and joined a church in one of the divided jurisdictions or another. We need to get acquainted and be open to each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Administrative unity is subsidiary. The most important thing here is the reconciliation of the people of God. Spiritual unity of the faithful is the key to the genuine oneness.

The Church must reflect what we declare her to be every time we recite the Nicene Creed, our great Symbol of Faith. We declare "I believe in One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church." So the church must be One. This means, first of all, the one united in the Spirit of Christ around the Lord's chalice. We must not be divided by ideologies and by power struggles.

The Church must be Holy. Every Christian should live according to God's commandments, remembering that the believer is first of all the one who is faithful to God. And this goes even more so for clergy, who should live what they preach.

The Church must be Catholic and conciliar. Bishops should not be above the church, but in the church; not to rule as tyrants over the people of God, but to be examples of true Christian love. All important decisions at the parish, eparchy, and the entire Ukrainian Church should be made

in the spirit of conciliarity—in the true spiritual unity of the episcopate, the clergy and the entire people of God.

What does the transitional process from UOC–MP to OCU look like?

According to an interactive map maintained by the Religious Information Service of Ukraine, there are 520 parishes and two cathedrals of the former Moscow Patriarchate, who have joined the united Autocephalous Church. One of them is the Holy Transfiguration Cathedral in Kiev where I am a priest. It makes roughly 5% of the total number of Moscow Patriarchate parishes in Ukraine. Official representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate say only about 40 of these parishes voluntarily joined OCU. Most of them were forced to change jurisdiction, they argue.

As journalist Denis Targonsky pointed out, in the vast majority of cases, in the transitions of communities to the Church of Ukraine it is ordinary people who play a decisive role. The Moscow Patriarchate's authorities did not pay much attention to the fact that the ordinary people are also the part of Church and have the right to vote. Now the church leaders are forced to pay special attention to this fact.

A parish priest in the Ukrainian Church/Moscow Patriarchate is facing a difficult choice. He finds himself between the hierarchy and the people. He has no list of the parish members. Typically, all the village is considered to be a religious community. The priest baptizes, does weddings and funerals for everyone who might ask him.

In most villages, the church buildings are built by village communities. They believe, therefore, that they have the right to decide to which jurisdiction their church should belong to. While in the Western Ukraine almost the whole population attends church services every Sunday, in other regions most peasants go to the church only for the main feasts.

If the priest joins the majority of the village, that is, those visiting church rarely, then he risks being left without a certain number of constant parishioners who might consider him a “traitor” and “Judas.” If he supports the minority, that is, constant parishioners, he may be rejected by the village community and left without a significant amount of material support from people.

The minority of regular parishioners often cannot reconcile with the majority and therefore numerous internal conflicts arise. Often those who are in the minority are supported by the clergy and parishioners of other villages or by some “pilgrims” who claim to “stand up for the faith.” As a result, conflicts are increasing and often police become involved.

In order to keep a priest in the Moscow Patriarchate, considerable money is offered to him. I know about both lump sum payments and the constant support of those

priests who remain with the minority of their community in the Moscow Patriarchate. The amount of such funds often exceeds what the priest could possibly have from his parish before. Most rural priests can barely make ends meet, and such a proposal is a serious test for them. That is why in some eparchies of the OCU there are many parishes that joined this jurisdiction from the Moscow Patriarchate without priests.

### **What is needed to be done today?**

We all should pray for the unity of the Ukrainian Orthodoxy. Let me give you a good example of such an initiative from the grassroots. On 2016 I started a project of compilation, translation, editing, and publishing “A Prayerbook of the Orthodox Faithful.” The project was supported by our friends from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, whom I met on the Symposium of Ukrainian Churches in Toronto in 2014. It was intended as a prayer book that would transcend competing Patriarchates. It was printed in early 2017, and since then 8,000 copies have spread among the faithful of different church jurisdictions. The Prayerbook opens with a prayer for the unity of the Ukrainian Orthodoxy. I wanted to unite Ukrainian Orthodox Christians, who are divided into several church jurisdictions, in a common prayer for the unity of the Church in Ukraine. I believed that a common prayer, even if recited in a private room, will help Christians in Ukraine to treat each other as brothers and sisters, not as “schismatics” or enemies. Christians who pray for unity are already on the path leading to unity.

We still need to reject the rhetoric of division: do not call each other “schismatics.” The split of the Church in Ukraine is the unfortunate state of Orthodoxy in this country, but it is not a particular characteristic of any of its parts!

