



**THE UNITY  
OF THE CHURCH**  
AND  
**THE WORLD CONFERENCE**  
OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

(Letter to Mr. Robert Gardiner, secretary of the Commission to arrange  
a World Conference of Christian Communities)

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THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD  
CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

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*With the Permission and Approval of*  
*HIS GRACE THE MOST REVEREND VITALY,*  
*Archbishop of Montreal and Canada*

INTRODUCTION.

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Where should we turn to find a thought to introduce this little book if not to that greatest of the teachers of nations, the holy Apostle Paul? For he it is that exhorts us: As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, thus walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the Faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ. (Col. II. 6-8)

At the Council of Hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, held in Montreal in September 1971, it was decreed that, because of the current growth of the ecumenist heresy, our clergy should revert to the stricter practice of receiving converts from Latinism and Protestantism by the rite of baptism, rather than by chrismation, which was previously the general practice. Only in the case of necessity and with the blessing of the bishop allowing were other practices now to be allowed for reasons of economy or pastoral condescension.

This decision of the Council of Hierarchs was greatly misunderstood in many quarters, both by those outside the Russian Synod Abroad and, sadly, by some within. Some accused the Synod of becoming sectish; others protested that the Orthodox had always "accepted" the baptism of certain heretics as valid, etc. Thus there were many in danger of being spoiled through vain deceit and the tradition of men. It is therefore with great joy that we are able to present the following letter of the New Hieromartyr Archbishop Ilarion to Mr. Robert Gardiner, for in it Vladyka Ilarion nicely answered questions about which there is great confusion at the present time: firstly, the Church's doctrine of Her own Unity, and secondly, how this Unity is unimpaired despite the fact that the Orthodox have, at different times and in different places, used different rites in uniting those of the western confessions, who wished to be saved, to themselves.

It is a happy coincidence that our monastery in Boston lies almost adjacent to the Gardiner estate, where in the early part of this century Archbishop Ilarion's addressee was living. However apart from this we know very little about Mr. Gardiner. Of Archbishop Ilarion himself we are blessed in knowing much more, because his life has been published in English (Orthodox Life, Jordanville, no. 3, 1971), as have some of his other works. Archbishop Ilarion, still an Archimandrite when this letter was written, was a close spiritual disciple of our beloved Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky. Like his teacher, his writings are distinguished by amazing lucidity of thought and a penetrating understanding of the doctrines of the fathers. Metropolitan Anthony was fore-ordained of God to lead the Russian faithful in diaspora and to confess the Faith amid the nations; Archbishop Ilarion received a martyr's crown on 15th December, 1929. On this day, the Holy Church celebrates the Holy Hieromartyr Elevation of Illyria, and we cannot fail but to remark a certain similarity between the two hieromartyrs; both were exceedingly erudite, both were quickly raised to the episcopal throne, both were staunch defenders of the ecclesiastical doctrines, and both were crowned with martyr's wreaths.

We offer praise and thanksgiving to our true God, our dear Saviour, who, in these last days as in the first centuries, has raised up champions of Orthodoxy who put down the audacity of the impious. We thank Him also that He has deemed us worthy to be able to present this book in English for the strengthening of the faithful. We would also like to thank Archbishop Vitaly of Montreal and his synodia, who in 1955 first published Archbishop Ilarion's letter in Russian, and have now undertaken to reprint it in its English translation. Our special thanks are also due to Mrs Margaret Jerenic of Acton, Massachusetts, for her excellent and fluent translation of the letter. The fathers, here at the monastery, carefully checked her work and found it to be practically faultless; only a few minor alterations were necessary.

There is one point to which we would like to draw our readers attention. In the original Archbishop Ilarion often used "Catholic", as is also done in English, to mean Roman Catholic. Hence he speaks of a Catholic priest, or the Catholic mass, etc. In order to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding we have used the term "latin" in all such cases, except when the full term "Roman Catholic" is employed. In one or two instances, the word "catholicism" has been used and this always in the generally accepted use, meaning the faith, practice and system of the Roman Catholic Church. When employed alone the term "catholic" in the present text is therefore to be understood in its proper meaning, that is pertaining to the Catholic Church which is, of course, our own Orthodox Church; the Romans having wrongly appropriated the designation.

Archbishop Ilarion's letter was written nearly sixty years ago, and yet, because he draws from the crystal waters of the tradition of the Church, we are amazed how he has managed to pin-point the basic weakness of the ecumenical movement which in those days was just beginning to gain momentum. Soon after he wrote this letter, the Russian Empire fell, the Orthodox people of Russia were subjected to persecution and torment. One after another, Orthodox states fell, until in our own day there is not one Orthodox country left in the world. One after another the Orthodox hierarchs of the local autocephalous churches betrayed their flocks and our Faith, and joined themselves to the innovators, to the ecumenists, to the apostates. Every circumstance of church-life has changed, and yet the teaching of the Orthodox remains as ever the same, and we direct your attention to the words of Vladyka Ilarion and the holy fathers whom he cites; and we ask those who dispute with us and mock at us for our "intolerance": Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? The base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should boast before Him. But of Him ye (the pious and Orthodox Christians) are in Christ Jesus, who from God is made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption unto us: that according as it is written, He that boasteth, let him boast in the Lord. (cf. 1 Cor. I. 20-31)

**HOLY TRANSFIGURATION MONASTERY,  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.**

Feast of St. Photios the Great of Constantinople,  
and of our Righteous Fathers and  
Elders Barsanouphios and John the Prophet,  
1975.

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## THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES



I was very pleased to receive the pamphlets that you sent: they enabled me to become acquainted with the gratifying movement among the American Christians, whose aim is to do everything possible for bringing together people who throughout the world make their appeals to the holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. I could not help noticing the spirit of love and humility with which all the publications of your Commission are imbued, and this spirit could not fail in convincing me that all your intentions issue from a pure and sincere heart. I am also impressed by the zeal with which you propagate your idea of a world conference of Christians. I have before me your pamphlets which have been printed in three parts of the world—Europe, America, and Africa.

I also have had the pleasure of receiving your kind letters, in one of which (of September 13/26, 1916) you expressed the hope that besides reading your pamphlets I would also inform you of my comments.

I am very glad to enter into a discussion with you on a question which is so close to my heart, that is, the question concerning the Church. How could it be otherwise? What conscientious Christian does not feel sorrow in his heart when he witnesses hostility and dissent among those who should be united by virtue of their faith, among whom there should reign the peace, left behind by Christ as a gift to His disciples, and the love infused into the hearts of Christians by the Holy Spirit! There has been so much enmity and so many mutual accusations during the ages of separation, that now is the time to start speaking in the spirit of love and goodwill. I am quite willing to reiterate the words you use in your letter: The spirit of love must triumph over the spirit of hate; the spirit of humility — over the spirit of rebellion and pride.

During the years 1915 and 1916 I had followed with keen interest, in the journal "Faith and Reason," your correspondence with one of the most enlightened hierarchs of the Russian Church, Antony, Archbishop of Kharkov. This correspondence appears to me to be the most significant event in Russian theology for the past two years. The spirit of ardour for Divine truth in this correspondence is marvellously combined with frankness and with the spirit of love and goodwill. The Archbishop Antony presented his objections with complete candidness and resoluteness; but I was glad to read, in one of your booklets in Modern Greek, your comment that, according to the impression you got, those objections had not been made by an enemy wishing to perpetuate dissent among brethren. I also have read in your letter of November 1/14, 1916, about your fondness for the kind of research which, in the spirit of humility, either reveals new aspects of the Divine truth or roots out the tares growing in the midst of good wheat.

Because of all this I am convinced that I can write to you with complete frankness, without concealing my total disagreement with you at times, and without passing over in silence certain doubtful propositions.

I should like to make a brief preliminary remark. In your article, published in "Revue internationale ecclésiastique," a reprint of which I have received from you, you say about Archbishop Antony's treatises: "They are marked by stricter orthodoxy (de la plus stricte orthodoxie), but they are of significance in determining the doctrinal position of ultraconservative elements in the Russian Orthodox Church, in other words, of the hierarchy."

First of all, in no wise can I acknowledge Archbishop Antony to be a representative of ultraconservative elements in our Church. We have long since grown accustomed to regard him as a foremost champion of renovation in our school theology, of its emancipation from the strangling fetters of scholasticism, imposed on it by the unfortunate historical conditions in which our Church had existed in the seventeenth and, especially, in the eighteenth century. The appellation "ultraconservatives" may be applied in our theology only to those who blindly adhere to the scholastic theology imported from the West as the only possible and exclusively true one. I assure you that among such ultraconservatives you would find more persons holding the same views as you do on the questions touched upon in your correspondence with Archbishop Antony. You and they would have agreed on certain scholastic propositions left intact in the "new" Russian theology which does not acknowledge scholastic authorities. Nor can I regard Archbishop Antony's views as being typical of our hierarchy alone. Not being of the hierarchy,<sup>1</sup> I rather share his opinions, and I also know laymen with like views, who express them in print as well. Besides, no matter how I try, I cannot understand your statement concerning stricter orthodoxy. I am of the opinion that in the matters of faith there can be but one strict orthodoxy; here we can have either truth or error, but there can be no truth which is strict, and

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written when the author was still an archimandrite. (Note of translator).

another which is less so. Archbishop Antony emphasized strongly, moreover, in his epistolar pamphlets that he was presenting not his personal views but the doctrine of the Church, just as an unbiased Mohammedan or Jewish scholar would have done.

Archbishop Antony has already raised the question concerning the unity of the Church. So do I in order to answer your kind letters. I am raising this question precisely because I wish the planned world conference of Christian communities the greatest success possible in achieving its lofty goal. This question, it seems to me, cannot by any means be circumvented at the conference itself. I am not satisfied with the views on the unity of the Church expressed in the pamphlets you sent me. What is important is, of course, not that they do not satisfy me, but that they hardly can be justified from the point of view of the ancient Christian Church.

You have presented in brief your viewpoint concerning the unity of the Church in your third letter (of February 5/18, 1916) to Archbishop Antony "The Church of Christ is of course one, despite the existence of various particular churches, but the sins of humanity have obscured her visibility." Your second letter (of June 12/25, 1915) dealt with the subject in greater detail. "I believe that there exists a spirit of Christian solidarity among all those who worship Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who believe in a Divine mission of the Church in the world, and in the praeternatural effect of the sacraments. This spirit of solidarity exists in spite of all theological differences of opinion. Through the sacrament of baptism, correctly administered, we all enter the spiritual kingdom of Christ. It is beyond my grasp that just because we are at odds concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit, or because we differ in sacramental rites, we acquire the right to hurl anathemas at those who do not share our viewpoint on these matters. I regard it as inconceivable that everything

could be lost in the Christian world outside a particular church, whatever she may be, that all the churches which call themselves those of Christ, could in actual fact be nothing but cadavers rotting away with gangrene." In the pamphlets that you sent I took particular notice of the prayers which you recommend for communal and private use, and which give solemn expression to your outlook on the unity of the Church, namely this: "O Lord Jesus Christ, who saidst unto Thine Apostles, Peace I leave with you: My peace I give unto you! Regard not our sins, but the faith of Thy Church; and grant her peace and unity, if this be Thy will. Our Lord Jesus Christ, we beseech Thee, look with compassion upon Thy Church, weakened and fettered by dissent and strife; bless the resolve to gather for a conference all who confess Thy Holy Name."

Thus, all communities which call themselves Christian comprise one Church of Christ, albeit weakened in her unity. Such a theory on the unity of the Church is not alien to some of the Russian theologians as well. Thus, the archpriest P. Ya. Svetlov asserts that the Christian creeds of the West comprise, along with the Orthodox faith, Christian churches belonging to the Catholic Church, and that they are not extra-ecclesiastical communities separated from the Church; that the extant Christian churches in the West and in the East are local churches or parts of the Catholic Church, and for any of them to assume the right of the Catholic Church constitutes misappropriation. At the same time, the Catholic Church is, in Fr. Svetlov's opinion, a unity of true believers, scattered everywhere in all local or particular Christian churches in the West and in the East, or, what amounts to the same thing, an aggregate of local churches of the East and the West which, in the absence of a possibility of convoking an Oecumenical Council and with the Church in a state of external division, is deprived of a complete outward or visible organization, yet in possession of an internal unity of faith and of grace-filled life

in Christ, Who Himself is at the head of His Church or Body.<sup>2</sup> As you can see, our Russian author expresses himself even more strongly than you do. Such a doctrine of the Church is absolutely inadmissible, however, since it was, beyond any doubt, alien to the ancient Church, where no reduced concept of Church unity had ever been known and where faith "in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church" had always and invariably been professed through the ninth article of the Creed. I could ask you this question: Do you and I belong to the one Church of Christ? In answering it you undoubtedly would mention the insignificance of our dogmatic differences and the virtually negligible difference in rites. For me, however, the answer is determined not by considerations of dogmatic disagreements but by the fact on hand: there is no ecclesiastical unity in grace between us. This fact cannot be disregarded, whereas you and Fr. Svetlov try to compensate for it by discoursing on dogmatic disagreements. For instance, two ideas underlie Fr. Svetlov's statements quoted above: 1) All Christian creeds agree in their essentials, and 2) differences, even dogmatic ones, between the Christian creeds are negligible and subject to exaggeration. We are willing to agree that both these ideas are quite correct. By no means, however, do they provide sufficient grounds for inferring that all Christian creeds belong to one Church of Christ. The Christian Church is not a philosophical or theological school, an affiliation with which is sufficiently determined by the acknowledgement of its theoretical precepts.

The principal truth of Christianity, its great mystery — the Incarnation of the Son of God — is acknowledged by all Christian creeds, yet this alone cannot fuse them into one Church. For, according to the Apostle James (II, 19), the devils also believe; as attested by the Gospel, they confessed their faith like the Apostle Peter did (Matt. XVI, 16; VIII,

<sup>2</sup> *Apologetic Presentation of Christian Doctrine*, Vol. 1, 3rd printing, Kiev, 1910, pp. 208-209.

26; Mark I, 24; Luke VIII, 28). But do they belong to one Church of Christ? On the other hand, the Church community undoubtedly embraces people who do not know the dogmas of the Council of Chalcedon and who are unable to say much about their dogmatic convictions. Finally, members of the Church enjoy much leeway in theological views, yet the broad spectrum of theological opinion does not disrupt the unity of the Church. When it comes to that, the Church does not even have a doctrinal system with all its sections worked out in detail. This is why school courses in dogmatic theology always differ from each other. This could not be so had the Church fixed obligatory answers to all dogmatic questions.

