



Patriarchal Visit - Christian Unity



Visit of the Patriarch Bartholomew

During his visit to Paris from the 28th to the 30th of January, His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew celebrated a Te Deum (Moleben) in the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St. Alexander Nevsky in Paris. Many priests and faithful in the cathedral were there to welcome him. The choir, led by Subdeacon Alexander Kedrov, gave its very best, as it always does on important occasions. The celebration was conducted with pomp and solemnity; everyone wanted to pay homage to His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch. At the end of the service, His Eminence Archbishop Job gave a speech of welcome and thanks to which His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew responded (the text of their speeches can be found on pages 6 and 7 of this leaflet). He most notably reaffirmed the support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for our Archdiocese, and wished Archbishop Job success in his new position of service.

PATRIARCHAL VISIT

During his three-day visit to France from 28 to 30 January, His Holiness, Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, made several very important speeches that were published in part by the Catholic press.

The first of these talks was a «Discourse» at the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences on Tuesday, January 28 in the morning. The Patriarch, who is well-known to be involved in the cause of religious freedom, gave a highly acclaimed speech on freedom of religion in celebration of the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan.

After referring to the historical context in which the Edict of Milan was proclaimed as well as its implications for Christian history, he also recalled the reservations about it made by Christos Yannaras: «The emergence of Christianity as the religion *imperii* produced problems for the Church itself and bequeathed 'strong temptations' regarding authority over the following centuries".

His Holiness then gave a brief summary of the events of the past century: «How can we forget the cruel persecution by the Communist atheistic regimes against the Church, against religious expression in general, during the twentieth century». The Patriarch continued, speaking extensively on the secularization of our society and the necessity of reassessing the role and function of religion in the fields of anthropology, spirituality, culture and society. He stated:

«The question of human rights is probably the chief one ever addressed to religions. (...) Among human rights, the right to freedom of religion is the greatest challenge faced by religions, yet it also assures them a positive perspective. The guarantee of the right to freedom of religion requires more than that religions simply tolerate different perspectives. Tolerance certainly has nothing to do with a nihilistic acceptance of anything at all, with a flippant approval of different points of view and no regard for the truth. Openness to

differences presupposes a sincere appreciation and respect for one's own tradition, inner strength and self-confidence. One who does not respect one's own tradition is not able to understand or respect the tradition of others. The key issue in the proper approach to religious freedom is how to understand the truth and the relationship to the truth. It is important to accept that the boundaries between truth and non-truth do not coincide with our own religion and the religion of others. Such an assumption naturally means neither relativism nor theological minimalism. The truth of religion cannot be separated from the truth of human freedom. God is the God of the human being. This means that a substantial criterion of the truth of religion is whether it respects and protects human dignity.»

The Patriarch then denounced the

«fundamentalism of modernity that continues to regard religion as a pre-modern phenomenon incompatible with the progress of modern open societies (...) We believe that this is a position that not only ignores the anthropological, social, cultural and spiritual functions of religion, but also negates the victories of modernity itself (...) the crucial question to ask today is not when will religion be completely marginalized, but how long can a society cut off from its religious roots survive.»

In conclusion, His Holiness, Bartholomew, recalled that:

«The twentieth century, a period marking impressive progress in science and technology, improved living standards and cultural levels for a large proportion of the world population, was also the most violent century in history, with regard to both the practice of violence by man against his neighbor and cruelty against nature. (...) the Orthodox Church is called to testify boldly of freedom in Christ, solidarity with human beings and Creation, and to articulate her own word of faith, hope and love before God and humanity. It is not at all acci-

dental that for the self-identity of the Orthodox Church, the Sign of the Cross which St. Constantine the Great 'saw in the sky' reveals the mission of the Church as service to humanity, civilization and the world, in order to fulfill the command of Christ: 'If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.' (Mt. 16:24.) The Cross of Christ, which cannot be considered without the Resurrection, expresses the quintessence of our freedom, 'the truth about freedom'.»

