

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD

by

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Introductory Remarks

AT THE PRESENT TIME not just the soul of an Orthodox Christian, but that of any religious person is not infrequently shaken by phenomena which until quite recently seemed impossible. In the West we are witnesses of how priests defend blatant perversion and sacrilegiously "marry" persons of the same sex, and in Roman Catholic periodicals the existence of the devil is questioned.

We will probably have further discussions at this Council of various distorted manifestations of modernism, so I will not now focus on all the disorder which surrounds us. Sin has always existed among the descendants of Adam, but never before has it enjoyed such freedom and open justification as in our days. Roman Catholicism and Protestantism vie with each other in proclaiming a new morality and indifference to the truth; and the more they contrive new techniques for attracting young people to their churches, the more those young people lose their faith.

The abyss of religious and moral collapse which surrounds us did not appear suddenly: it is the product of a lengthy process which began with a perverted understanding of Christian salvation and a perverted faith in the Church.

A. S. Khomyakov was the first to explain that ecclesiology, i.e. the doctrine of the nature of the Church, was the central point in the separation of the West from Orthodoxy and in the subsequent theological disputes. The other dogmatic disputes proceed from this point. This is also the view of many other Russian theologians.

Professor Archpriest E. Akvilonov suggested that the earlier disputes will serve as a preparation "for the disclosure of the doctrine of the Church, since, on the strength of the close connection of all the elements of the Christian faith with each other, each in its turn will be-

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

come a subject of argument until the final division occurs between those who disagree on the question of the Church; the existence or destruction of human societies depends on one decision or another of this question. Consequently/' he writes, "the completion of the disputes on the question of the Church will coincide with the time of the appearance of Antichrist."¹

Fr. Akvilonov was not mistaken. It is precisely this dogma of the Church or the questions connected with it which stands at the center of all contemporary ecclesiastical divisions as well as all attempts at inter-confessional unification. Everything which we see in the religious life of the West which is related to the decline of faith and morality is connected in the closest possible way with the corruption of the dogma of the nature of the Church. This began with the errors of Rome, and then a reaction appeared on the part of the Protestants, but they departed even further from the truth than the Catholics. Western scholasticism was incapable of penetrating the depths of the dogma of the Church and approached it either as a kingdom headed by the Pope or as a democratic society. Orthodox theologians, beginning with Khomyakov, approach this dogma in a completely different way. They have a living consciousness that the Church is not an organization or a society, but a mystical organism in which the earthly is united with the heavenly. Of itself this union makes it extremely difficult for the limited human mind to penetrate the Mystery of the Church. We can study the history of the Church on earth, we are acquainted with the external side of its structure; but its simultaneously divine and human nature makes it an object of faith, not of knowledge. Much in it remains in the realm of mystery, which to some degree is revealed to people only in proportion to the extent to which they have become perfect.

The Church is the Body of Christ

The Sacred Scriptures do not give us formulae that will fully define the essence of the Church for us: the Savior and, following Him, the Apostles usually give us images in parables to explain what the Church is. In isolation these images are not exhaustive, because they are taken from the realm of the earthly life of the people at the time of the Gospels. Thus they are not able to embrace the whole extent of that life which exceeds the grasp of human reason. There are, though, two New Testament images which reveal the essence of the Church to us more deeply and fully than do the others; these are the image of the kingdom and the image of the body.

The image of the Kingdom of Heaven in the parables cannot, however, fully be identified with the Church. In certain respects, as Fr.

¹ *New Testament Teaching on the Church*, St. Petersburg, 1904,

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

Akvilonov notes, the concept of the Kingdom of Heaven is broader than that of the Church. He explains this by examples, in certain cases substituting the word "Church" for "Kingdom." For example, in the words of the Savior, "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21), such a substitution changes the meaning. Fr. Akvilonov shows that the literal comparison of the Church to the image of the Kingdom of God can lead to incorrect conclusions. According to the *Extensive Catechism* the second petition of the Lord's Prayer speaks about "the kingdom of grace", which, as St. Paul says, is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:27). For some this kingdom has not yet come in its full strength, while for others it has not come at all. It comes secretly and inwardly ² It is quite clear that in this case one cannot equate the image of the kingdom and the Church.

The comparison of the Church to a body is fuller and deeper. While in other cases, as in regard to the kingdom, the Scriptures speak of a *comparison* of these images to the Church, we do not find this with the image of the Church as the Body of Christ. Here there is no mention of "is likened to" (Matt. 13:24) or "is like" (Matt. 13:31) or "shall be likened to" (Matt. 25:1); rather the Church is spoken of directly as the Body of Christ: "which is His Body" (Eph. 1:23). Citing Chrysostom, Akvilonov comes to the conclusion that if "from the doctrine of the Church as the society of believers united into the Body of Christ proceeds the doctrine of the Church in its essence and attributes, true in content and complete in extent, then, as a consequence, the designation of the Church as the Body of Christ is more than just a simple image like the other images applied to it."³

V. Troitsky (later Archbishop Marion) supplements what has been said so far with some important ideas: "just from calling the Church a body one can derive its two chief attributes. Above all, a body is an organism. All the members of a body are inseparably united into one body. The same blood flows through the whole body; all the members of a body are united with each other by their very being. No individual member of the body lives and develops of itself, but only in an organic union with the whole body. A body is not an accidental, mechanical assemblage of members each of which is self-contained, but is a single organism with a single indivisible life.