If the question of the belonging or non-belonging to the Church be formulated in terms of theoretical dogma, it will be seen that it even cannot be resolved in a definite way. Just how far should conformity to the Church's ideas go in dogmatic matters? Just in what is it necessary to agree and what kind of disagreement ensues following a separation from the Church? How to answer this question? And who has so much authority as to make the decision stand? Perhaps you will point to the faith in the incarnate Son of God as the chief characteristic of belonging to the Church. Yet the German Protestants are going to argue against the necessity of even this feature, since in their religion there are to be found even such ministers who openly deny the Divinity of the Saviour.

Christ never wrote a course in dogmatic religion. Precise formulation of the principal dogmas of Christianity took place centuries after the earthly life of the Saviour. What, then, determined the belonging to the Church in those, the very first, times of the historical existence of Christianity? This is attested to in the book of the Acts of the Apostles: "Such as should be saved were added to the Church" (II, 45; VI, 13-14). Membership in the Church is determined by the unity with the Church. It cannot be otherwise, if only because the Church is not a school of philosophy. She is a new mankind, a new grace-filled organism of love. She is the body of Christ. Christ

Himself compared the unity of His disciples with the organic unity of a tree and its branches. Two "bodies" or two trees standing side by side cannot be organically related to each other. What the soul is to the body, the Holy Spirit is to the Church; the Church is not only one body but also One Spirit. The soul does not bring back to life a member which has been cut off, and likewise the vital sap of a tree does not flow into the detached branch. A separated member dies and rots away. A branch that has been cut off dries up. These similes must guide us in a discussion of the unity of the Church. If we apply these similes, these figures of a tree and a body, to the Church, any separation from the Church, any termination of the unity with the Church will turn out to be incompatible with membership in the Church. It is not the degree of the dogmatic dissent on the part of the separated member that is important; what is significant in the extreme is the fact of separation as such, the cessation itself of the unity with the Church. Be it a separation on the basis of but a rebellion against the Church, a disciplinary insubordination without any dogmatic difference in opinion, separation from the Church will for the one that has fallen away have every sad consequence.

Not only heretics but schismatics too separate themselves from the Church. The essence of the separation remains the same.

In the ancient Church the reasoning went as follows: "Those who desired not to be unanimous in the Church of God, cannot be with God." "He professes himself falsely to be a Christian, just as the devil often falsely declares himself to be Christ," says St. Cyprian. This holy Father had to deal with the rebels against the Church, Novatus and Novatian. In the beginning there had been no dogmatic dissent at the basis of their rebellion. Nonetheless, St. Cyprian says about these rebels that they are outside the Church, that they are not Christians, that they are not with Christ. "Does he who strives against the Church and resists her think that he is in the

Church, when the blessed Apostle Paul, discoursing on the same thing and setting forth the sacrament of unity, says: 'One body and one spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God' (Ephes. IV, 4-6). The Church is one, although with increasing fecundity she splits into a multitude. For the sun too has many rays, but the light is one; the branches of a tree are many, but the trunk is one, sitting firmly on its root; many streams flow from one source, but although the overflow resulting from the abundance of waters presents a multiplicity, nevertheless unity is preserved at their origin. Separate a ray of light from its origin, its unity will not allow the existence of a divided light; break a branch from a tree, the branch thus broken will not be able to grow; cut off a stream from its source, the stream thus cut off will dry up. Thus, too, the Church bathed in the light of the Lord radiates her rays over the entire world; yet the light which is diffused everywhere is one; and the unity of the body remains inseparable. She extends her branches over the whole earth in fruitful abundance; her rich streams flow far and wide; yet her Head is one, and the Source is one; one Mother copious in the results of her fruitfulness. By her womb we are born, by her milk we are nourished, by her Spirit we are animated. The spouse of Christ cannot be defiled: she is chaste and uncorrupt; she knows one home, with chaste modesty she guards the sanctity of one couch. Whoever falls away from the Church and joins an adulteress becomes alienated from the promises of the Church. He who abandons the Church of Christ deprives himself of the rewards foreordained by Christ: he is a stranger, he is profane, he is her enemy. He cannot have God as a father who does not have the Church as a mother. He who is outside the Church might be able to be saved only if someone who was outside the ark of Noah was able to escape." Such is St. Cyprian's discourse on the unity of the Church. At the basis of the unity of the Church he puts not just dogmatic unanimity but precisely the unity with the Church as with an organism of some kind. "Should a hand

happen to be torn from the body," discourses St. John Chrysostom, <sup>3</sup> "the spirit (which proceeds) from the brain, looking for the continuation of the limb and not finding it there, does not escape from the body and pass on to the hand thus torn off, but if it finds it not in its place, it does not communicate itself to it." And here are St. John Chrysostom's words against those who without discrimination attach themselves to people who fall away from the Church. "If those persons have dogmas contrary to ours, then on that account one should not have intercourse with them; if, on the other hand, they hold the same opinions, the reason (for avoiding them) is greater still. Why so? Because this is the disease of lust for authority. Do you not know what happened to Kore, Dathan, and Abiram? Were they the only ones to suffer? Did not also their accomplices? What wilt thou say? 'Their faith is the same, they are Orthodox as well.' If so, why are they not with us? There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. If they are right, then we are wrong; if we are right, then they are wrong. Tell me, do you think this is enough that they are called Orthodox, while with them the charism of ordination has grown scarce and done away with? What is the advantage of all things else, if this latter is not observed? As we must contend for the faith, so must we for this also. For if it is lawful for any one, according to the saying of old, to fill his hands, to be a priest, let all approach to minister; in vain has this altar been raised, in vain the Church order, in vain the assembly of the priests: let us overthrow and annihilate all this." In his first canonical epistle to Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, St. Basil the Great adduces the opinion of the "ancients" concerning those who had fallen away from the Church. "Although the separation had been initiated through schism (διὰ σχίσματος), those who had separated themselves from the Church no longer had the grace of the Holy Spirit in them, its communication having failed because of the breaking of the lawful continuity."

<sup>3</sup> Ephes. Hom. 11, 3.

<sup>2</sup> The Unity of the Church



We shall discuss these and subsequent words of St. Basil later on in greater detail. For the time being, I merely wish to note that St. Basil did not by any means reject the idea of the "ancients" concerning the complete absence of grace in all those who had separated themselves from the Church, including even the schismatics.

It seems to me that these patristic statements reveal enough of the attitude of the ancient Church, although testimonies similar to those cited could easily be multiplied. The ancient Church did not consider dogmatic agreement to be the only condition for belonging to her. Separation from the Church on account of rebellion and schism was also considered a departure from the unity of the Church. Communion with and humble submission to the Church were regarded as a necessary condition for belonging to the Church. The falling away from the Church was, moreover, regarded as that from Christ and Christianity as well. The idea that it might be possible to belong to the Church invisibly and enjoy all the grace-filled gifts of the Church while being visibly separated from her, was quite alien to the ancient Church. And understandably so. Because a contrary idea inevitably would entail destruction of the one Church. This would be tantamount to preaching complete indifference in questions of Church life and Church discipline. And indeed, why should I avoid rebellion, schism, and even heresy in the Church, if separation from her, cessation of the vital unity with her would not jeopardize me in any particular way? Let me be disobedient towards the Church, let her expel me from the membership in her community, let her pronounce an anathema against me — no great harm is done; since I remain a Christian, I remain with Christ and am not deprived of the hope for eternal salvation! But then, what point was there in all the admonitions to obedience, to submission to the hierarchy, to a visible unity with the ecclesiastical community, which fills to overflowing the entire old Church literature, beginning with the

Epistles of the Apostles and on to the missives of Clement of Rome and Ignatius the God-bearer? For Clement of Rome wrote his missive on account of a Church rebellion in Corinth and not on account of a heresy of some kind. All those admonitions could not have been sheer nonsense; on the contrary, they were full of meaning and significance in the ancient Church because she was unshakably convinced that there was no salvation, no Christian life, no Christianity outside the visible communion with her. This is why Augustine, though he preached predestination in salvation, asserted that "sancti regno Dei praeordinati dividi ab Ecclesia nullo modo possunt," that is, that the Saints predestined for the Kingdom of God cannot in any way separate themselves from the Church.<sup>4</sup> As for the obnoxious doctrine which holds the membership in the visible Church to be unnecessary, it is something which the ancient Church knew nothing about, a contemporary invention, suggested moreover by ideas and feelings which are far removed from those of the ancient Church.

If one firmly and unreservedly adheres to the standpoint of the ancient Church, however, he cannot accept your idea that, as you put it, Christendom comprises one Church of Christ, that all churches of the East and the West are local churches or are parts of the Catholic Church. And this is not at all because I tend to exaggerate the difference in dogmatic opinion on the part of Christian creeds, or their differences in rites and ways of life. First and foremost, the Christian creeds taken together cannot comprise one Church because there is no unity amongst them. I am unable to understand how the East and the West could remain in one Church after 1054. What is then the meaning of the fact of "the separation of the churches" or, to be more precise, of the falling away of the Roman patriarchy from the Catholic Church? Could it be that no separation could have happened although both parties regarded the separation as an accomplished fact? In his letter

<sup>4</sup> *Contra Cresconium* II, 33, 42. PL, t. 43, col. 491.

sent through legates to the Patriarch Michael, Pope Leo IX expressed an emphatical threat: "Should any nation anywhere in the universe fall into an arrogant dissent from the Roman Church, it can no longer call itself and be regarded as a church: it is no more than an assemblage of heretics, a conventicle of schismatics, a synagogue of Satan — non sit jam dicenda vel habenda Ecclesia aliqua, sed omnino nulla; quin potius conciliabulum haereticorum, out conventiculum schismaticorum et synagoga satanae." <sup>5</sup> The aspiration for power on the part of the Roman bishop had borne a bitter fruit. On the unfortunate day of July 16, 1054, the legates laid on the altar of the Church of the Holy Wisdom a Bull of excommunication containing, inter alia, the following words: "By the authority of the Holy Undivided Trinity and of the Apostolic See, whose legates we are, of all the Orthodox Fathers of the seven Oecumenical Councils and of the whole Catholic Church, we sign the anathema pronounced by our Lord, the most reverend Pope, against Michael and his followers, unless they repent: "Let them be anathema maranatha, with the Simonians, Valesians, Arians, Donatists, Nicolaitans, Severians, Pneumatomachi, Manichaens, Nazareans, and with all other heretics, together with the devil and his angels, unless they become converted. Amen. Amen. Amen." <sup>6</sup> On the same day the legates of the Pope repeated the anathema orally in the presence of the Emperor and his dignitaries. "Whosoever will act contrary to the faith of the holy, Roman and Apostolic See and its sacrifice, let him be anathema maranatha, regarded not as a Catholic Christian but as a heretic and Prozymite. So be it. So be it. So be it." <sup>7</sup> On July 20, the Patriarch's synod responded in kind with a just anathema. From the legates' Bull we see that the Greeks too thought that the Church of Christ, the true sacraments, and baptism had been lost by the Latins. <sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> PL, t. 143, col. 776 B.

<sup>6</sup> PL, T. 143, col. 1004 A-B.

<sup>7</sup> PL, t. 143, col. 1004 C.

<sup>8</sup> PL, t. 143, col. 1003 B.

So what do we have? Both sides had exchanged anathemas, and each side had ceased to regard the other as a church, believing itself to be the only Church. Did a rupture take place? Of course it did. There can be no other answer. It is not that there came into being two separate Christian Churches in the year 1054, since there cannot be two Churches; it is rather that one of the local churches had ceased to exist as such through having broken off relations with the Catholic Church. So for the Catholic Church, she was preserved in all her fullness of grace and oneness just as she had been before the separation of one of several local churches. The event of 1054 is a sad and tragic one, but one should not be afraid of calling things by their proper names. Such a tendency can be quite harmful in the matters of faith and of the Church.

I believe that any discussion on the problems concerning ecclesiastical unity among the Christians of our time should begin with establishing a viewpoint as to the meaning of the grievous event of 1054. What did happen in that year? A falling off or a division? If it was a division, then it means that after one, unified Church had existed for a millenium there came into being not one but two Churches. You are inclined to give a different answer, namely that there had been neither a separation nor a division in 1054, the Church having remained one, encompassing both the West and the East, but with her unity weakened somewhat as a result of cessation of visible communion. Such an answer is absolutely impossible to accept. What happened in 1054 was a falling away. Who has fallen away is another question; but someone did fall away. The Church has remained one, but either only in the East or only in the West. It is now the 863rd year since the 1054 event, and there is no unity among us. The Latins were admitted to the Church through baptism, like the heathens, or through the mystery of anointing with chrism, just as the ancient Church used to admit the Arians, Macedonians, Apollinarians, and similar heretics. We have an anti-Latin mission; in our theological schools there are also chairs for the exposure

of Latinism. The Latins use violence, fraud (Uniate Churches) and propaganda to convert the Orthodox to papism. The Pope proclaims indulgences to anyone who for a certain number of days will offer prayers for conversion of Eastern schismatics. The Latins convened councils, acknowledging them as Oecumenical; in the centuries past they have invented new dogmas never heard of in the ancient Church. The Eastern Church has condemned as heresies the new dogmas of Latinism. Let us take a comparatively recent example. Pope Pius IX, in his missive of January 6, 1848, addressed to the Easterners, defends all the falsehoods of Latinism and calls upon the Orthodox to return to the true Church. Four months later, on May 5, 1848, four Eastern patriarchs and all the bishops comprising the synods of Constantinople, Antioch, and Jerusalem issued a "circular letter of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church to all Orthodox Christians." Along with a refutation and condemnation of the papal missive, the patriarchs speak of a return of the separated churches to the body of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. This missive also condemns the filioque clause in resolute words: "The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, following in the footsteps of the holy Fathers of both the East and the West, now proclaims — as it did in the old times of our forefathers — this belief, recently introduced, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and from the Son, to be a downright heresy, and its adherents — whosoever they may be — to be heretics; the communities made up of them are heretical societies, and any spiritual or ecclesiastical intercourse with them constitutes a grave transgression for the Orthodox flock of the Catholic Church."