On the afternoon of Tuesday the 28th, the Patriarch met Nicolas Hulot, named special envoy for the protection of the planet by President Hollande, to discuss with him the Churches' engagement in the fight against climate change. His Holiness, Bartholomew I, proposed that during his meeting with Pope Francis in the Holy Land, a paragraph of the joint statement by the two religious leaders should be devoted to ecology and climate protection. The Patriarch also expressed the hope that the Orthodox Church might offer - through Metropolitan Emmanuel, the representative of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in France - to proclaim September 1, the first day of the Orthodox year, «Creation Day», and thus stimulate the awareness of Christians regarding the defense of the environment in an ecumenical perspective.

On the evening of Tuesday the 28th, a Te Deum for the new civil year was held in the Greek Metropolia, under the patronage of the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops of France. On this occasion, His Holiness, Bartholomew, gave a short speech, recalling in particular that

«Contrary to certain ideologies which emerged during the Enlightenment, the Christian Faith cannot be reduced to a form of moral enslavement, to a force for institutional coercion which, under the cover of a message of love, in fact, preaches submission. (...) We recognize humanity, in the words of the book of Genesis, to be created «in the image and likeness» of God. The image of God in man is considered a gift - that of the right to be free, engraved in the profoundest depths of our nature. (...) In May, we will once more find our Brother in the Lord, His Holiness Pope Francis, in the Holy Land, fifty years after our blessed predecessors, His Holiness Pope Paul VI and His Holiness Patriarch Athenagoras, exchanged a kiss which was to transform a millennium of separation



and confrontation. Our next meeting is an important event in the relations between the sister Roman Catholic Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate and, through him, the entire Orthodox Church. This will not be merely to reiterate the strong ecumenical commitment taken there five decades ago, but to intensify the encounters to take a new step towards the restoration of full communion between the two sister Churches. The meeting will not be purely ceremonial. Otherwise, it would be of no interest. By finding ourselves again, we mean that the walls of separation constructed by history are on the point of yielding. (...) However, dialogue and reconciliation with the Roman Catholic Church, as is true of every ecumenical initiative, cannot attain the conditions of its own development except through Pan-Orthodox work. Today we are on the eve of an important Synaxis at the Phanar of Primates of the Orthodox Churches, on the Sunday of Orthodoxy which marks the celebration of the first Sunday of Lent. In the new conditions in which the Orthodox Church finds itself after the end of communism, at a time when migration flows bring Orthodox populations throughout the whole planet, more than ever we must be attentive to the unity of communion. Otherwise, we cannot consider ourselves to be true witnesses of Christ.»

After the ceremony, the Patriarch met with members of the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops of France.

In the welcome speech that His Eminence, Metropolitan Emmanuel of France,

and the making of those "small gestures" that allow real progress to emerge, much more than the time it takes to perform a service (which is also necessary) where one can imagine, for a moment, that everything is resolved...

Father Guy (Fontaine), Dean of Belgium

CHRISTIAN UNITY IN BELGIUM : THE JOURNEY OF AN ECUMENICAL MARATHON

There is a service every evening. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, for the Orthodox priest that I am, is truly a race of endurance. Are there so few examples of this in the world? In Wallonia, these meetings for the Church are still relatively unknown. This fact makes it even more important for us to witness what we have shared.

Without a doubt, my "week" has been the very image of what is happening everywhere in Belgium. As the case may be, I am simply to be present at a vigil and to read the prayer we have prepared, or to read "our way", because it is different from what many are used to hearing. Or we celebrate a vesperal service in an approach that is based (without knowing it) on this quote from Dom Lambert Baudouin, the founder of the community of Amay-Chevetogne, "If you want to know the brother from whom you are separated, pray as he does." What's more, there are services where we make an imaginative effort to incorporate various symbols, the ritual concocted a bit like theatre; everyone finds himself included (or is meant to), and nothing bothers anyone. In certain cases, it is simply a moment to share, where each person explains what he wishes to highlight of his "leaning." At times, this means a conference with a time for questions and answers.

Fortunately it only lasts a week... for both the energy and the schedule of the participants. Unfortunately it only lasts a week... because too often, if one thinks intensely about ecumenical relations during these eight days, one hastens, with the best of intentions, to put everything on the shelf until the next evening, the next meeting, the next "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity." Luckily, there are "dialogues" that, at the regional level, and concretely throughout the year, at times lead to involvement in societal problems

addressed to the Patriarch on this occasion, he said «I dare to believe that the presence of highly diversified Orthodoxy in France, takes part not only in the tradition of welcome peculiar to this country, but also helps the ability of our communities to integrate into it. They seek, at once, to keep in an often complex balance, their own identity, their own traditions, together with an attitude of openness and dialogue. For it must be stressed that Orthodoxy is no longer made-up simply of immigrants. She was able to draw on her own forces to be an integral part of the ferments in the world in which it is evolving. Without sounding too presumptuous, in its own way, Orthodoxy is nothing other than what was already announced in the Letter to Diognetus: 'In a word, what the soul is to the body, the Christian are to the world'.»