Now we are blamed by our fellow brothers and sisters from Moscow Patriarchate as deprived of any grace from God. They continue to deal with us just as they used to deal with the former Kievan Patriarchate, accepting no Mysteries, and even no Baptism, in our Church. This evidently contradicts the 1st rule of St Basil who discerns the heresy, the schism, and the ‘parasynagogue’, but accepts the baptism of the last two. But Moscow is trying to be more canonical than St Basil! One of the bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine, Metropolitan Luke Kovalenko of Zaporizhzhya, proclaimed that there is no God in the Phanar any more. “If someone would be baptized in the Church of Constantinople after the October 11 [2018], I will consider him as not be baptized,” he added.

We all should remind ourselves of Jesus's words that “the Spirit breathes where he wants”, and, according to St. Metropolitan of Moscow Filaret (Drozdov), “no church that confesses that Jesus is the Christ, I will not dare to call false.”

The Church of Christ should be free of politicization, even when it is too difficult to avoid mixing ideology with the church life. To be free from politicization doesn't mean to be free from any kind of church policy. Our Christian policy means to be responsible for our presence among the society and to be open to joint participation in charity and social projects, community events, any kind of joint work on education, media, culture, *etc.*

The rise of national autocephalies on the wreckage of the Ottoman Empire, as Archimandrite Cyril Hovorun wrote, was a key moment in shaping the modern concept of an autocephalous church. At the same time, it became a "time bomb" under the catholic foundation of the church. Now, almost every autocephalous church has been largely infiltrated by the nationalism of its "titular nation," Greek in the churches of the Greek tradition, Russian in the Russian Orthodox Church, *etc.* Therefore, in particular, it was so difficult for many Ukrainians to remain in the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. And the matter here lies not only in the policy pursued by the Moscow Patriarchate in its relation to the Ukrainian Church but in the very essence of the church politics within the Ukrainian Moscow Patriarchate church. According to the principles on which the local autocephalies are built, the Church of Ukraine had had every reason to be autocephalous. However, the Moscow Patriarchate has another logic that looks more like a Roman one: to be a supra-national church, which unites in itself various local church identities. But, in reality, Moscow Patriarchate allows any national identity except Ukrainian.

In reality, again and again, this is clearly demonstrated by the confessing of the Russian identity of the neighbouring state of Russia on the territory of independent Ukraine. It's no secret that in the most of the parishes of Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine and in some media, popular among believers of this Church in the rural regions, as well as in the literature which is spread in its parishes, the Russian identity is being cultivated and supported pretty openly, and the Ukrainian identity is either simply ignored or declared alien and illegal.

Sure, not all of the Ukrainian Moscow Patriarchate churches are pro-Russian oriented. After more than 500 of its parishes joined the Autocephalous Church there is still a certain number of clergy and faithful supporting the idea of canonical autocephaly. Why have they not joined yet? Many reasons. Some of them avoid joining the church in which Filaret is still being referred to as a patriarch. Some are waiting for recognition of the autocephaly by other sister Churches. Some have their personal reasons including family tensions.

Not everything is OK with the new Autocephalous Church of Ukraine. The main part of it, that of the former Kievan Patriarchate, lived for years in isolation from the



Andriy Dudchenko, protopresbyter, Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Holy Transfiguration Cathedral, Kiev, senior priest, Orthodox Theological Academy, teacher. Father Andriy is completing his doctoral dissertation on the Liturgical Theology of Father Alexander Schmemmann. Father Andriy is a correspondent of Father Paul's.

Christian world. But there is hope for the future. New wine is being put into the new wineskin. The new generation of not only clergy but also of lay theologians is arising, and is setting a new agenda for those responsible for making decisions.

This agenda has been documented in the Manifesto of 10 proposals. Just before the enthronement of Metropolitan Epiphany, a group of clergy and laity of the OCU issued this document with agenda proposals for the newly created autocephalous Church that would help with better management of its tasks in the present circumstances.

Among the ten proposals there are appeals for establishing a true conciliarity, for renewal of parish life, for deepening the involvement of faithful in the Church matters, for high-quality translations of liturgical texts, for a "new evangelization", for rejection of the old paradigm of church-state relations, for increasing transparency and accountability, for the social ministry of the Church, for developing the environmental agenda, for the reform of church education and for dialogue and openness.

This initiative has been welcomed by Metropolitan Epiphany and is supported by Kiev Orthodox Theological Academy as well as by several bishops, including Metropolitan Alexander Drabynko. Their openness gives reason to have hope for a better future for the Church. Another reason for hope comes from the fact that the clergy and people who were isolated from the ecumenical Orthodoxy are now longing for the full communion with it.