Is it then possible to imagine such relationship between local churches within the fold of one Catholic Church of Christ? Could it be that all these relationships were nothing but an insignificant trifle, an everyday occurrence, attesting not at all to ruptures within the mystical depths of the body of Christ? To take but one rupture which is universally known: we are not partaking of one bread in the Eucharist. Is this

then not enough? Is this then nothing but a deficiency of visible unity? But the Sacrament of the Body and Blood is the focus of the mystical life of the Church. It is the mysterious centre of ecclesiastical unity, as taught also by the ancient Church of Christ, beginning with the Apostle Paul and on to St. Ignatius the God-bearer, St. Cyprian of Carthage, St. Cyril of Alexandria, and so forth. Following the offering of the sacred gifts, the priest prays in the liturgy of St. Basil the Great: "Unite us one with another, all of us who partake of one bread and one cup unto communion with the Holy Spirit." What greater separation, inward, invisible, mysterious, can there be once we have become divided in the mystery of the Eucharist? There is no doubt that relations like these are unthinkable among local churches. The Catholic Church even now consists of 16 autocephalous local churches. Do we convert and take in Orthodox Syrians, Serbs and Rumanians? We celebrate the Divine Liturgy with particular joy if we have as a co-celebrant a hierarch or a priest from another local church. What a commotion there was all over Russia four years ago when we were visited by Gregory IV, the Patriarch of Antioch! The enthusiasm of the people, the spiritual ecstasy of tear-provoking joy cannot, it seems, ever be forgotten. When the patriarch was conducting services in our academy church, we experienced that very thing which our Lord grants us on the great Paschal night. In your letter of September 13/26, you mention that relations between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Churches are becoming friendlier and more heartfelt with every passing day. True, but the main thing is lacking: there is no ecclesiastical unity. We have received high-ranking representatives of Anglicanism at our Academy, but how different were those receptions from that of the Patriarch of Antioch! Why the difference if both the Patriarchate of Antioch and the Church of Great Britain are local churches of equal standing within one Catholic Church of Christ? It is no use quoting from some Russian theologian's or hierarch's words to the effect that the partitions separating the Christian

churches do not reach the heavens: the fact of the West's falling away from the Church in 1054 is for the Orthodox believer a present fact of religious experience. In your letter of June 12/25, 1915, to Archbishop Anthony, you adduce the viewpoint of the famous Metropolitan of Moscow, Philaret, who wrote in one of his early treatises: "No church which believes Jesus to be the Christ will I dare to call false." But there are quite a few obstacles to recognizing as valid Metropolitan Philaret's reasoning that churches can be either of pure truth or of impure truth. A church of impure truth seems to me to be evidently a false one, and there cannot be a false church; such a church ceases to be a church, becoming an extra-ecclesiastical community. For Metropolitan Philaret did not partake of the Eucharist with the Latins; and neither do other theologians of ours, who occasionally show too much zeal in defending the unacceptable doctrine of the unity of the Church, according to which the one Church may embrace local churches that have for centuries been out of communion with each other. And this looks inconsistent to me. Why then shouldn't one celebrate the mass or partake of the eucharist with a priest of the local Roman Church?

No, the falling away of Rome from the Church (or of the East from Rome) is a fact on hand, which should not be hushed up and reduced to zero. You reproach Archbishop Anthony with a tendency to theological rigorism, and state that his conclusions transpose us into too obscure an atmosphere. This cannot be helped, however, for precisely such conclusions fully correspond to reality. The obscure atmosphere has been created not by theological rigorism, but by the arrogance and aspiration for power on the part of the Roman bishop throughout history, for the sake of which ecclesiastical peace, unity and the truth itself of the Christian faith have been sacrificed. Should we choose an atmosphere which you would call a brighter one, would not then the one Church of Christ turn into empty nothingness? What would the spouse of Christ look like to us if parts of her could stay out of communion

with each other and even be mutually hostile? Can membership in our Orthodox Church possibly be shared by those Russian sectarians, Stundists and Baptists, who hate the very name of the Orthodox Church, who are unable to hold a single meeting without abusing the Church, who regard us as idolaters just because we accept the dogmas established at the Seventh Oecumenical Council? But if this be the case, where are the boundaries of the Church? Or are perhaps these boundaries altogether unnecessary? Yet they were there in the time of the Apostles, when of the outsiders "durst no man join himself" to the believers (Acts 5, 13). It seems to me that you are wrong in calling the definiteness and sincerity of opinions "theological rigorism." For definiteness and sincerity of this kind impel one to acknowledge that all Christian creeds cannot belong to one Catholic Church of Christ, that but one of them is the true Church, all the rest being merely extra-ecclesiastical communities. For me the only true Church is the Orthodox Church. You may disagree with me on this point, and your disagreement on this particular point will cause me far less grief than would your dissent on the preceding thesis. It is much more dangerous, in my opinion, to lose the idea of one true Church than it is to belong to a false extra-ecclesiastical community, for in this case one still looks upon it as the only true representative of the Church of Christ on earth. To express even in prayer the idea that the Church of Christ is supposedly being "weakened and fettered by strife and dissent" — does this not mean to doubt the truthfulness and indisputability of Christ's prophetic words that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church founded upon the rock of the Incarnation of the Only-begotten Son of God?

The World Conference of Christian Communities, whose idea you propagandize with zeal, sets itself a lofty and magnificent goal: to doctor the wounds, to heal the ailments of Christian communities. In order for this good intention to be crowned with success, however, it is necessary to get to the very core, deep as it may be, of the ailment which heavily

oppresses and corrodes Christendom. Otherwise the course of treatment is not going to be of any tangible use. Yes, if all Christendom is regarded as comprising one Church of unbroken ecclesiastical unity, this will be but a superficial view concerning the state of the patient. Such a viewpoint will leave untreated the principal ailment — the falling away from the Church, which undoubtedly took place in 1054 and which so far has not been corrected either by the Protestants or by the Anglicans or by the Marianites. It is not enough to detach oneself from an extra-ecclesiastical community; in order to become a local church it is necessary to reunite with the extant truly one, Catholic Church whose unity could not and will not ever be obscured by any sins of mankind.

I shall now turn to the question which you touch upon in your second letter to Archbishop Antony and to which you have devoted your entire third letter. The interpretation of the unity of the Christian Church as set forth by myself, and prior to that by Archbishop Antony, does not seem to you to represent the present doctrine of the Orthodox Church. You derive such a doctrine from the practice of the Orthodox Church as related to the admittance of converted Latins. You write: "The Orthodox Church concedes that there are Christians in other churches of Christ, who form a part of the mystical body of Christ and who require no second rebirth in order to enter it." Since the Russian Church refrains from rebaptizing and reconfirming the Latins in the cases of both mass or individual conversion, we have to infer that this practice is suggested by the profound conviction that there is no necessity for re-administering the mysteries performed by the Latin clergy; and since such a conviction does exist, it follows that the Russian Church officially recognizes the validity of some of the Christian churches which had become separated from Orthodoxy. I am unable to conceive of the Russian Church adhering to such theories which she rejects in practice. I do not think that the Russian Church would admit into her fold unbaptized persons simply on the sole

principle of *οικονομία* (economy). The economy theory cannot turn a heathen or a Jew into a Christian without baptizing him. In my opinion, the Orthodox Church does not rebaptize the Latins and reordain their priests simply because she recognizes the validity of their baptism and ordination."

Here you are posing a question which deserves a thorough study in its historical and dogmatic aspect and a detailed discussion. Unfortunately, in our theology this question has been muddled up by misunderstandings and occasionally even by tendentious studies.

I call tendentious A. Serafimov's "historical, dogmatic study" "On the Admittance of non-Orthodox Christian into the Orthodox Church" (Kiev, 1864) which treats of this question in great detail and where the author's purpose is not an unbiased historical-dogmatic investigation into the question, but polemics against the schismatic Bezpopovtsy.

Having presented your interpretation of our practice with respect to the Latins, you yourself also point to a strong argument against it: "If the sacraments administered outside the Orthodox Church are valid, then we have several semi-churches instead of one Church of Christ." You yourself admit with rare sincerity that this argument deserves to be most seriously considered by theologians. You write, "I regret that I do not belong to those who could counter it with a strictly logical answer." I for my part believe that no one could come up with a half-way satisfactory answer to that argument. And its tone appears to me to have a somewhat higher significance. If the mysteries are valid outside the one Church of Christ, if the fullness of the ecclesiastical life in grace is not limited to the boundaries of the Church, then there exist several churches and not semi-churches, then the ninth article of our Creed should be dropped. There can be no semi-churches of any kind. I think Bishop Success expressed the perfect truth when he said at the Council of Carthage in 256: "Haereticis aut nihil aut totum licet" — heretics should

be allowed either nothing or everything.<sup>9</sup> If the Latin priests are as we are, if their laying on of hands is identical with that which we receive through the grace of God, if they bestow on their flock the same grace-filled gifts as we do, then why is Catholicism a different church from our Orthodox one? What reason can I have, I, a priest in the Church of Christ, for avoiding ecclesiastical communion with Latin bishops? Why do I not join them in celebrating the Divine Liturgy, why do I not partake with them of one Body of Christ? If the recognition of the beneficence of the Latin hierarchy and its religious rites does not contradict the truth of Church unity, then I must, bound by my conscience, enter into unity with the Latins at once, appealing to my brethren to do the same and censuring them in case of resistance on their part. I must moreover preach to the laity that they may receive the Eucharist also in a Polish or a French church.

No, the truth of ecclesiastical unity does not recognize the grace of the mysteries administered within extra-ecclesiastical communities. It is impossible to reconcile Church unity with the validity of extra-ecclesiastical sacraments. Even the genius of Augustine had been unable to solve this problem satisfactorily. Augustine's teaching on the necessity to recognize the mysteries administered outside the Church has been discussed by me in detail in a book devoted to the history of dogmas concerning the Church.<sup>10</sup> In Augustine's opinion, recognition of the complete independence of the mysteries from the person of the celebrant (in the Church) inevitably entails a recognition of the validity of the mysteries outside the Church. This idea permeates Augustine's entire treatise "De baptismo." Having admitted, however, the paradoxical thought as to complete identity of a sinful (and who is a saint?) priest of the Church with a hierarch of an extra-ecclesiastical society, Augustine finds himself in a kind of a dead end

<sup>9</sup> *Sent.* 16. SCEL 3, p. 443.

<sup>10</sup> *Essays on the History of Church Dogma.* Sergiev Posad, 1912, p. 527.

because for him the only path to salvation lay *via* the Catholic Church. To recognize as valid the mysteries administered outside the Church means to recognize the operation of grace outside the Church, to recognize the possibility of salvation apart from the Church and in hostility towards her; in a word, this means to recognize that the Church is not obligatory, and to cast away the faith in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. But Augustine also wished to retain the truth of there being no salvation outside the Church.<sup>11</sup> With this purpose in mind, Augustine started to differentiate between the concepts "to have mysteries" and "to have mysteries with profit." "The one," he says, "is not to be had, another it is pernicious (pernitiose) to have, and another still is saving (salubriter)."<sup>12</sup> Schismatics, according to Augustine's teaching, possess the mysteries, yet without any profit towards salvation, only to the detriment of it. Augustine displays here in rudimentary form the subsequent scholastic distinction between the validity of the sacraments and their efficacy. The mysteries may be valid yet ineffectual. This idea is difficult to assimilate if one is grounded in religious experience instead of engaging in scholastic play of words. What kind of grace is this if it brings nothing but harm? While possessing the mysteries, schismatics, in Augustine's opinion, are deprived of their grace-bestowing and saving effect because of their separation from the Church. This separation shows that they have no love. Without love man cannot be virtuous; the Holy Spirit cannot abide in him. Thus the schismatics, who are outside the Church, have not the Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup> This objection inevitably rises in the mind: If schismatics do not have the Holy Spirit, how is their baptism effectuated? Augustine makes the strange assumption that presumably at the moment of baptism, and only at that moment, the Holy Spirit operates

<sup>11</sup> *De bapt.* IV, 17, 24. PL, t. 43, col. 170. Cf. col. 695.

<sup>12</sup> *Contra epist. Parmeniani* II, 13, 28. PL, t. 43, col. 71.

<sup>13</sup> *De bapt.* IV, 1, 1. V, 23, 33. PL, t. 43, col. 155, 193. *Serum.* 268, 2. PL, t. 38, col. 1232. *In ep. Ioan.* tr. 6, 11. PL, t. 35, col. 2026.

outside the Church as well. The sins of the person being baptized — so goes Augustine's reasoning — are forgiven but return upon him at once. He who is baptized outside the Church passes at it were through a narrow zone of light and again enters darkness. While he passes through the zone of light, he is cleansed of his sins, but since immediately after baptism he returns to the darkness of dissent, his sins return immediately upon him. The Lord spoke in a parable about the servant whose master remitted his debt of a thousand talents. When the servant showed no pity toward his debtor, the master demanded payment of the entire debt. The same happens to a schismatic who received baptism outside the Church. After receiving forgiveness for his debt before God, he again becomes responsible for that debt because he reveals enmity towards his brethren who are in the Church. In order for a schismatic to receive the fruits of grace after his baptism, he must show his love towards his brethren, that is, he must lovingly come into union with the Church. When such union takes place, he no longer needs to be baptized.<sup>14</sup>

It is difficult to recognize such a solution to the problem of the reconciliation of the unity of the Church with the validity of sacraments outside the Church as satisfactory. You see, schismatic baptism is accomplished outside the Church. Why then is the Church's baptism also to be found among the schismatics, although only at the moment of its accomplishment? For the schismatic is converted not to the Church, but to the schism (for the time of Augustine to Donatism): he is converted perhaps after making a conscious choice and after consciously condemning the Church. He is even at the very moment of baptism at war with the Church. While asking remission of his debt, he declares at the same time that he has no love for the Church. In Augustine the beginnings of the Catholic doctrine of *opus operatum* are noticeable. The sacrament is conceived of as not being dependent on the Church,

<sup>14</sup> *De bapt.* 1, 12, 19-21. VI, 34, 65. VII, 3, 5. PL, t. 43, col. 119-121, 219, 227.

but only on the pronouncing of a certain formula. The Spirit of God gives life only to the body of the Church, and outside this body He cannot be, whatever words were pronounced there. It is not important who pronounces these words — a false Christian, a heretic, a schismatic, a heathen, or a Jew — only one thing is important; that these words are pronounced outside the Church. For certainly the essence of Christianity is not in the fact that in it is given a collection of incantations by means of which man can force from the Divinity the supernatural help which he needs. Firmilian, in his day, protested against such an understanding of the baptismal formula, saying that the pronouncement of names is not sufficient for the remission of sins and the sanctification of baptism.<sup>15</sup> The Augustine idea received further development in the works of Latin theologians. We can only thank God that the doctrine of the Eastern Church was formulated outside the sphere of Augustinianism, and we can and must consider this sphere alien to ourselves. In the great Eastern theologians, we do not find even a trace of arguments similar to those cited by the Augustinians. This is the reason why it is indispensable to turn to the doctrine and practice of the ancient Church.