On Wednesday, January 29, at 10 a.m., the Patriarch visited the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. A report on this visit and the speeches on this occasion is included elsewhere in this Bulletin. In the afternoon, His Holiness, Bartholomew, met with M. Laurent Fabius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Jean-Paul Delevoye, President of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council.

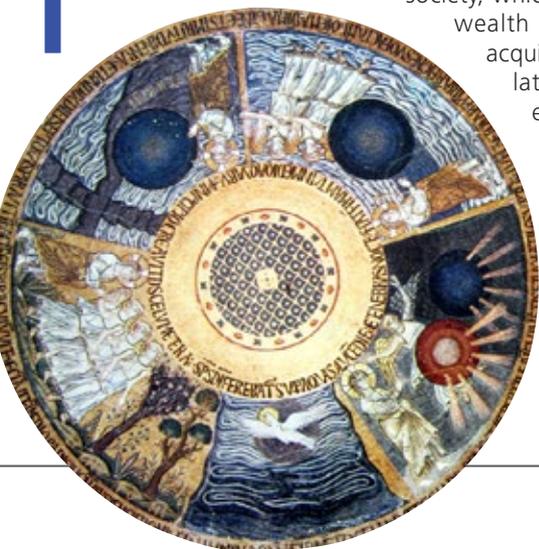
The last day of his visit, Thursday, January 30, Patriarch Bartholomew attended the Divine Liturgy celebrated in the Greek Orthodox Metropolia on the occasion of the Feast of the Three Holy Hierarchs.

This three-day visit was completed at the Institut Catholique de Paris, which awarded the Patriarch the title of doctor honoris causa. On this occasion, His Holiness, Bartholomew I, delivered a lecture on «Religion and Environment: What Spiritual Challenges for Today?». The Patriarch placed particular emphasis on the specificity of Christian commitment to environmental issues:

«The difference lies not in the degree of self-preservation and protection of the world's natural resources, which should be the priority of all men, whether political leaders or ordinary citizens. The difference - or the Christian specificity - lies in our conception of the world, and not in the goal aimed at by this process. Belief in man as 'steward' and 'priest' of Creation is marked by a deep sense of justice and moderation. We are called to preserve the Creation as we serve its Creator.»

The Patriarch then expressed with great vigor the seriousness of the situation in which we find ourselves today, before engaging in a vigorous critique of the consumer society:

«The degradation and destruction of the environment is a form of suicide of humanity. It appears that we are inexorably trapped in lifestyles and systems that continue to ignore the constraints of nature that we can not in any way deny or underestimate. It must not be that we shall reach a point of no return before we gain awareness of the limited capacity of our planet. (...) The unlimited exploitation of natural resources leads to the consumerism that is so characteristic of our contemporary world which is thus transformed into a society of lust. Indeed, this is not to satisfy vital human needs, but rather desires, constantly growing and endlessly cultivated by our consumer society, which makes an idol of wealth and promotes the acquisition and accumulation of goods. The exploitation of natural resources resulting from greed and lust, and not from basic needs, creates an imbalance in nature that can no longer be



renewed, as evidenced by the problems of overfishing, agricultural overproduction, deforestation and desertification.»