The Tomos given by His All-Holiness is like a passport for the Church of Ukraine to be an equal part of the Orthodox world. But the passport doesn't make its owner adult automatically. It is given to an adult with the perspective for the future growth in responsibility. Here we are. We need not to avoid uncomfortable questions, but to deal with them in mutual love and with great responsibility.

—Fr. Andriy Dudchenko

## Glimpses of the 2019 Holy Pasch in China where Orthodox Christians are enjoying a breath of fresh air.

Six photographs here recently circulated by Father Denis (Dionisiy) Pozdnyaev who works out of Hong Kong. He teaches himself Chinese, insinuates himself into what is left of Orthodox China, and shows how things are done by the Orthodox on the ground.

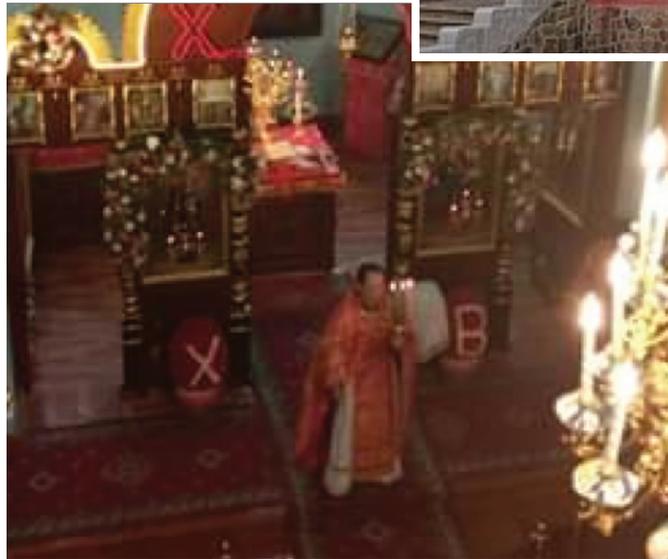
The Orthodox Church of China (simplified Chinese: 中华 东正教会; traditional Chinese: 中華 東正教會; pinyin: Zhōnghuá[China] Dōng[East]zhèngjiào[Orthodox]huì[Church]) is an autonomous Eastern Orthodox Church in China. She was granted autonomy by her mother Church, the Orthodox Church of Russia, in 1956.

There already were Russian traders in Harbin when Russian priests arrive in 1684.

It was the building of the railway, which ran south from Vladivostok through Harbin to Dalian, that would transform Harbin from a sleepy village on the banks of the Songhua River into a boom town.



Above: Church of the Protection of the Theotokos (October 1), one of several in Harbin.



Left and below: Moments in the celebration of the Feast of Feasts (Harbin).

The Muscovite preference for wearing red vestments on the Resurrection Pasch instead of Constantinopolitan (and Scriptural) white speaks to Chinese culture where the color red is festive but white is a token mourning.





Right: Beijing—Church of the Dormition (August 15) in the grounds of the Russian Embassy in Dongzhimen

The government of the People’s Republic of China extends official recognition to five religious communities: Buddhist, Taoist, Islamist, Roman Catholic and Protéstant. Such recognition does not extend to the Orthodox Church; no national Orthodox association has ever been created in China. The officially declared reason for the government’s non-recognition is the government’s fear that external political forces from outside nations—in this case, primarily Russia—could achieve influence within China. Nonetheless in the 2010s tentative steps have been taken between China and Russia to revive the Orthodox Church in China.

At present, there are only three communities in Mainland China with regular weekly services and resident clergy. The Beijing community meets at the restored Church of the Dormition in the grounds of the Russian Embassy in Dongzhimen; the Shanghai community at the Russian Consulate; and the Church of the Protection of the Theotokos, Harbin, the only one open to Chinese nationals for

regular divine service. Elsewhere, priestless congregations continue to meet in Northeast China (in Heilongjiang and elsewhere) and in Western China (Xinjiang) with, apparently, the tacit consent of the government. There are also Orthodox parishes in the Province of Guangdong (Canton) and in Shanghai; two former Orthodox churches in Shanghai are currently in a process of being returned to the Church, but no activities are currently held inside them.

In March 2018, the Chinese Orthodox Church acquired the government’s approval to prepare new priests in Russian theological seminaries.