The problems of theology and Church life are astonishingly eternal. In the twentieth century I must write from Russia to America about that which was written from Asia Minor to Carthage and from Alexandria to Rome as long ago as the third century. We have a sufficient quantity of historical material: however, nowhere are there Augustinian arguments. You see, the original ecclesiastical decisions ordered baptism for all being converted from heresy to the Church. Around the year 220, a council of African and Numidian bishops under the presidency of Agrippinus determined that heretics be baptized, "and from that time," testifies St. Cyprian, "until now, so many thousands of heretics in our regions, who were converted to the Church, not only did not disdain or hesitate

<sup>15</sup> *Ep.* 75, cap. 9.



to receive the grace of the life-giving font and saving baptism, but still more insisted upon it reasonably and willingly.”<sup>16</sup> “I learned,” writes St. Dionysius of Alexandria, “that such an opinion existed from ancient times among the previous bishops, in the most populous churches, and at the councils of brethren in Iconium, in Synades, and in many other countries.”<sup>17</sup> In the middle of the fifties of the third century Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, recalls in a letter to St. Cyprian: “Already for a long time, since we came down from Gaul, Cilicia, and the other closest regions, to the council at Iconium, which is in Phrygia, we have decreed to hold firmly to such an opinion of heretics and to defend it when any doubt concerning this subject is discovered. Here among certain people doubt has arisen concerning the baptism of those who, although they recognize new prophets, however know, apparently, the same Father and Son as we do. But we, having examined this topic with all thoroughness, resolved at the council at Iconium to reject completely every baptism performed outside the Church.”<sup>18</sup>

There is no need to set forth in detail an account of the controversies which in the middle years of the third century flared up around the question of the reception into the Church of converting Novatians, where the Roman bishop, wishing to see the Roman practice everywhere, met with objection from various quarters. I will only direct your attention to certain details of these disputes. First of all, the dogmatic position of the Roman bishop Stephen, who had denied the need of baptism, presents itself as indefinite and rather precarious. One automatically recalls the opinion of St. Cyprian, that in the letters of Stephen there is much which either has no relation at all to the matter at hand, or which is self-contra-

<sup>16</sup> *Epist.* 73-60 ad Jubajanum. cap. 3. *Ep.* 71-58 ad Quintum. cap. 4 (the author lists two editions of the letters of St. Cyprian whose numeration differ — note of translator).

<sup>17</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* V. 7, 5.

<sup>18</sup> *Epist.* Firmiliani, cap. 7, 19. CSEL 3 pp 815, 828. Russian translation in the works of Cyprian, Article 1, pp. 378, 384-385.

dictory and in general written unskillfully and thoughtlessly. St. Cyprian imparts to us the genuine words of Stephen: “If anyone turns to you from whatever heresy, then in this case introduce nothing new, other than what was transmitted to you, that is that upon such a person the laying-on of hands alone should be performed as a sign of repentance.”<sup>19</sup> Thus all heresies have the grace of baptism, and one need not baptize any of those being converted to the Church. St. Cyprian testifies that Stephen did not even baptize the Marcionites.<sup>20</sup> Yes, Stephen wishes to stand only on the soil of the tradition of the Roman church; the main thing for him is to preserve *quod traditum est*. But the soil is especially unsteady under Stephen when he demands all the same the laying-on of hands on those being converted and on schismatics, such as were the Novatians. Observe that by the laying-on of hands of which Stephen speaks, even Latin scholars understand chrismation, the mystical transmission of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Whom, obviously, the schismatics do not have, even according to the opinion of Stephen. How was baptism accomplished among them without the Holy Spirit? It is sufficient to read the letters of Cyprian to Jubaian, Pompeius, and Magnus, and the letter of Firmilian to Cyprian to be convinced how much more sound is the dogmatic position of Stephen’s opponents, who affirm the invalidity of every baptism outside the Church. St. Cyprian points out this very groundlessness of the dogmatic teaching of his opponent. “We will stop those who, although they are in other matters stubborn and slow-witted, nevertheless acknowledge that all heretics and schismatics do not have the Holy Spirit and that therefore, although they can baptize, they cannot however give the Holy Spirit. We will stop them on this point, in order to say that those who do not have the Holy Spirit decidedly cannot even baptize. Only he who has the Holy Spirit can baptize and give remission of sins. Let those who patronize heretics and

<sup>19</sup> *Ep.* 74-61 ad Pompejum, cap. 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Ep.* 73-60, cap. 4-5.

3 The Unity of the Church



schismatics answer us: do they have the Holy Spirit or do they not? If they do, then why do we lay our hands on those baptized by them, when they come to us, to bring down upon them the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would, of course, have been received where He was given, if He were there. If those baptized outside the Church, heretics and schismatics, do not have the Holy Spirit, then it is obvious that the remission of sins also cannot be given by them about whom it is known that they do not have the Holy Spirit.<sup>21</sup> Stephen explained the validity of baptism outside the Church and without the Holy Spirit by the Majesty of the Name of Christ. "The Name of Christ greatly aids faith and the holiness of baptism, so that he who is baptized into Christ at once receives the grace of Christ."<sup>22</sup> St. Cyprian convincingly refutes the opinion of Stephen. "If they ascribe the validity of baptism to the name, so that they consider as renewed and sanctified everyone baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ, no matter by whom, according to this criterion alone, then why among them, in the Name of the very same Christ, does not the laying-on of hands upon the baptized person for the reception of the Holy Spirit have its effect? Why does not the same Majesty of the one and the same Name not reveal the same power in the laying-on of hands which is attributed to it in the sanctification of baptism? If one who has been reborn outside the Church can make himself a temple of God, then why can he not also make himself a temple of the Holy Spirit? For whoever, having put off his sins in baptism, has been sanctified and spiritually transfigured into a new man has through this already made himself capable of receiving the Holy Spirit. The Apostle says: 'For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ' (Gal. 3: 27). So if one who has been baptized among the heretics can put on Christ, then he can all the more

<sup>21</sup> *Ep.* 69-72 ad Magnum, cap. 10-11. CSEL 3 p. 759 sq. Russian translation. Part 1, pp. 368-369.

<sup>22</sup> *Ep.* Firmiliani 75, cap. 18, p. 822. Part 1, p. 384. *Ep.* ad Pompejum cap. 5 pp. 802-803, Article 1, p. 353.

receive the Holy Spirit, Who was sent by Christ. Otherwise, if one baptized outside the Church could put on Christ but could not receive the Holy Spirit, then He who was sent would be greater than He who sent Him. However, can one really either put on Christ without the Spirit, or separate the Spirit from Christ? Moreover, the second birth by which we are born in Christ through the laver of regeneration is a spiritual birth: and therefore do they not affirm an obvious absurdity when they say that one can be spiritually born among the heretics, where they themselves do not recognize the existence of the Spirit. For water alone without the Holy Spirit, cannot, of course, cleanse a man of sins and sanctify him. So, there exists one of two alternatives: either to agree that there, where they think there is baptism, the Holy Spirit is also present, or, where the Holy Spirit is not, no baptism can be recognized either, for there can be no baptism without the Holy Spirit.<sup>23</sup> St. Cyprian and those of the same mind decisively express the proposition that outside the Church there can be no baptism and no grace-giving acts of the Holy Spirit at all. "If heretics have come over to the Church and are found within the Church, then, of course, they may make use of her baptism and other saving blessings. If, however, they are not within the Church and even act against the Church, then how can they be baptized with the baptism of the Church?"<sup>24</sup>

As it can be seen, in the arguments of St. Cyprian, the train of thought is the opposite of that which is sometimes proposed in our time. The first problem which St. Cyprian solves is the question of whether heretics and schismatics belong to the Church and are in communion with her. If not, then they have fallen away from the body of the one Church and have been deprived of the Holy Spirit. But especially one should note that even Bishop Stephen is not very far

<sup>23</sup> *Ep.* 74-61 ad Pompejum cap. 5.

<sup>24</sup> *Ep.* 73-60 ad Jubajanum, cap. 11 p. 786. pp. 338-339.

from the thoughts of Cyprian. Observe that he, the same as St. Cyprian, acknowledged that heretics and schismatics have fallen away from the Church, that they are outside her, that outside the Church they cannot have the Holy Spirit. Upon the practice of the Roman Church, Stephen laid an unfortunate foundation, which met with just criticism on the part of Cyprian and Firmilian. Not without reason do Latin scholars, wishing to justify the Roman bishop, make the rather strange and completely groundless proposition that Stephen supposedly did not express a thought about the absence of the Holy Spirit among heretics and schismatics, but that St. Cyprian only ascribed it to him, so to speak, in the heat of polemics.

But still more does this fact call attention to itself, that St. Cyprian and all those who took sides with his views, despite the exact certainty of their opinion about the complete lack of grace of all communities outside the Church, considered it possible to allow a varying practice in the different churches, if only the union of peace and concord among the bishops was preserved. Every president is free to govern his church according to his will, of which matter he will give an account before the Lord. St. Cyprian repeats this thought many times in his letters (to Stephen, to Magnus, to Jubainan, to Cornelius *et al.* St. Dionysius of Alexandria, a contemporary of St. Cyprian, also reasons in complete agreement, recalling the words of the Deuteronomy: "Move not the boundaries of your neighbour, which your fathers established."<sup>25</sup> "In judgments and affairs concerning separate persons," writes St. Dionysius, "how must we act towards those who are outside the Church and how must one treat those who belong to her? In our opinion, one must subordinate oneself to the presidents of the separate churches, who, in the power of Divine consecration stand at the head of the service. And the judgment about these matters we will present to our Lord."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Deut. XIX, 14. Euseb. *H. E.* VII, 7, 5.

<sup>26</sup> Pitra. *Analecta Sacra*, t. 4. Parisiis 1883, pp. 171. 414. Works in Russian translation, Kazan 1900, p. 60.

From Stephen's point of view, one must not allow a varying practice; this would mean to deny one baptism in spite of the Symbol of Faith. This is why Stephen demanded uniform practice without fail. But here we see that the opponents of Stephen allow diversity of practice in principle. What does this mean? You know that they looked upon heretics and schismatics as upon unbaptized persons, and of course, for all the churches schismatics were unbaptized persons. I think that the views of Stephen's opponents on the permissibility of diverse practices in relation to the reception of heretics and schismatics can be explained only by the assumption that, for the sake of the peace and the good of the Church, they considered it possible sometimes not to demand a second performance of the correct rite of baptism, believing in the mystical-charismatic significance of union with the Church itself. Before, the rite performed outside the Church was only an external form, which in the Church is filled with grace-giving content. You see, the same St. Cyprian says quite a lot about the "baptism of blood," which is accomplished, of course, without any sort of rite or form.

This proposition which I have assented to has grounds in the arguments of the writers of the Church. St. Cyprian was asked the question: "What will happen to those who before this time, having turned from heresy to the Church, were received into the Church without baptism?" St. Cyprian answers, "The Lord in His mercy is able to grant them forgiveness, and those who have been received into the Church, and have fallen asleep in the Church, He does not deprive of the gifts of His Church."<sup>27</sup> Firmilian is inclined to demand baptism of such persons if they are alive; if they have died, then he admits that they will receive the fruit of truth and faith such as they have deserved.<sup>28</sup> It is beyond all doubt that even in the age of Cyprian the question of the good of the Church arose. Cyprian finds that requiring baptism is

<sup>27</sup> *Ep.* 73-60 ad Jubajanum. cap. 23, p. 796, p. 347.

<sup>28</sup> *Ep.* 75, cap. 21.

even useful for a more successful conversion of schismatics to the Church.<sup>29</sup>

We have a very important piece of information in the epistle of Dionysius of Alexandria to Sixtus, Bishop of Rome: "In the assembly of the brethren there is someone who is considered Orthodox of long standing and who was joined to the society of Christians even before my ordination, even, it seems, before the enthronement of the Blessed Heraclius. Having been at the recent baptism, and having heard the questions and answers, he came to me with weeping and contrition and, after falling at my feet, began to confess and to swear that the baptism he had received from the heretics was not the same and had nothing in common with ours, because it was filled with impiety and blasphemy. Saying that his soul was greatly suffering and that on account of such impious words and actions, he did not dare to lift his eyes to God, he asked me to give him the most true cleansing, adoption, and grace. But I decided not to do it, having told him that because of his long communion with the Church, I do not dare prepare anew one who has listened to the blessing of the gifts, pronounced the Amen with the others, approached the table, extended his hands for the reception of the holy Food, accepted It, and for a long time communicated of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. I ordered him to be at peace and with firm faith and a good conscience to approach the communion of the Holy."<sup>30</sup> This fact is a clear illustration of the thought of St. Cyprian, which is expressed in the letter to Jubaian. St. Dionysius, just as St. Cyprian, recognized that the most important thing for a man is his union with the Church, in which he finds all grace-giving gifts, even if his baptism outside the Church were only a simple immersion, not even at all similar to the baptism of the Church. Otherwise, why did St. Dionysius not baptize the one who himself wept, remembering his baptism among the heretics?

<sup>29</sup> *Ep.* 73-60 ad Jubajanum. cap. 23.

<sup>30</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* VII, 9.

Of the two points of view — Cyprian's and Stephen's — I dare say that one can be fully satisfied only with the viewpoint of St. Cyprian. Here the unity of the Church is preserved and a possible condescension and independence of words and formulae is given. Stephen preserves the unity of the Church only in the thought that heretics and schismatics do not have the Holy Spirit and therefore, upon their reception into the Church, it is indispensable to perform the laying-on of hands for the transmission of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. But this thought, which is expressed still more decisively in the *Liber de rebaptismate*, belittles and even makes poorly understood the meaning of baptism. In the *Liber de rebaptismate*, the grace-filled gifts of the Holy Spirit are considered the exclusive property of the Church, but baptism performed in the name of Jesus is common to the Church and to others. Such a baptism washed only the body and, outside the Church, remains without benefit on the Day of Judgment. (Sarr. 7. 12. 18) But what sort of mystery is this? How can a mystery be performed without the grace of the Holy Spirit? If the grace-giving baptism of the Holy Spirit is permitted outside the Church, then it is completely impossible to preserve the unity of the Church.

Very often Church historians and patrologists express the thought, as it were, that the Bishop of Rome turned out to be right, and not St. Cyprian. I think that in history the rigorism of St. Cyprian in respect to Church practice was only somewhat softened, but that his dogmatic teaching of the unity of the Church was not at all changed. To be convinced of this, one must cross over into the fourth century. Here, first of all, we must pause carefully on the words of St. Basil the Great from his first canonical letter to St. Amphilocheus, Bishop of Iconium. In this epistle, which has canonical dignity and irreproachable authority, it is impossible not to notice the image of the thought of St. Cyprian and of those of like mind. St. Basil only puts the opinion of St. Cyprian into precise dogmatical formulation.