His Holiness, Bartholomew, then stressed the Eucharistic dimension of these questions:

«We forget too often that man is not only a logical or political being, but it is above all a Eucharistic creature capable of gratitude and with the power to bless God for the gift of Creation. A Eucharistic spirit implies therefore that we use the natural resources of the world with a spirit of gratitude, offering them back to God. Indeed, in addition to the earth's resources, we also offer ourselves to him. When offering the Eucharistic Prayer in the Orthodox Church, the Priest says, 'Your own, of Your own, we offer You, on behalf of all and for all.' In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, we give to God what belongs to Him: we offer Him bread and wine, which are the transformation, by human labor, of the wheat and grapes given us by the Creator. In return, God transforms the bread and wine into the mystery of Eucharistic communion. The Eucharistic offering is a fine example of synergistic offering in which man working constructively, not destructively, with the will of God. To grow the gifts of God constructively, and not destructively, should be the attitude of man vis-à-vis the natural environment. This Eucharistic spirit grows in us an ascetic spirit. Orthodox spirituality teaches us to live in harmony with our environment and teaches us how to preserve it while reducing our consumerism through moderation and abstinence, as well as by fasting and other similar spiritual disciplines. (...) The practice of fasting to which the spiritual life in the Orthodox Church invites us is another way to join heaven and earth. Fasting is the way of not wanting, of wanting less, and of recognizing the needs of others. By abstaining from certain foods, we do not punish ourselves, but rather we make ourselves capable of recognizing the proper value of each food. In addition, fasting involves vigilance. By paying attention to what we do, to the food we take and to the quantity of what we have, we better appreciate the reality of suffering and the value of sharing.»

In his conclusion, the Patriarch recalled the spiritual roots of the crisis in which we find ourselves.

«The crisis that our world is facing is not merely an environmental crisis. This crisis is primarily spiritual since it concerns the way we think about or imagine the world. By cutting itself off from God, humanity is also cutting itself off from its neighbors and its own environment, and thus, individualism and utilitarianism lead us to abuse the sacred Creation and lead us to the contemporary ecological impasse. We have a responsibility before God for every living creature and for the whole natural Creation which we must treat with appropriate love and great care. It is only in this way that we shall ensure to future generations a healthy environment conducive to happiness. Otherwise, the insatiable greed of our generation will be a mortal sin which will result destruction and death.»

CHRISTIAN UNITY IN METZ (FRANCE): PARISH OF THE THREE HOLY HIERARCHS

This year again, as every year, we contributed to the week of prayers for Christian unity: vespers were celebrated in our chapel on Tuesday, January 21st. We also took part in various ecumenical celebrations in the city of Metz and its surroundings. This year we had also two novelties.

Concerts of orthodox chant

Our church choir gave two concerts:

- On Sunday November 24th, 2013 at 4.00 P.M. in the castle of Luneville (we were invited by the local interreligious group) ;
- On Sunday, January 26th at 4.00 P.M. in the Church of saint Eucaire in Metz (during the closing ceremony of the week for unity).

Our choir is composed of 8 persons; originally all members were French, then several Russian speaking persons joined us. We sing mainly in French, although we have also added several chants in Slavonic; all our chants are based on traditional Slav music.

The program of our concerts included fixed chants from the Sunday Vigil and the Liturgy, as well as several chants from the liturgical year cycle, particularly from the Holy Week and Easter.

We did feel some qualms when we took our decision. We have no experience in singing other than during our Services. Singing for us is tightly entwined with prayer and liturgical action. But it seemed interesting to us to introduce our way of praying to people who have usually no reason to attend our Services.

Generally speaking, people have heard of orthodox chants only thanks to more or less professional chorales from Russia. Musically their shows are very beautiful, and we do not pretend to be compared to them. But for a public who does not understand



Slavonic, the problem is that they see no intrinsic link between music and words. We think that this link is essential, as we are convinced that the beauty of our chants is the result of the balance between the substance (of our faith, of our prayer) and the format.

Our intuition did not fail us. The audiences were relatively numerous (around 60 persons in Luneville, one hundred in Metz). They really felt the beauty of the music and the praying atmosphere stemming from our chants.

Common celebration of Saint Blaise's day

The church of Saint Eucaire, to which our chapel belongs, owns a relic of Saint Blaise (he was a bishop in Sebaste in the Lesser Armenia, and died a martyr in 316; the Orthodox Church celebrates him on February 11th). Every year a pilgrimage is organized on February 3rd. We accepted the invitation of our Catholic friends and celebrated together the Saint's day, who is honoured in both religions. The celebration, which lasted from 7.00 A.M. to 8.00 P.M., included Orthodox vespers..