In Hong Kong the Orthodox Church operates relatively freely, where there are two parishes: cathedral of St. Luke (Eastern Orthodox Metropolitanate of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia under the Ecumenical Patriarchate) and the church of Saints Peter and Paul under the Patriarchate of Moscow. There is also a presence in Taiwan (where Archimandrite Jonah Mourtos leads a mission church).



Shanghai community at the Russian Consulate;



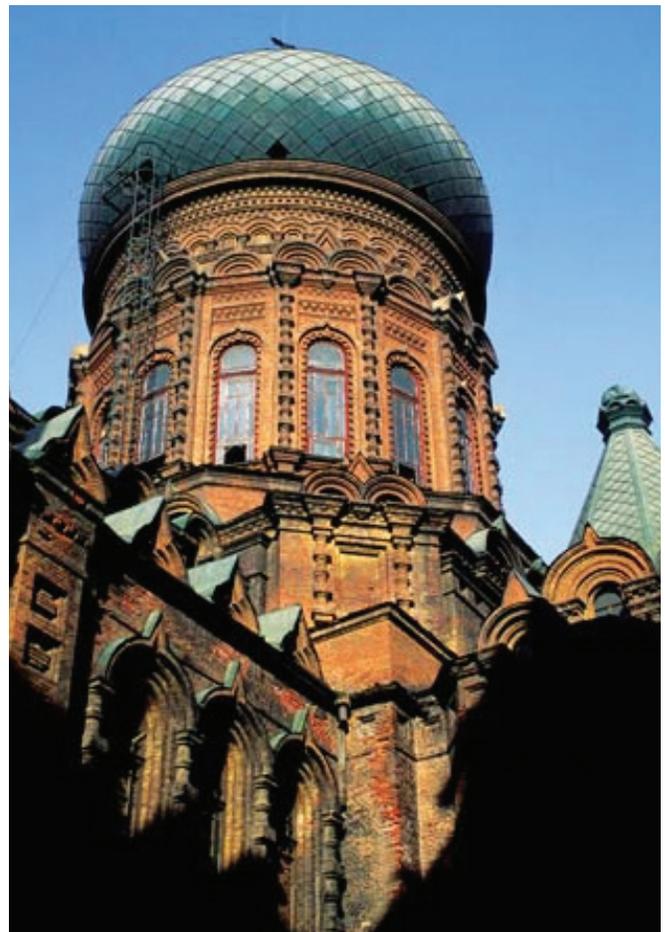
Above: At Heilongjiang

The Church of the East (Assyria, Syriac speaking, today's Iraq) was introduced to China in the seventh century by missionaries, but was suppressed in the ninth century. The Eastern Christianity of that period is commemorated by the Assyrian Stele and Daqin Pagoda of Xi'an. Christianity was again introduced in the XIII century via the Mongol Empire (many Mongols belonged to the Assyrian Church) during the Yuan dynasty, but declined rapidly with the coming of the native Chinese Ming dynasty in the 14th century (and when the Mongols—after their destruction of Baghdad—abandoned Christ for Mohammed).

Russian missionaries arrive in China in 1684.

The first Orthodox mission establishment was begun in 1715 at Beijing by an archimandrite, Hilarion. This mission is first recorded in the Russo-Chinese Treaty of Kyakhta (1727). The Chinese government conceded to the Russians the right to build an Orthodox chapel at the ambassadorial quarters of Beijing. The mission would eventually publish volumes of research in Chinese studies in the 1850s and 1860s. Two clerics became well known for scholarship in the subject, the monk Iakinthos and the archimandrite Palladios, who also compiled a dictionary.

By 1949—time of the Communist takeover—106 Orthodox churches were open in China. Parishioners included Russian White-Army refugees and approximately 10,000 Chinese converts. Many churches were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (St. Nicholas church in Harbin, for example).



Holy Wisdom church in Harbin



The Boxer Rebellion of 1898–1900 targeted foreign missionaries and Chinese converts to Christianity. Orthodox Chinese were among those killed. The rebels also burned the Orthodox mission’s library at Beijing. The Orthodox liturgical calendar for June 24 remembers 222 Chinese Orthodox Christians, including Father Mitrophan, who were slaughtered in 1900, as the Holy Martyrs of China. In spite of the uprising, by 1902, there were 32 Orthodox churches in China with close to 6,000 adherents. The Church also ran schools and orphanages.



A church in Wuhan

NOTE.—The factoids in this piece were distilled from a Wikipedia article on the Orthodox Church in China. This is also the source of the photographs of three churches.