“It seemed good to the ancients, I mean Cyprian and our Firmilian, to place all of them, the Cathari, the Encratites, the Hydroparastatae, under one common condemnation because although the origin of their separation (τοῦ χωρισμοῦ) was in consequence of schism (διὰ σχίσματος), those who left the Church no longer had the grace of the Holy Spirit upon them, since the granting of it came to nothing after the breaking of succession, and even though the first who were separated had the ordination of the fathers and through the laying-on of hands had received spiritual gifts, but when they broke away, having become laymen (λαϊκοί γενόμενοι), they had no power to baptize or ordain, and they were not in a condition to transmit to others the grace of the Holy Spirit, from which they themselves had fallen away (ἦς αὐτοὶ ἐκπεπτώκασι). Therefore, when those baptized by them come to the Church, they are ordered, since they have been baptized by laymen, to be cleansed by the true baptism of the Church.” (Canon 1)

This is the dogmatical part of the canon of St. Basil, in which he transmits the opinion of his predecessor Firmilian and of St. Cyprian. Not with a single word does St. Basil refute or question those dogmatical arguments about the unity of the life of grace in the Church. But this is what he necessarily must have done, since soon after the quoted words, he begins to speak of the possibility of practice apparently not in agreement with this dogmatic theory. “But inasmuch as it seemed best to some in Asia to have their baptism accepted, for the sake of the good of many (οἰκονομίας ἕνεκα τῶν πολλῶν), then let it be received (ἔστω δεκτόν).” The transition from dogmatical reasonings to disciplinary instructions is made in a concessive tone. Dogmatic theory does not change, but a condescending practice is permitted (ἔστω δεκτόν). Within the one general dogmatic point of view diverse practice is possible, as St. Cyprian agreed in principle. St. Basil even begins his first canon with a recognition of the possibility of diverse practice. “One must follow the custom of each country (this concerns the Cathari), because in that time those who dis-

cussed their baptism thought differently about this subject.” If St. Basil recognized baptism outside the Church as grace-giving and effectual, then he could not have reasoned in this manner. Then he would have had to insist that schismatics should nowhere be baptized, because baptism is one; but for St. Basil the question of whether to baptize or not to baptize schismatics is determined only by Church practice and the benefit of the act, according to the circumstances. You see, according to the words of St. Basil, “it seemed best to some in Asia to receive the baptism of the Cathari (οἰκονομίας ἕνεκα τῶν πολλῶν),” not according to dogmatic considerations, not in consequence of anything else than the doctrine found in St. Cyprian on the unity of the life of grace only in the Church. St. Basil reasons entirely in the same way when he speaks of the Encratites. “It is our duty to reject their baptism, and if someone has received baptism from them, we should baptize him when he comes to the Church. However, if this is an obstacle to the general good governance (ἐάν μὲλλῃ τῆ καθόλου οἰκονομία ἐμπόδιον ἔσσεσθαι), then again we must resort to custom and follow the Fathers, who have provided with discretion what was necessary for us. For I fear that, in wishing to keep them from haste in baptism, we might place obstacles to their salvation by the strictness of the rule. But in any case, let it be decreed that those who come from their baptism be chismated, to wit, in the presence of the faithful, and thus approach the mysteries.” In the second epistle to St. Amphilochius (Canon 47), St. Basil insists that the Encratites must be baptized. “But if among you, as among the Romans, rebaptism is forbidden by reason of a certain economy (οἰκονομίας τινὸς ἕνεκα)...” Again, as is obvious, in the establishment of practice, dogmatic teaching does not rule, but rather the principle of Church economy. Having acknowledged it necessary to baptize Encratites, St. Basil nevertheless agrees to another practice, if only not to place obstacles to the conversion of heretics by the strictness of the rule. According to the canon of St. Basil, is the baptism of the Encratites valid in itself or not? Of course it is invalid,

since he considers it more correct to baptize them. Why does he agree to another practice? Only because the practical problem of the baptism of heretics is not for him inseparably bound with the dogmatic teaching of the unity of the Church. The Church is one, and in her alone do mysteries have grace. The Encratites do not have grace, and if someone does not baptize them upon their reception into the Church, then by doing this he does not make the Encratites themselves a part of the Church, a local church, but acts in such a way only for the sake of the good of the Church, to facilitate the conversion of heretics. A different interpretation of the words of St. Basil seems completely impossible. Why is the custom of the country or “a certain economy” mentioned here if the matter concerns dogma? For the sake of the good of those being converted or to follow the customs of various countries, one must not deny the truth of consubstantiality, the unity of the Church, *et al.*!

In your third letter to Archbishop Antony, you somewhat inaccurately quoted the Latin book of Dr. Johan Ernst — *Ketzertoujangelegenheit in der altchristlichen Kirche noch Cyprian*. Aneinz, 1901. On the basis of this scholar's book, I am convinced that the contemporary Latin is incapable of understanding the thought of the ancient Church concerning the life of grace. But in the place which you pointed out, J. Ernst speaks not at all of the fact that “it seems that the canonical rules of St. Basil concerning the rebaptism of heretics do not have the meaning of Christian dogma, but they express the strict discipline of the Church in that period in which he wrote them.” J. Ernst writes the following: “In a great part, perhaps in the greater part of the Asiatic Churches, the rebaptism of Novatians asking to be received into the Church and of schismatics in general was firmly made the rule, and Basil cites as a basis for this practice the argumentation of Cyprian that one outside the Church who performs a baptism lacks the canonical right to validly celebrate baptism. But for St. Basil the Great, the invalidity of Novatian

(*resp.* schismatic) baptism is not a matter of dogma, as for St. Cyprian, but a matter of the discipline temporarily ruling the Church. Παράδεξασθαι in the aforementioned canon of the “ancients” he understands in the sense of possibility (als fakultatives), and in accordance with this, he makes the recognition of Novatian baptism dependent on the rulings which exist in the separate Churches” (pp. 5-6). If such is the case, then from one Church practice or another, it is impossible to draw conclusions about dogmatic teaching! If in practice someone from a group outside the Church is not baptized upon his reception into the Church, this does not at all mean that the Church supposedly recognizes them as belonging to her and having the grace of the Holy Spirit, which acts in their rite of baptism.

Following the rule of the “ancients,” St. Basil divides all apostates into three classes in relation to the means of their reception into the Church: heresy, schism, unlawful assemblage (αἱρέσεις, σχίσματα, παρασυναγωγάς), but this just in relation to the means of reception. The words of St. Basil must absolutely not be understood as though only heretics in the strict sense do not belong to the Church, while others still remain in the Church. “The baptism of schismatics, ὡς ἔτι ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὄντων, should be received (παράδεξασθαι)” writes St. Basil. The Greek words quoted here are often translated in the following manner: “as still not alien to the Church” (Slavonic) translation in the *Book of Canons*), “As still belonging to the Church” (Russian translation in the “Works of the Holy Fathers”), “mit der kirche nach in Vergindung stehen” (translation of J. Ernst, p. 4). But these are not translations, but interpretations which must be recognized as inaccurate. It should be translated literally: “as recently being from the Church.” There is no thought here that schismatics presumably still belong to the Church, but the thought that they have recently gone out from the Church. In any case, belonging to the Church can hardly be expressed by the preposition ἐκ. It is difficult to con-

ceive of belonging to the Church in the form of successive stages: the Church, unlawful assemblage, schism. If the words of St. Basil ἔτι ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας designated some sort of membership of schismatics in the Church, then an unlawful assembly must, in his opinion, belong still more to the Church. Adherents of an unlawful assemblage are received only through repentance. But what does St. Basil say about them: "If someone has been barred from divine services because he has been found guilty of sin and has not submitted to the canons, but has arrogated for himself the right of presidency and the priestly functions, and others, abandoning the Catholic Church (καταλιπόντες τὴν καθολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν), have gone along with him..." How can one be in the Church, having left the Oecumenical Church? This would be some sort of incomprehensible self-contradiction to say that schismatics are still in the Church, and to affirm that unlawful assemblies have departed from the Church, that they have left her.

So, this is what the first canon of St. Basil teaches us. The Church is One and only She alone has the entire fulness of the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit. Whoever has in whatever way fallen away from the Church — in heresy, in schism, in unlawful assembly — this man loses the communion of the grace of God. Therefore, mysteries performed outside the Church have no charismatic action. Only for the sake of the good of the Church, for the sake of facilitation of being united to the Church, can the rite of baptism not be repeated over those being converted, if it has been correctly performed outside the Church. Not because this rite was already a mystery with grace, but in the hope that the grace-filled gift will be received in the very act of union with the body of the Church.

If baptism outside the Church is completely incorrect even in its external aspect, as, for example among the Montanists, then there is no foundation, no reason (λόγον, after St. Basil) for making such a condescension for them. Only be-

cause St. Basil did not inseparably link Church practice with any sort of dogmatic theory about the validity of mysteries outside the Church — only for this reason could he in principle agree to the permissibility of diverse practice in different countries, only for this reason can one "follow the custom of each country."

In the opposite case, if Church practice were inseparably linked with dogmatic principles, if the reception of a heretic or schismatic without baptism signified his belonging to the Church and the validity of mysteries performed outside the Church, if the validity of mysteries depended on the faith and dogmatic teaching of heretics, then the Church certainly must have completely and exactly defined what sort of error makes one a heretic, tears one from the Church, and makes mysteries invalid. There is no such designation, and from Church practice one cannot deduce any general ruling thought.

The 95th canon of the Sixth Oecumenical Council is drawn to my attention. First of all, in this canon it is said of all heretics and schismatics who approach the Church that they are "united to the portion of those being saved — τῇ μερίδι τῶν σωζομένων». Consequently, earlier they were not among those being saved, that is, in the Church. According to this rule such a regulation and custom is determined: "Arians, Macedonians, Novatians (who are called Cathari), Quartodecimians, or Tetradites, and Apollinarians, when they submit a written document and curse every heresy that does not believe as the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church believes, we receive by sealing them with holy chrism... Nestorians must make a written statement and anathematize their heresy and after this... let them receive holy Communion."

Is it possible to explain this decision of the Oecumenical Council from a strictly dogmatic point of view? It is impossible. The Novatians were schismatics; the Nestorians were heretics beyond all question, condemned by an Oecumenical Council. And all of a sudden the canon of the Sixth Oecumenical Council is stricter and more exacting towards schismatics

than towards heretics. The 79th canon of the Council of Carthage can be understood only from the point of view of Church economy. "In conclusion it was deemed well to send letters to our brethren and fellow bishops, and especially to the apostolic throne, on which presides our co-servant, the worthily esteemed and revered Anastasios, about this matter, so that according to the great need of Africa which is known to him, for the sake of the peace and good of the Church, even the clerics of the Donatists themselves, having corrected their position and having desired to approach Catholic union, may be received in their rank of priesthood, as each Catholic bishop who rules the Church in that place reasons and is pleased, if this is shown to contribute to the peace of Christians . . . This is done not in violation of the council which took place concerning this matter in the countries lying beyond the sea, but so that this would be preserved for the good of those wishing in this way to come over to the Catholic Church, so that no obstacles would be placed in the way of their union. Whoever in the place of their residence will be found to be assisting and hastening Catholic union in every way for the obvious profit of the souls of the brethren, let the decree formulated against their orders at the council beyond the sea not be an impediment to them, for salvation is barred from no person. That is, if those ordained by the Donatists, correcting themselves, wish to approach the Catholic faith, let them not be deprived of being received in their orders, according to the decision of the council which was beyond the sea, but all the more so let those be received, through whom a hastening to Catholic union is brought about."

Here before us is, first of all, the possibility of diverse practice. For the "council beyond the sea," Donatism was an alien calamity which could be approached with a strict dogmatic measure, and this council determines that Donatist clerics be received as simple laymen. For the Council of Carthage, practical considerations speak louder. The "council beyond the sea" is not refuted; dogmatically it is completely in the

right. But for Africa, practice is determined according to the considerations of Church economy. Here the great need of Africa, the good will of each Catholic bishop, the peace of Christians, and even the personal merits of Donatist clerics being converted play an important role. All these considerations must be silent before the dogmatic point of view. If the Donatists are in the Church all the same and if their ordination is valid, then there is no reason to plead the need of Africa and the benefit of the peace of the Church, one must necessarily rise up against the "council beyond the sea," which decreed that persons already ordained and possessing the grace of ordination be ordained anew. Obviously, both councils are of one mind in this: that there are no hierarchs outside the Church, even in schism, and that no ordination outside the Church has charismatic sacramental meaning. However, according to the considerations of Church economy, for the sake of the peace of the Church, schismatic clergy may be received in their rank with the expectation that, for union with the Church, the Lord grants them the grace of priesthood even without the repetition of the rite, which was already correctly performed although without grace. To understand the 79th canon of the Council of Carthage otherwise is, to all appearance, quite impossible.

I will permit myself to take still more time on the matter of the practice and teaching of the ancient Church. According to the rules of the Church, although at first, when there were still no conciliar decisions, some did baptize Arians,<sup>31</sup> Arians and Nestorians were not baptized. Arians were chrismated, while Nestorians were received simply through repentance and renunciation of the heresy, according to the third formula. Did Arians, condemned and excommunicated by the Oecumenical Council, still remain members of the Church? Could their hierarchy perform baptism and give the grace of the Holy Spirit in the mysteries?

<sup>31</sup> Epiphanius. *Expositio fidei Cath.* PG. t. 42, col. 805. Works in Russian translation, part. 5 Moscow, 1882, p. 338.

If now there were somewhere a community of Arians, would you recognize them as a local Church, having a grace-filled priesthood and real mysteries? You see, the Arians are already indisputable heretics, and their heresy concerns a most essential dogma, which is the reason it was met by such a resolute struggle and condemnation.

Why did the Church not perform baptism over them, upon receiving them into her bosom? Obviously, only according to the considerations of Church economy, wishing to facilitate the conversion of Arians to the Church. In receiving Arians without baptism, the Church thought not at all to proclaim by this very fact that the Arians, in spite of their denial of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, were, all the same, Christians who had the life of grace and hope of eternal salvation. We cannot even suppose this if we remember how the teachers of the Church of the fourth century speak of the Arians. "Those who call Arians Christians are in great and extreme error, as are those who have not read the Scriptures, who know nothing at all of Christianity and the Christian faith. In place of Christ they have Arius, as the Manicheans have Manes. How can those be Christians who are not Christians, but Arians? Or, how will those belong to the Oecumenical Church who have cast off the Apostolic faith?"<sup>32</sup> St. Athanasius discourses on the baptism of the Arians also. "Heretics are already in danger of losing the very fulness of the mystery, I mean baptism. For if the power of the mystery is bestowed in the name of the Father and of the Son, then these words do not mean the true Father, denying the One Who is from Him and of one essence with Him, and they also deny the true Son and name another, who, according to their own invention, is created from the non-existent, — then, is not the baptism performed by them completely empty and without profit, possessing an imaginary form, and in reality not in the least aiding piety? The Arians grant baptism not into the

<sup>32</sup> St. Athanasius the Great. *Sermon on the Arians* I, 1. 2. 4.