Fr. André Jacquemot

Our site : <http://www.orthodoxeametz.fr/>

CHRISTIAN UNITY IN BRUXELLES (BELGIUM)

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, on January 22nd, 2014, the French-speaking parish of the Holy Trinity and of Saint Cosmas and Damian hosted a FOB meeting (Brussels Orthodox Forum, see www.orthodoxie.be) with Gerard Fomerand (Patriarchate of Antioch in France), author of "Renaissance du Christianisme" (Ed. Fidelité, 2013). The debate dealt with full communion and Christian unity, a most controversial topic!

Forty or so persons came from various parts of the country and from different Church jurisdictions; they attempted to define

the concepts of communion and Eucharist. It appears that in some parts of the world and at some time in our history, Christians have experienced or still are experiencing Eucharistic hospitality, a Christian custom completely banned from our Orthodox communities in Western Europe.

The speaker expressed the opinion that, if we want to see progress towards Christian unity, we need to have common witnesses to charity; to achieve this, we may dream of the World Council of Churches becoming a World "Entente" of Churches. Some mystics or theologians in different Churches have

already inaugurated the way to Unity: Nicholas Berdiaev, Matta El Maskine or Maurice Zundel; Thanks to their testimony of inner unity and peace, the Church as a whole is able to progress towards a growing reconciliation between separated brothers.

The conference ended with a general discussion between participants and a toast to friendship. Participants decided to hold more such meetings, thus enhancing communion between Orthodox from different communities.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

HOMILY OF ARCHBISHOP JOB DELIVRED THE
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21 OF THE CATHOLIC
INSTITUTE OF PARIS

The theme for this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was Baptism and Christian Vocation. Baptism, which is meant to lead towards unity in Christ, has unfortunately been a source of division between Christians. Saint Paul thus challenges us, asking if Christ himself is divided. In his first epistle to the Corinthians, he addresses disputes among them, some adhering to the teachings of Paul, while others to Apollos, Peter or Christ. If the apostle Paul were with us today, he would say that some claim to be Orthodox, others Catholic and others Protestant. Some adhere to the Pope, others to Luther, others to Calvin, and others to the Church Fathers. It is for this reason that Paul's exhortation remains as current as ever, and resonates in our hearts today with just as much vigour.

In its Decree on Ecumenism, Vatican II, a major council of the Roman Catholic Church for which several special events are currently being held in honour of its fiftieth anniversary, affirms in its preamble, "*Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only. However, many Christian communions present themselves to men as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ; all indeed profess to be followers of the Lord but differ in mind and go their different ways, as if Christ Himself were divided. Such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature.*"

It is important to acknowledge the work of Vatican II, especially in order to promote a constructive dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian confessions, particularly the Orthodox Church. This council has opened new perspectives on the weakening, or the neutralisation, of the consequences of the tragic events that shattered the unity of the Church. Saint John Chrysostom already stressed in the fourth century that "*.. it was made a Church, not that we who come together might be divided, but that they who are divided might be joined: and this act of assembling shows... We must all be in the Church as in a common home: we form one body. We have only one baptism, one table, one source, and also one Father*" (Homely on 1 Cor 10).

In this week of prayer for Christian unity, it is fitting to question the sense that each one of us, as a Christian, gives to his baptism, which introduces us to ecclesial life and which opens access to the Eucharistic table. Is baptism a sign of division for us, or is it a call towards unity in Christ? Certainly, we cannot ignore the reasons that have separated us for centuries, a millenium, in fact, nor resolve them in a day. Nevertheless, to be conscious that through baptism we have been included in the body of Christ will perhaps allow us to overcome and move beyond them.

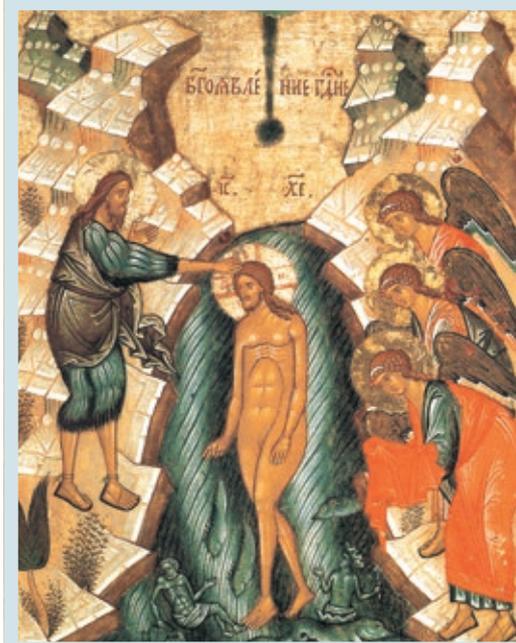
Orthodox Diocesan Services SERVICES DIOCÉSAINS ORTHODOXES APPROVISIONNEMENT DES PAROISSES