Father and the Son, but into creator and the creature, into the maker and his work. As the creature is one thing and the Son another, so the baptism, seemingly given by them, is something else and not genuine, although in appearance they pronounce, according to what has been written, the name of the Father and the Son. He does not baptize, who says only: "Lord!" but he who unites right faith with the name. For this reason the Saviour Himself did not simply command to baptize, but said before: *teach*; and only then: baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, so that right faith would come from instruction, and that the sacrament of baptism would unite with faith.

"And many other heresies, pronouncing only the names, but not being right in their wisdom, and therefore, as was said, not having sound faith, have the water bestowed on them without profit, as being scant in piety; for this reason the one sprinkled by them is rather befouled with impiety than washed clean . . .

Those who reason according to Arius, although they read what has been written and pronounce the names, nevertheless lead into deception those who receive baptism from them because they themselves are more impious than other heretics, and little by little they surpass them in heresy. Receiving, to all appearances, baptism in the name of the non-existent, they receive nothing."<sup>33</sup>

In like manner, St. Athanasius judges the baptism also of those heretics who reduced the Holy Spirit to a creature. "The faith in the Trinity transmitted to us is the only one, and it unites us with God, and whoever takes away something from the Trinity and baptizes in the name of the Father, or in the name of the Son alone, or into the Father and Son without the Spirit, receives nothing, but those being baptized and he who imagines himself to be giving baptism remain in vanity and unconsecrated, because the mystery is accomplish-

<sup>33</sup> *Sermon on the Arians* II, 42-43.

<sup>4</sup> The Unity of the Church



ed in the name of the Trinity: so that whoever separates the Son from the Father or reduces the Spirit to a creature has neither the Son nor the Father but is an atheist, worse than an unbeliever, and anything but a Christian.”<sup>34</sup>

All these dogmatic arguments of St. Athanasius the Great are completely indisputable, and his views on the essence of Arianism fully reflect the general conviction of the Church of the fourth and subsequent centuries.

However, Arians were not baptized upon their conversion to the Church. Why was such a means of reception of the Arians into the Church employed? Obviously, it was only a condescending Church practice and was not at all a dogmatic teaching that the Arians are supposedly members of the one Oecumenical Church of Christ, who are only visibly separated from her, and that baptism, performed in the Arian community, was supposedly the real charismatic mystery. In the face of the obvious heresy of this community separated from the Church, the Church received its members without a new baptism. This fact convinces one that the thought that some who are separated from the Church, supposedly all the same, remain in the Church of Christ and keep the grace of the Holy Spirit, is completely alien to the ancient Church. In receiving certain heretics and schismatics without baptism, in receiving even their hierarchy in their order of priesthood, the Catholic Church continued to consider only herself the one Church of Christ, the exclusive guardian of the charismatic gifts of the Holy Spirit, and by this practice she did not in the least think to declare Cathari, Donatists, Arians, Nestorians and others her members, having the saving gifts of the Holy Spirit; it seems that one absolutely must not understand Church practices in relation to heretics and schismatics being converted to the Church in any other way.

If the thought that heretics already have grace-filled baptism lay at the foundation of their being received without

<sup>34</sup> *Epistle to Serapion*. I, ch. 30.

baptism, then one would have to determine for each separate Church *exactly* and without fail, which of the heretics have baptism and which do not, and no such thing occurred. The Church permitted diversity of practice according to the conditions of place and time, without differentiating very rigorously between the dogmatic teaching of the heretics.<sup>35</sup> Otherwise a completely unthinkable conclusion is reached: according to the circumstances of place and time, the Church changed the dogmatic teaching of her unity. Such a conclusion of course, is unconditionally inadmissible, and therefore one must agree with the explanation of Church practice offered above.

This explanation can be easily accepted if one sees Christianity not as a sum of dogmatic propositions, but rather perceives the essence of Christianity in the life of the Church. Here under the action of the grace of the Holy Spirit, all human short-comings are made up and the external rite of baptism performed outside the Church can be changed into a grace-filled mystery. Only with such a view of the dogmatic meaning of Church practice is the truth of the unity of the Church preserved, and the purity and spotlessness of the Bride of Christ insistently demands this truth. From any other point of view, the truth of the unity of the Church is clouded, and there the Church is presented as the sum of local churches which are alien to one another, mutually at war, and anathematizing each other. The consciousness of the Church does not endure such a strange idea of Church unity!

I cannot fail to notice a certain inaccuracy in your arguments, an inaccuracy of a historical nature. In your third letter to Archbishop Antony you say: “It seems to me that

<sup>35</sup> A very characteristic case was at the first session of the Seventh Oecumenical Council, where they argued at great length about how to receive the bishops of the Iconoclasts. One deacon wanted to transfer the question to dogmatic soil and posed the question: “Is the heresy which has now appeared anew less grievous than those that preceded it or more grievous?” The Patriarch St. Tarasius at once remarked: “Evil is evil, especially in matters of the Church, as far as dogmas are concerned, it is all the same to err to a small degree or to a great degree, because in one case and the other the law of God is broken.” *Acts of the Oecumenical Councils*, vol. 7. Kazan, 1873, p. 104. This was said during the discussion of the problem of heretical ordination.

historically the question of the invalidity of sacraments outside the Orthodox Church does not go back any further than the second half of the eighteenth century and was raised due to the defamatory activities of an ignorant monk. I read the story of this deplorable episode in *The History of the Eastern Church under Turkish Rule* by Alexei Lebedev, who sharply reproaches the Church of Constantinople, which allowed itself to be carried away by the monk Auxentios. But the Russian Church did not follow the example of the Great Church; it remained faithful to the tradition of the ancient Byzantine Church, which wept over the separation of the Churches of the East and West and prayed with Balsamon for the conversion of the Pope, but did not cease to recognize the validity of the baptism and ordination of Western Christians." "In reality, there was a certain period when the rebaptism of Latins in the Russian Church was practised; this innovation — I think that I am not mistaken if I use such a term — was introduced at the Council of Moscow in 1620. But the Council of Moscow of 1667, which was notable in the history of the Russian Church, abolished the rebaptism of Latins. This conciliar decision, in my opinion, is a decisive proof of the fact that the Orthodox Church recognizes Latin sacraments."

After the foregoing examination of the practice of the ancient Church and its dogmatic significance, the reception of Latins nowadays without baptism does not at all convince me that the Latin mysteries are valid in themselves, independently of the reception of those baptized in Latinism into the Orthodox Church. But, moreover, you are not completely correct in your historical affirmations. In the first centuries after the separation of Rome from the Church, Latins were differently received in the Greek and in the Russian Churches — by baptism and by chrismation. For a long time there were no general decisions on this question. There is much information about the baptism of Latins, even in the bull which marked the beginning of the unfortunate separation, the Papal legates accuse the Greeks: "Like the Arians, they

rebaptize those baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, and especially Latins; like Donatists they affirm that with the exception of the Greek Church, the Church of Christ and the true sacrifice and baptism have perished in the whole world."<sup>36</sup>

At the very beginning of the twelfth century, a Serbian prince, the father of Stefan Nemanya, was forced to baptize his son with the baptism of the Latins, but later rebaptized him in the Orthodox fashion when he returned to Rascia.<sup>37</sup>

The bishop of Cracow, Matthew, in a letter of 1130 to Bernard, the Abbot of Clairvaux, invites him to concern himself with the conversion of the Russians to Latinism and affirms that the Russians rebaptize Latins.<sup>38</sup>

It is well known how kindly Ludwig VII was received by Manuel I in Constantinople in 1147; however, the description of his journey to the East, *Odo de Dioglio* mentions that the Greeks rebaptized Latins.<sup>39</sup>

In the same twelfth century our Niphon, Bishop of Novgorod, instructs Kyrikus that Latins should be received through chrismation. According to his words, this is how they were received in Constantinople. Nevertheless, details of an exclusively ritual character interest Niphon.<sup>40</sup>

At the end of the twelfth century Theodore Balsamon forbids Latin prisoners to be admitted to the sacraments until they renounce Latin dogmas and customs, until they have been catechized according to the canons and can be considered equal with the Orthodox. Balsamon proves the necessity of treating Latins thus by the fact that the Romans separated from the Church and that the Pope is not commemorated together with the Patriarchs.<sup>41</sup> According to the interpretation

<sup>36</sup> PL, t. 143, col. 1003 B.

<sup>37</sup> E. E. Golubinsky. *A Brief Sketch of the History of the Orthodox Churches of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Rumania*. Moscow, 1871, p. 551.

<sup>38</sup> E. E. Golubinsky. *History of the Russian Church*, vol. 1, 2, Moscow, 1904, p. 807.

<sup>39</sup> De Ludov. VII profectio in Orientem. Ed. Chiffetius, Paris 1660, p. 34.

A. Pichler, *Geschichte der Kirchlichen Trennung Zwischen dem Orient und Occident*. 1. Band Muenchen 1864, s. 288 Amn. 7.

<sup>40</sup> *Russian Historical Library*, vol. 6. Second Printing. St. Petersburg, 1908. Columns 26-27.

<sup>41</sup> Rallis and Potlis *Syntagma ton Theion kai Ieron Kanonon*. Vol. 4, p. 440.

of Canon 14 of the Fourth Oecumenical Council, Balsamon testifies that the Orthodox required renunciation of heresy from Latins if they wished to marry Orthodox.<sup>42</sup> It is quite possible that by *κατηχήθη* in the first case, and by *εξόμνησθαι* in the second, the baptism of Latins is not implied, but the Byzantine canonist considers Latins as not belonging to the Church. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 bears testimony that after the apostasy of Rome the Greeks began to rebaptize those baptized by the Latins and practised this sometimes in the thirteenth century.<sup>43</sup>

At about the same time the Bulgarian Archbishop Demetrius Chomatinos testifies that there were diverse attitudes towards the Latins and their sacraments.<sup>44</sup>

In 1222, Pope Honorius III mentions in a letter to the judges in Livonia that the bishop of Livonia had informed him, “quod Rutheni Latinorum Baptismum, quasi rem detestabilem execrantes, etc.”<sup>45</sup> In 1232, Pope Gregory IX wrote to the Polish clergy not to permit the marriage of Roman Catholic women to Russians, who have them rebaptized according to their own rite (in contemptum fidei Christianae secundum ritum ipsorum denuo baptizari faciunt.<sup>46</sup>) In Russian sources there is testimony of the baptism of Latins from the fourteenth century. Our chronicles for 6841 (1333) report that Grand Duke Ivan Danilovich married his son Semyon: “From Lithuania they brought a princess for him by the name of Augusta, and in holy baptism she was called Anastasia.”<sup>47</sup>

In the fifteenth century the Greek Church stopped baptizing Latins. The reception of Latins into the Church was

<sup>42</sup> *Syntagma*. Vol. 2, p. 254.

<sup>43</sup> Cap. IV. Baptisatos etiam a Latinis et ipsi Graeci rebaptizare ausu temerario praesumebant: — et adhuc, sicut accepimus, quidam agere hoc non verentur. *Mansi*. Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio. T. 22, Venetis 1778, coll. 989-990.

<sup>44</sup> Eunclavii. *Jus Graeco-Roman*. I pp. 318-320.

<sup>45</sup> A. I. Turgenev. *Historica Russiae Monumenta*, V. 1, Petropoli 1841, XII, p. 13.

<sup>46</sup> *Historica Russiae monumenta*, V. 1, XXXIV, p. 31.

<sup>47</sup> *Voskresensky Chronicle, A Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, vol. 7, St. Petersburg, 1857, pp. 204. The Patriarchal, or Nikon's Chronicle, Complete Collection of Chronicles, vol. 10. St. Petersburg, 1885, p. 206.

accomplished by *chrismation*. Such a practice was determined upon also at the council of Constantinople in 1484, where the order for the reception of Latins required a renunciation of the *filioque*, unleavened bread, and other Latin customs, after which it read «εὐθὺς χρίεται ὑπὸ τοῦ ἱερέως ὁ τοιοῦτος τῷ ἁγίῳ τῆς ἐκκλησίας μύρω»<sup>48</sup> (“and the man is immediately anointed by the priest with the chrism of the Church”). Although they did not baptize Latins, they nevertheless received them as the ancient Church received Arians, Macedonians and others. It is remarkable that the Greek writers of the fifteenth century prove by the chrismation of Latins upon their being received that these latter are heretics. “The ordinances of piety say,” writes St. Mark of Ephesus, “that even those who in the least fall away from the Orthodox faith are called heretics and are also subject to the statutes against heretics. And why do we anoint with chrism those of them who unite themselves to us? Obviously it is because they are heretics.” Here St. Mark of Ephesus bears witness that Latins were only chrismated. But this does not at all mean that he considers them as belonging to the Church. He speaks clearly and definitely on this question. “We,” he says, “have cut them off and cast them out from the common body of the Church . . . We have abandoned them as heretics, and thus separated ourselves from them.” St. Mark of Ephesus refers to the 7th Canon of the Second Oecumenical Council in proof of the fact that Latins are received into the Church as were the ancient heretics and that therefore they are likewise heretics.<sup>49</sup>

On the contrary, from the fifteenth century the practice of rebaptizing Latins began to be the rule in the Russian Church. Thus the Chronicles remark that in the fifteenth century John Friezini, a Venetian working in Moscow as a coiner, “was baptized among us.”<sup>50</sup> We have an especially large

<sup>48</sup> Rallis. *Syntagma*. Vol. 5, p. 143-147.

<sup>49</sup> *The Unpublished Works of Mark of Ephesus and George Scholarios*. Published and translated by Abraam Norov, Paris, 1859, pp. 28-31. See *Christian Reading* for 1860, vol. 1.