« Services Diocésains Orthodoxes » (**orthodox diocesan services**) is a legal company (*an SARL, the equivalent of a Ltd. in the UK*) created in 1999 by our Exarchate. This company took over the « Diocesan candle manufacturing with the Exarchate » which had been founded by His Eminence the Metropolitan Eulogius to provide parishes with candles and church supplies. SDO pursues the same goals as the candle manufacture but with modern equipment. Candles are no longer home made. SDO has found very good quality candles at competitive prices. All the same, SDO can provide church communities and the clergy with church articles and liturgical ornaments at interesting prices for these communities, as SDO's sole target is to break even. The idea is to provide church services to alleviate the life of the communities by offering an easy channel to find everything they need for liturgical celebrations. The SDO website which has just been created is user friendly and allows online orders: <http://s-d-o.fr>

For this, we must remind ourselves of the words of the apostle Paul, "*For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect*" (1 Cor 1:17).

Baptism is meant to introduce us to a Christ-centred life, a Gospel-centred life, a life shaped by evangelical precepts. It is thus in this spirit of evangelical love that all of us who have been baptized in Christ and who in this way have put on Christ, must lead our lives, independent of our confessional affiliations and of those with whom we associate. And it is by this love that the world will recognize us as true disciples of Christ, according to his teaching: "*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*" (John 13:35).

In this week of Prayer for Christian Unity, let us therefore discern what place Christ has held in our lives since our baptism. Let us examine and put our lives to the test in order to see if we are truly living in Christ, in conformity with the Gospel and its precepts. Because it is only in declaring ourselves followers of Christ, our only light and our only Saviour,



and not others (however exemplary and worthy of respect), that we will overcome our divisions and find unity. Let us bind ourselves to Christ alone, practicing his commandments in order to find in Him this strongly desired unity, the Church, which must be modelled on the Trinity. Let us learn to see each Christian, everyone who is called by the name of Christ, as a Christophorus, as a bearer of Christ by baptism and above all, recognize every human being, regardless of race, sex, ethnic origins or religious belief, as created in the image of God. It is through such charity that we can claim ourselves to be Christ followers, and that the world will recognize us as His true disciples, and that we will

move towards the restoration of full Eucharistic communion between our Churches. That we may be led in this endeavour by the one, holy, consubstantial and indivisible Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in whose name we have been baptized, to whom is due honour, praise and worship unto the ages of ages. Amen..

*† Job, Archevêque de Telmessos,
Exarque du Patriarcat œcuménique*

Council of the Archdiocese

The Council of the Archdiocese met February 5, 2014 and elected on the proposal of His Eminence Archbishop Job Telmessos Archpriest Eugene Czapiuk as Vice President, Serge Runge as Secretary and Mr. Alexander Victoroff as Treasurer. It was also decided to convene a pastoral meeting and a meeting of «Matouchky» (wives of priests) on 1 May 2014, which will be followed by a diocesan pilgrimage on May 2

S. E. Archbishop Job Telmessos and the entire Council of the Archdiocese thank the previous diocesan administration and especially Michel Sollogoub who served as Secretary for nearly ten years for the work.

PATRIARCHAL VISIT

IN THE MORNING OF 29 JANUARY, HIS HOLINESS THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW I WENT TO SAINT-ALEXANDRE-DE-LA-NEVA CATHEDRAL, WHERE SHE CHAIRED A TE DEUM IN THE PRESENCE OF MANY CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE.

ON THIS OCCASION, HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP JOB TELMESSOS GAVE A GIFT TO HIS HOLINESS AN ICON OF ST. ALEXANDER NEVSKY WAS GREETED BY THESE WORDS:

Your All-Holiness, Father and Master,
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Your presence here today, under the golden dome of this magnificent Cathedral of Saint-Alexander-Nevsky is a source of joy and a great blessing to us all.

The gift of your visit to the headquarters of our archdiocese constitutes a great event for several reasons. Above all, it attests to your incessant paternal love for your Patriarchal Exarchate who holds extensive internal autonomy. For it is a maternal, and not merely an institutional relationship that binds us with the Mother Church. Indeed, we are gathered here today in the house of our God as a family, for you are a spiritual Father to us all.

Our choice to remain under the omophorion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate renews and continues to some extent the ancient regime of the Patriarchal Exarchate once



held by the ancient Metropolitanate of Kiev, the Mother of the Russian cities, before it was suppressed in 1687, when the Tsar subordinated it to the spiritual oversight of the Patriarch of Moscow, to which the Ecumenical Patriarch, Dionysius IV, consented on condition that it should retain its autonomy as a Patriarchal Exarchate in reference to the Ecumenical Patriarch.

Your presence here today is indeed a gift because it recalls in an exceptional way the sense of privilege of being linked to the primatial Seat of the Orthodox Church, with the Head of the ecclesial body, which is not only a great honor but also a great responsibility if we wish to respond authentically to the loftiness of the special task entrusted to our Exarchate with respect to both inter-Orthodox and inter-Church relations.

Besides, your visit confirms that our relationship with the inexhaustible source of rich spiritual heritage of the Orthodox



Church, which we receive from the Mother Church, serves as a guarantor of the seriousness of our witness to the society in which we

live and which so needs to be illuminated. On this point, it is undeniable that our Exarchate can play a key role in building bridges between our Byzantine Church Matrix and our Russian spiritual heritage, between Eastern and Western Christendom,

Eminences, Dear Eminence Job, Archbishop of Telmessos, Excellencies, Dear Fathers, Ladies and Gentlemen, Beloved children in the Lord,

We are delighted to be back with you today in this magnificent St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, which is at the heart of the Russian immigration which has continued to transform over the decades. Throughout the 20th century its history has been that of the uprooted or exiles far from Russia which political upheaval had made unbearable. In this uprooting, your community has found the creative force to manage the conditions of life in the Diaspora, while tapping into the source of a spiritual heritage consisting of liturgy, hope and grace.

Also, we would especially like to welcome your new Archbishop, His Eminence Job of Telmessos, our Patriarchal Exarch, who was given the responsibility of our ecclesial communities of the Russian tradition in Western Europe for some time. He has our confidence and we are certain that he will find the words and actions needed to strengthen and reassure you and especially to affirm the unity and communion of the Body of Christ which is the Church.

We have taken note of the concerns expressed by some of our faithful in a long letter which reached us. We studied it with great interest. We can already inform you that a response will be officially communicated in the coming days.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate is committed to your Exarchate. So we have said and so we reiterate. It is obvious that the Mother Church of Constantinople must be concerned

and between Tradition and modernity.

Of course, your presence is a blessing to me personally because it strengthens me in the mission awarded me by the Mother Church, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, a mission to which I shall faithfully dedicate all the days of my life.

For all these reasons, in welcoming you among us this day, we give thanks to the Triune God for your fatherly care, so continuous and so generous, proclaiming:

Hosanna in the highest Heaven!

† Job, Archevêque de Telmessos,
Exarque du Patriarcat œcuménique

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land 20 to 30 october 2014

with the participation of Archbishop Job

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for her followers. In all things, it must protect the integrity of the Body of Christ. However, the unity of the Church thrives on the diversity of charisms bestowed by the Holy Spirit. Everyone has a special place. The Apostle Paul writes in the First letter to the Corinthians: «It is one and the same Spirit Who works [the gift of charisms], distributing to each one individually as He wills» (1 Cor.12:11). But among all these charisms, that of the Episcopate plays a key role. Meditate on the words of the ancient Prayer of Consecration of Bishops as transmitted by Saint Hippolytus of Rome in his Apostolic Tradition: «O Father, Who know the hearts, grant to Your servant whom You elected to the Episcopate, that he may feed Your holy flock [...] serving you night and day, that He may please You and offer You the Gifts of your holy Church ...» (Sources Chrétiennes 11, 29).

Your Eminence, dear Archbishop Job,

Again, we thank you warmly for this welcome. We pray to the Lord to guide you at the beginning of your episcopal ministry. May the Spirit of the Lord grant you the discernment necessary to grow the gifts of the faithful for which you are responsible for the greater glory of the Triune God.

† His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I