<sup>50</sup> *A Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*, vol. 8, St. Petersburg, 1859, p. 176.

number of testimonies of the rebaptism of Latins from the sixteenth century. John Lasski, Archbishop of Gnezno, reported about the Russians at the Lateran Council of 1514: "They say that all subordinate to the Church of Rome are not true Christians and are not saved . . . They profane, blaspheme, mock, and despise all the sacraments of the Church."<sup>51</sup> In the 1670's Daniel, a prince from Buchar, came to Moscow as the ambassador extraordinary of the Austrian Emperor. We have his work *The Origin and Rise of Moscow*, in which we read: "Those of our compatriots who are converted to their faith they rebaptize as not properly baptized. They cite the following as the reason for this: baptism is immersion, and not sprinkling. Since the Grand Duke gives money to such people, often the frivolous let baptism be repeated upon them for the small profit and thus put our religion to no little shame."<sup>52</sup> At the end of his life, Tsar Ivan IV began to court Mary Hastings, niece of the English queen Elizabeth. It is well known that this Tsar had a despotic attitude towards the Orthodox Church, however, when Bowes, the ambassador of Elizabeth, replied to the demand that the bride accept Orthodoxy that the Christian faith is one, the Tsar remarked decisively that "that princess who shall marry me must first be baptized into our Christian faith."<sup>53</sup> In the August of 1590 Queen Elizabeth wrote to Tsar Feodor Ivanovich reproving him because certain merchants "were forced to be baptized anew, when they had already been received into Christianity through baptism."<sup>54</sup> Nicholas Varkoch, ambassador of the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, who was in Russia in the year 1593, testifies in the description of his journey, "If baptized Christians happen to convert to their faith, they must allow them (the Russians) to baptize them again, since the Muscovites doubt that our baptism is genuine. That poor

<sup>51</sup> *Historica Russiae Monumenta*, V. I, no CXXIII, pp. 124, 125.

<sup>52</sup> Russian translation of I. A. Tikhomirov in *Readings in the Imperial Society of History and Antiquity of Moscow University*, 1876, book 3, pp. 37-38.

<sup>53</sup> *Journal of the Imperial Russian Historical Society*, Bk. 38, p. 105. St. Petersburg.

<sup>54</sup> Y. Tolstoi. *The First Forty Years of the Relations between Russia and England*, St. Petersburg, 1875, p. 383.

sinner who allows himself to be baptized must renounce the baptism he has received and be baptized anew."<sup>55</sup> And here is what we read in the encyclical letter of June 14, 1613 of Sylvester, Archbishop of Vologda, to the Archangelsk priest Bartholomew: "When this letter reaches you, you, together with your fellows, the priests and deacons of Archangelsk, shall order those foreigners to prepare themselves for baptism. And you shall baptize them into our true Orthodox Christian faith according to the canons of the holy Apostles and the holy Fathers; you shall command them everywhere to curse and renounce their faith, to deny heathenism and to turn to the true God; after baptism and Communion, you shall also order them to fast as much as possible."<sup>56</sup>

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, at the end of the "Time of Troubles," the question of the rebaptism of Latins became a question of political importance in Moscow, because in 1613, Russia obtained a Russian dynasty instead of a Polish one, and also because the Russian people and the Russian hierarchy were quite convinced of the necessity of rebaptizing Latins. When they offered the throne of the Moscow tsardom to the Polish Prince Vladislav, they required that he be baptized beforehand into the Orthodox Faith. On August 17, 1610 St. Ermogen, Patriarch of Moscow, the metropolitans, archbishops, bishops, archimandrites, abbots, and all the council of the Church, the boyars, the courtiers, the military and the civil officials of all ranks, wrote an "Instruction" to the embassy, which had Metropolitane Philaret of Rostov at its head, and which was sent to the Polish King Sigismund III with the request to release Prince Vladislav for the Moscow tsardom. In this "Instruction" the following condition is repeated many times in the foremost position: "and would His Majesty Prince Vladislav Sigismundovich be

<sup>55</sup> Russian trans. in *Reading in the Imperial Society of History and Antiquities for 1874*, book 4, pp. 33-34, p. 135.

<sup>56</sup> *Chronicle of the Studies of the Archeographic Commission*, (Issue) No. 2, St. Petersburg, 1862, p. 64.

pleased to be baptized in the Orthodox Christian faith according to the Greek canon.”<sup>57</sup> “And will the Polish noblemen be pleased to say that the Prince was so baptized in the Orthodox Christian faith, and that upon this second baptism, there shall be no other baptism for a Christian?” And to the boyar Prince Vasily Vasilevich and his companions say: “We know that His Majesty the Prince is baptized in the Roman faith according to the Roman canon, but if His Majesty the Prince will take compassion on us and pity us, and will to join our Orthodox Christian faith of the Greek canon, it will be proper for His Majesty to be baptized with the true, holy baptism of our holy Christian Faith according to the Greek canon.”<sup>58</sup> They also sent a letter to Vladislav himself in the name of the Patriarch St. Ermogen and from all the Russian clergy and laity of every rank and calling. In this letter the fundamental thought is “With all peacefulness and meekness and humility accept holy baptism” — and they point out St. Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles, as an example to Vladislav.<sup>59</sup>

In view of all these testimonies, I think that it would be an inaccuracy to call the decision of the Council of Moscow of 1620 an innovation. Indeed, the Council of 1620 itself looked on its decision not as a novelty, but as a confirmation of an old custom. Patriarch Philaret himself speaks of the incentives to the decision of 1620. “In my second year as chief shepherd, in the year 7128 (1620) from the creation of the world, two priests, Ivan and Evphimy from the Church of the Honorable and Glorious Nativity of our most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, which is in Stolechniki, informed me concerning Jonah, Metropolitan of Sarsk and Podonsk; that this same Metropolitan Jonah commanded these two priests, Ivan and Evphimy, not to baptize the Poles converting from the Latin faith, Jan Slobotsky and Matvey Svetitsky,

<sup>57</sup> *Collection of Government letters and Agreement preserved in the Governmental College of Foreign Affairs.* Part II, Moscow 1814, no. 201, p. 408, 411, 413, 414, 416, 418, 421.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 421.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 207, pp. 444-450.

but only to anoint them with Holy Chrism and afterwards to give them Communion in the Most Pure Body and Blood of the Lord. They brought me a written sheet taken from the ukaze of the metropolitan, which ordained them not to baptize, but only to anoint them with Holy Chrism. I, the humble Philaret, did not overlook this schism, fearing lest the sheep of the flock of Christ might perish, and I deigned to correct the matter reported to me by the test of Scripture and true Faith, so that in truth no pagan remnant nor Hebrew maliciousness should be mixed with the ripe wheat, but would be torn out like a tare, this leaving the field of the Church clean; for this reason I ordered Metropolitan Jonah to appear before me.” The Patriarch reminded the Metropolitan of Patriarch Ignatius, who, “pleasing the Latin heretics, brought Marinka of the heretical papist faith into the Cathedral of the Dormition, and did not baptize her with the holy, perfect baptism of the Christians, but only anointed her with Holy Chrism, and then married her to that defrocked person, and like Judas the betrayer, he likewise insulted Christ: for such a fault, the hierarchs of the great holy Church of Russia deposed Ignatius from his throne and episcopal rank in the year 7114 (1606), since he had disdained the Canons of the holy Apostles and the holy Fathers.”

Patriarch Philaret further recalls how St. Ermogen sent him to Vladislav “to make him Tsar, and to baptize him into our true Orthodox Christian faith of the Greek canon. And our father, the great, most holy Patriarch Ermogen, gave me a script from the Canons of the holy Apostles and the holy Fathers, for the strengthening of us all, and as an answer against the heretics of many different heretical faiths, why they should be baptized.”

The Patriarch speaks of how he studied the canons and understood “that all heretics of every different heretical faith are deprived of the true, holy baptism, which is of water and the Holy Spirit. For this reason it is proper for all those who come to the Orthodox Christian faith from heretical

faiths to be baptized perfectly with holy baptism . . .” “But how do you, in this imperial city of Moscow, undertake to introduce and establish that which is in opposition to the canons of the holy Fathers, the seven Oecumenical Councils, the Local Councils and the holy Patriarchs; why do you not order those coming to you from the Latin faith to be baptized in three immersions and why do you not investigate the deviation of their heresy, but instead command only that they be anointed with Holy Chrism . . . ?”

“I, the humble, do not even wish to hear of your newly introduced heretical delusion, since it is not in accordance with the divine canons that you introduce and teach new heresies, saying that it is not proper that those papists be baptized, and affirming that you do this in accordance with the canons of the holy Fathers...” “For from the years of the Grand Duke St. Vladimir of eternal memory, who enlightened all Great Russia with holy baptism received from the Greeks, and even until today, in the year 7128, no one among us has dared commit such a scandalous act of heresy, except Ignatius, the dethroned Patriarch and yourself.”

“Since the beginning of the state of Moscow until now, there has never been a case where Latin heretics and heretics of other faiths were not baptized, except for the case of Ignatius the Patriarch, who was deposed from his episcopal throne.”<sup>60</sup>

In 1621 Patriarch Philaret issued a decree on how the White Russians should be examined: which of them to baptize, which to chrismate, and which neither to baptize nor chrismate.<sup>61</sup> It was indicated that those baptized by the Uniates should be baptized with three immersions “because they were baptized by an apostate who prays to God for the Pope.”<sup>62</sup> But upon writing this directive, the Patriarch also confesses

<sup>60</sup> *Trebnik for Laymen*, 1639 edition, pp. 399 and ff.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 427 and ff.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 431.

that “we have not introduced a new tradition, but only renewed and strengthened the ancient one.”<sup>63</sup>

All these affirmations of Patriarch Philaret have a genuine historical foundation. This is the reason why even the foreigners who were in Moscow after 1620, when recalling the rebaptism of Latins, do not speak as though this practice had just recently appeared. In the 1630's, Adam O'Leary became quite interested in the question of baptism in old Russia. He describes rites, reports the biographies of the more famous of baptized persons, discusses the fact of rebaptism from the historical point of view:<sup>64</sup> “The Russians undoubtedly borrowed the practice of rebaptizing Christians who go over to them from other confessions from the Greeks, who, after their separation from the Latin Church, consider Latin baptism insufficient, and therefore they baptize a second time those who wish to come over to them from the Western Church and become members of the Greek Church.” Further on O'Leary cites the acts of the Lateran Council.<sup>65</sup> From O'Leary we could rightly expect remarks that the rebaptism of Western Christians in Moscow is only a recent innovation, yet we find nothing of the kind. Baron Augustine Maierberg, who was in Moscow in 1661, reports without any stipulations that “the Muscovites believe that baptism has no power unless the baptized person is completely immersed three times, according to the custom of the ancient Church. For this reason, when someone baptized according to the Latin faith goes over to the Muscovite faith, they rebaptize him by triple immersion, as one not baptized according to the ritual of the Church; they even dissolve a marriage contracted by him beforehand, considering that he was unlawfully led to the other sacraments, having not entered the Church by the sacred door of baptism. They at once anoint the baptized with chrism,

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 429.

<sup>64</sup> *Reading in the Society of History and Antiquities*, 1868, part IV, pp. 316-324.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 323-324.

not placing any value on Latin chrismation, considering it ineffectual.”<sup>66</sup>

The old Russian practice, confirmed by the Council of 1620, was changed at the Council of Moscow of 1667. This is understandable. The Council of 1667 is *distinguished* for the fact that, led by Greeks often of dubious worth, it condemned everything, even in the minor rites of the Russian Church, that deviated from Greek practice. And till now the curse hastily placed by the Council on the Old-Russian rite, as on a heresy, still causes turmoil in the Russian Church. Obsequious in relation to the secular government, the Greeks were at that time ready even to proclaim the principle that the State is superior to the Church and only the protest of the Russian hierarchy prevented such a solution of the problem of the mutual relations of Church and State.<sup>67</sup> Concerning the rebaptism of Latins the Council of 1667 decided: it is not proper to rebaptize Latins, but, after they forswear their heresies and confess their sins and submit a written statement, let them be anointed with the holy and great chrism and let them be administered the holy and most pure Mysteries and thus be united to the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.<sup>68</sup> But the Council could bring only the decision of the Council of Constantinople of 1484 and the words of St. Mark of Ephesus in support of its decree.<sup>69</sup> It is worthy of note that the decision of the Council of 1667 did not immediately change the Russian rule of practice for receiving Western Christians; at the end of the seventeenth and at the beginning of the eighteenth century they were still rebaptized. Here is what John Corb, who was in Moscow in 1698, writes in his “diary”: “The Russians do not recognize as truly baptized and as Christians those who, according to the Roman rite, are

<sup>66</sup> *Readings in the Society of History and Antiquities*, 1873, article 3, pp. 77-78.

<sup>67</sup> On the Council of 1667 see the work of Prof. N. T. Kaptarev, *Patriarch Nikon and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich*, vol. 2. Sergiev Posad, 1912, pp. 209-225, 366-420, esp. pp. 394-406.

<sup>68</sup> *Acts of the Councils of Moscow of 1666 and 1667*. Moscow, 1881.

<sup>69</sup> *Acts of the Councils of Moscow of 1666 and 1667*. Moscow, 1881. Leaf. 73, Leaf. 74.

reborn in Christ by mere sprinkling in the name of the Most Holy Trinity. The Muscovites, according to their stubborn superstition, affirm that baptism must be accomplished through immersion, since the old man must be drowned in the water, and this can be done only by immersing him in the water, and not by sprinkling him with it. Holding steadfastly to this error, the Russians admit Christians, regardless of their confession, to renewal of baptism, when they voluntarily accept the Russian schism.”<sup>70</sup>

Henrich Sederberg was in Russia from 1704 to 1718 and in his *Notes on the Religion and Morals of the Russian People* he writes: “Although it is true that they consider Roman Catholics Christians, they nevertheless consider their teaching filled with countless errors, and therefore, placing them on a par with others who come to their faith they baptize them once again, saying that they were Latins.”<sup>71</sup> On this point, according to Sederberg’s remark, the Russians differ from the Greeks.<sup>72</sup>

But meanwhile, at the very same time, the Church of Constantinople extended the decision of the Council of 1484 to apply to Lutherans and Calvinists. As a friend of all German Lutherans, Tsar Peter I asked the Patriarch of Constantinople how Lutherans should be received into Orthodoxy. In 1718 Patriarch Jeremiah answered with a written statement which was thereupon included in the *Complete Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire* (Vol. 5, No. 3325); in it the Patriarch, ready to please the Russian Tsar, decrees that “Let those who turn away from the Lutheran and Calvinist heresy be no longer rebaptized, but let them be made perfect Christians, sons of light and heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven by being merely anointed with holy chrism.” Afterwards, and without any conciliar decision — for the conciliar order of the Russian Church was abolished by Peter I — Latins began to be received even without chrismation.

<sup>70</sup> *Readings in the Society of History and Antiquities*, 1873. Bk. 3, pp. 266-267.

<sup>71</sup> *Readings in the Society of History and Antiquities*, 1873, Bk. 2, pp. 5, 30.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

From the seventeenth century, Russian theology begins to fall under Latin influence. Kievan practice in the seventeenth century was different from the Muscovite. In the *Trebnik* (Book of Needs) of Peter Mogila an idea, unknown to the ancient Church, intrudes: That there is some sort of validity to mysteries performed outside the Church. In this *Trebnik* it is said of Lutherans and Calvinists that "it is not at all proper to rebaptize them since they are baptized," and of Latins: "But as for these, not only do we not baptize them, but if they have been chrismated by their own, we do not anoint them with holy chrism."<sup>73</sup> In the *Trebnik* of Peter Mogila, a dogmatic foundation is placed under a practice, which in the ancient Church was admitted only according to the considerations of Church economy. Baptism, chrismation, and priesthood are not repeated because supposedly "they leave a stamp, that is an indelible seal or a sign upon the soul of the recipient." "For baptism signs or seals the soul of the person baptized such that he is known to be a sheep of the flock of Christ, and is written in the book of life; chrismation signs or seals the chrismated person such that he is distinguished from the unchrismated, being inscribed in the *ranks* of the warriors of Christ."<sup>74</sup> But how can one be a sheep outside the one flock of Christ? How can one be a soldier of Christ while waging war against the Church of Christ? It is in Latin theology with its *opus operatum* that the source of this theory of the validity of mysteries performed outside the one Church of Christ lies, a theory which has been adopted by certain of the new Russian theologians.

Patriarch Jeremiah wrote quite decisively in the document mentioned above: "We confirm and establish, that this be unchanging for all ages... firmly and forever preserved by posterity." Not forty years had passed when the very Church of Constantinople began to baptize heretics upon their conversion to the Church. Under Patriarch Cyril V in 1756, it

<sup>73</sup> Kiev, 1646 edition, p. 164.

<sup>74</sup> Kiev, 1646 edition, p. 192.

was determined to receive those coming from the Western confessions as "unsanctified and unbaptized" (ὡς ἀνισαγούς καὶ ἀβαπτιστούς). Then a reference is made to the unity of the true and apostolic Church, which possesses the Mysteries; "The baptism of the heretics, however, as divergent from and alien to the divine, apostolic ordinance, is unprofitable water (ὕδατα ἀνόητα), after the word of the sacred Ambrose and the great Athanasius, and it gives no sanctification to the recipient and is unprofitable for the cleansing of sins, and therefore it is rejected."<sup>75</sup> At the end of the eighteenth century, the Greek *Rudder* (Πηδάλιον) was compiled in which Latin baptism is named ψευδώνυμον βάπτισμα (baptism falsely so called) and the first Canon of St. Basil the Great in its dogmatic part is applied to the Latin hierarchy (λαϊκοί γενόμενοι — "They are become laymen"). It is true that the decision of 1756 was passed under extremely restless conditions of Church life. At that time throngs of people rose up against Patriarch Paisius, and once again elevated to the patriarchal throne Cyril V who, even earlier during his first patriarchal reign (1748-1751), was an advocate of rebaptizing Latins. One must not explain the events of the year 1756 only by the activity and preaching of the monk Auxentios, for he was strangled and drowned in the sea by the Turks even before the elevation of Cyril V to the Patriarchate. Prof. A. P. Lebedev may not sympathize with the decision of 1756 and may quote the indignant words of Vendotis directed against Patriarch Cyril V;<sup>76</sup> he may scoff at the Greek *Rudder*,<sup>77</sup> but this circumstance does not change the fact that from the middle of the eighteenth century on the Greeks began to rebaptize Latins. However, there were sometimes deviations from this practice in the East, for example, upon the reception of Arab Roman Catholics in

<sup>75</sup> Rallis and Protlis. *Syntagma*. vol. 5, pp. 614-616.

<sup>76</sup> *History of the Greek Eastern Church under Turkish Rule*, vol. 1, Sergiev Posad 1896, pp. 318-322.

<sup>77</sup> *History of the Greek Eastern Church under Turkish Rule*, vol. 2, Sergiev Posad 1902, pp. 561-563.

5 The Unity of the Church



Ptolemaides or of Syrian Melkites in the year 1861.<sup>78</sup>

Such is the history sketched in brief of the order of reception into the Orthodox Church of Western Christians after the falling away of the Patriarchate of Rome from the Church. For whole centuries the practice of the Eastern Church was diverse, wavering between baptism and chrismation; thereafter in local Churches, different conciliar decisions were made which also altered in various centuries. In 1484, the Greek Church decreed that Latins should be chrismated, but at this same period the Russian Church more and more sanctioned the practice of rebaptism, confirming it later at the Council of 1620. In 1667, under the influence of the Greeks, the Russian Church decreed that Latins should be chrismated, and at the beginning of the 18th century, it decreed that even Lutherans should be received by chrismation. This practice was still more mitigated in the Russian Church: those chrismated in the Latin church were not rechrismated. In 1756, at the very same time, the Greek Church established the practice of rebaptizing Latins and Lutherans, however making some condescension if the Latins were an Arab or a Syrian.

How is one to regard all these historical facts? How must he think of them, and what attitude must I have towards them as a member and priest of the Eastern Church? Can I admit that this practice is inseparably linked with the dogmatic understanding of the unity of the Church? Does the reception of Latins without baptism mean that they are members of the same Church to which I belong? But then, how will I regard *my* Church, which now recognizes Latins as Her members, possessing Her gifts of grace, and then begins to baptize them, like pagans and Jews? If all Latins are to be baptized, why can Arab Roman Catholics not be baptized? What did St. Ermogen, Patriarch of Moscow, who received a martyr's death from the Latins, do when he demanded the baptism of Prince Vladislav? Did he not, in spite of the tenth article

<sup>78</sup> A. N. Muravev. "Question religieuse d'Orient et d'Occident" 1859, p. 176. *Translations of the Theological Academy of Kiev*, 1866, vol. 2, pp. 346-347.

of the Symbol of Faith, require a second baptism? If the rebaptism of Latins was a second baptism, then do not hundreds of Orthodox hierarchs deserve to be deposed, according to the 47th Apostolic Canon. "If a bishop or presbyter shall baptize again one rightly having baptism or shall not baptize one polluted by the ungodly, let him be deposed, as one mocking the Cross and death of the Lord and not distinguishing priests from pseudo-priests." No, I cannot dare to think that the local Churches, Greek and Russian, have throughout the course of centuries mocked and are mocking the Cross and death of the Lord. If sacraments outside the Church are valid and grace-bestowing, one can only accept them; then to change the practice of receiving converts, as did the Greeks and the Russians from the eleventh century to the eighteenth, means to blaspheme and to be subject to anathema. I cannot recognize my own Church as having blasphemed or blaspheming. For this reason one must seek explanation for Church practice in relation to the Latins only in the considerations of Church economy, and not in the dogmatical understanding of the unity of the Church of Christ. The Eastern Church, just as the ancient Church, has not gone astray or erred. For although at times for the sake of the profit of human souls, She has made a condescension by not requiring that a new rite of baptism be performed upon converting Latins, even though their rite differs from the Orthodox in its external aspect (sprinkling). She has nevertheless retained immutably Her dogmatical understanding of the unity of the Church. The decisions of the Church and authoritative Church writers demanded the chrismation of Latins. Receiving Latins without chrismation is only a local custom of the Russian Church which was introduced under the influence of the *Trebnik* of Peter Mogila and was even prompted by the theological spirit of Catholicism itself. Everything which is the sad result of the influence of Latin scholasticism in our theology cannot be, of course, more authoritative than the teaching of the ancient Church and the direct heir of Her grace-filled gifts —

the Eastern Church. And is it not a convincing fact, that in the Eastern Church, it was always directed that Latins be received through chrismation, i. e., as Arians, Macedonians, and Apollinarians were received by the ancient Church? Did not the Church testify by this, that She considers Latins just as much members of the Church as She did the Arians and other heretics of antiquity?

In your letters to Archbishop Antony, you do not say what you think of the past and present practice of the rebaptism of Latins. But I will not be mistaken if I bring your reflections on our problem to a decisive condemnation. This practice seems to you, of course, a mistake, an error, and perhaps, even blasphemy against a sacrament. The Latinizing Peter Mogila in his *Trebnik* is also inclined to rush a thought (p. 192); "He who dares to repeat these holy mysteries commits sacrilege and a second time crucifies and rails at Christ." About seventy years ago, the English theologian W. Palmer in his letter to our A. S. Khomiakov, a man remarkable in the history of Russian thought, directly accused the Orthodox Church for the rebaptism of Christians and considered this a sign of Her untruth, since change of practice was a confession of the possibility of error, be it insignificant. In his answer to this accusation, A. S. Khomiakov vacillates to some degree, but all the same the perceptivity of a profound theologian suggested to him several beautiful and true thoughts which I cannot but quote here:

*"Local errors are not the errors of the Church, but errors into which individuals can fall by ignorance of ecclesiastical rule. The blame falls on the individuals (whether bishops or laymen signifies nothing). But the Church Herself stands blameless and pure, reforming local error, but never in need of reform. I could add that in my opinion even in this case the Church has never changed Her doctrine, and that there has only been a change in rites without any alteration in their meaning. All sacraments are completed only in the bosom*

*of the true Church, and it matters not whether they be completed in one form or another. Reconciliation renovates the Sacraments or completes them, giving a full and Orthodox meaning to the rite that was before either insufficient or heterodox, and the reception of the preceding Sacraments is virtually contained in the rite or fact of reconciliation. Therefore the visible repetition of Baptism or Confirmation, though unnecessary, cannot be considered as erroneous, and establishes only a ritual difference without any difference of opinion. You will understand my meaning more clearly still by a comparison with another fact in ecclesiastical history. The Church considers Marriage as a Sacrament, and yet admits married heathens into Her community without remarrying them. The conversion itself gives the sacramental quality to the preceding union without any repetition of rite. This you must admit, unless you admit an impossibility, viz., that the Sacrament of Marriage was by itself complete in the lawful union of a heathen pair. The Church does not remarry heathens or Jews. Now, would it be an error to remarry them? Certainly not, though the rite would seem altered."*<sup>79</sup>

As you can see, A. S. Khomiakov expresses almost the same thing which was, in my opinion, the constant mind of the Church; many are prevented from understanding this thought by the medieval Latin doctrine of the sacraments, according to which sacraments can be performed even outside the one Body of Christ, outside the one Church. The living faith of A. S. Khomiakov in the unity of the Church inspired him to explain the diversity of Church practice in the reception of heterodox without destroying the doctrine of the unity of the Church. Faith in the unity of the Church of Christ, which we confess in the ninth article of the Symbol of Faith, definitely prevents me, in like manner, from agreeing with that understanding of the unity of the Church which is offered in your letters and brochures. You must not distort the one

<sup>79</sup> In the second volume of the *Works* of A. S. Khomiakov, "Third Letter to Palmer."

Church, which is “the dove, the unique mother of Christians” (Canon 68, Council of Carthage). I cannot believe in such a “one” church, in which local churches wage war against each other, do not have communion of the same bread, baptize or chrismate those coming from another local church, in which one local church establishes special missions for the defamation and destruction of the other. How can I call such a church one? You see, that would be such an obvious untruth! and in matters of faith, untruth, is forbidden! It can only harm the work of Christian unity!

Do not think that my decisive disagreement with your conception of the unity of the Church is a criticism of the very idea of a world-wide conference of Christendom. No, I have already spoken of my complete sympathy with and prayerful well-wishing for the projected conference. But I am firmly convinced that it would be a big step on the road to unity if the conference would affirm first of all the truth of the unity of the Church, and would not consider all contemporary Christian confessions and sects put together as the one Church of Christ which has lost only its visible unity. I will permit myself to give an example in which the idea of the Church and the mysteries adhered to in my letter could serve the work of unity and immediately dull the sharpness of disputes and differences of opinion. You know that there were many disputes among the Latins about the validity of Anglican orders; this problem is also discussed in the theology of the Church. I think that an indisputable solution to this question, as it is usually posed, is hopeless. The question is transferred to the troubled soil of historical findings and is reduced, for the most part, to the explanation of the historical circumstances of the ordination of Parker. The question of the continuity of ordination of Anglican bishops is under debate,<sup>80</sup> but for me this question does not exist. According to the first canon of St. Basil, outside the Church the bestowing of grace is re-

<sup>80</sup> See Prof. V. A. Sokolov, *The Hierarchy of the Anglican Episcopal Church*, Sergiev Posad, 1897.

duced to nil and every sort of succession outside the Church is unlawful, since a layman (really even less than that) executes the laying-on of hands upon a layman, without communicating any sort of grace to him, because there is none, nor can there be any outside the one Church, outside the unity of the Body of Christ.

Those among the Russian theologians who discuss the legitimacy of the Anglican hierarchy start out from that supposedly indisputable position that the former Latin bishops of England were true grace-filled bishops of the Church, and therefore, for a positive solution of the problem, it is sufficient simply to prove the continuity of succession in ordination. But, according to the canon of St. Basil the Great, from bishops of a community outside the Church, as were the Latin bishops before the English Reformation, it was impossible to receive grace, which had already run dry in Catholicism from the date of 1054. You say: what rigorism! What a gloomy outlook! How is unity possible with such an opinion? It is quite possible and greatly facilitated. According to the 79th canon of the Council of Carthage, which I quoted above, the whole Anglican clergy can be received in their present orders without all sorts of scholarly investigations and disputes. According to this canon “no barrier to union should be placed, if “the profit of the souls of the brethren is obvious.” I consider the contemporary formulation of the question exactly a “barrier to union.” Historical discussion of the problem can only present grounds for the application of the 79th canon of the Council of Carthage. But such grounds have been mentioned quite sufficiently, and further disputes are only provoked by the incorrect formulation of this question, according to which people wish to affirm, on the basis of historical facts, a dogmatical truth that has absolutely no connection with these facts. I hope that, on the grounds of this example, you will be convinced that the teaching I have presented on the unity of the Church and on the unity of Her life of grace serves the work of Christian union, and not for separation. Union

with the Church, adherence to the living body of the one Church of Christ, is placed highest of all. It should be of no importance to the man who joins the Church what he was: it is important and saving for him only that he, by becoming united with the Church, becomes a member of the Body of Christ.

Therefore, we will not close our eyes to sad reality, we will not be afraid to confess that we do not all belong together to the one Church of Christ! To speak of union and to annihilate and obscure the idea of the one Church of Christ for the sake of it — will this be profitable for the work of unity? Why build an edifice on sand when there is the safe and indestructible rock of Christ's one Church?

It is our lot to live in the time of great events of world-wide importance. The cultural Tower of Babel itself is crumbling. In the near future, will not new stones enter into the mystical edifice of the One Church of Christ? O, if it were so! If the sorrow of enmity and bloodshed were superseded by joy in heaven and on earth over the multiplication of children of the one true Church!

I pray to God to grant me, a young man, to live to the time, when we will both be together in the One Church of Christ and when, on the different hemispheres of our planet, we will have Communion in the one Bread.

*January 18, 1917*

*SS. Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria*