"On the other hand, a body is not self-existent. Organic life is a characteristic of a body; however, this is not sufficient to make that body live. In the Sacred Scriptures the body is viewed as an organ of the spirit. Man's spirit dwells in a bodily habitation and eventually leaves it"⁴

* *Ibid**, pp. 46-47.

» /*bid*, p. 62.

⁴ *Not68 on the History of the Dogma of the Church*, Sergiev Posad 1912, p. 19.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

Through baptism we become such members, while through prayer and the Mysteries, especially the Mystery of the Eucharist, we strengthen our union, our membership in the Body of Christ and our growth in it Khomyakov writes that the Christian who has received baptism "no longer is what he was, no longer is an isolated personality; he has become a member of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, and his life has become an inseparable part of the higher life to which it voluntarily has subjected itself."⁵

St. Cyprian of Carthage writes, "There is one God; there is one Christ, and He has one Church; there is one faith and one people bound together in the unity of the body by the bond of agreement."⁶ To represent this unity St. Cyprian uses the example of the grain in the bread offered for the Eucharist: "Our unified people is represented by this mystery," he writes, "for as many kernels of wheat collected together, ground, and mixed form one loaf, even so we (and we will know this in Christ, the Heavenly Bread) — we constitute one and the same body with which we are joined and united although we are many in number."⁷

The Apostle Paul expressed this thought in the following significant words: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (I Cor. 10:16-17).

But this is not the only important element in our communion of the Holy Mysteries; there is also the fact that through them the earthly is united in us with the heavenly, that testimony is borne to Christ's resurrection, and that Communion serves as a pledge of our own resurrection. "For as bread from the earth," St. Irenaeus of Lyons writes, "after the invocation of God over it is no longer ordinary bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two things, one earthly and one heavenly, even so when we receive the Eucharist our bodies are no longer perishable, since they have the hope of being resurrected."⁸ "Thus the Eucharist," writes Fr. Akvilonov, "contains in itself the teaching of the whole content of the Christian faith and in particular that on the Church, and consequently that on the fact that we are members of the Church, the glorified Body of Christ, and as such we will not face death, but will pass from death to life."⁹

⁵ *Works*, Vol II, fifth edition, Moscow,

⁶ *On the Unity of the Church*.

⁷ *To Coecilius*.

⁸ *Against Heresies*, Book VI,

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 77.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

Since it is the Body of Christ and unites the visible with the invisible, the Church cannot be understood as some sort of organization similar to other human associations. Because it connects the earthly with the heavenly, it cannot be comprehended purely rationally, but is an object of faith.

Of course what has been said above is far from an exhaustive definition of the Church and particularly of its attributes as presented in the Symbol of Faith (the Creed). We shall have to give these separate consideration.

The Meaning of the Word "Church"

It is very important to understand correctly the derivation and meaning of the word "Church." E. Bogdashevsky gives a fine, brief philological explanation of this word: "By simple philological derivation the Church (in Greek, ecc/es/a) is an assembly; this word corresponds to the Hebrew *qahal*. But not every assembly is the Church. An assembly of the most prominent people of the state, officials, consuls, etc., is not the Church (ecclesia), but is termed a *synklesis* (a convocation). The Athenians distinguished two types of assemblies, the ecclesia and the *agorai*. The former signified a legally empowered assembly of the citizens (i.e. those persons who had the right to participate in the discussion of state affairs) summoned by the authorities through a herald in a lawful manner; the latter were mixed assemblies without any order when a crowd of all sorts of people simply collected together. This philological information leads to the following conclusion: The Church as an assembly contains two elements: the first is that of calling or vocation (ecclesia, from *klesis*, *ekklytos*, *enkalein*). The members of the ecclesia are members of the same city, ruled by the same laws, having the same religion; the Church is not a spiritual aristocracy, but neither is it a motley crowd; it contains those who have been called or summoned by the grace and power of God."¹⁰

Fr. Akvilonov and V. Troitsky explain the meaning of the word "Church" in the same sense. The latter adds a profound observation. The Hebrew word which signifies ecclesia — Church — is *qahal*. *Qahal* is a solemn designation of a religious assembly, of society in its relationship to God. Therefore this *flame* was applied to the Hebrew nation as a whole. The word ecclesia" is encountered twice altogether in the Gospel and both times are in the Gospel of St. Matthew which was written for the Jews and so clearly reflects the Old Testament world-view. The Gospel says only that Christ will found *His* Church, and not just a Church. The fact that from the very beginning the term

¹⁰ *On the Church*, Kiev, 1904, p. 4.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

which was chosen to designate the Christian Church was this very word *ecclesia*, which has a close connection with Old Testament terminology, speaks of the consciousness of unity which imbued the early Church. In the Old Testament there was a single *qahal*, the people of the Lord or the commonwealth of the Lord (Num. 16:3; 20:2-4, 9). Equally in the New Testament there also is a single Church of God/¹¹

To this one can add Bolotov's observation: "The circumstance that Christ called the society He founded an *ecclesia* has a special polemical significance against Protestantism. The Protestant conception is obsessed with an invisible Church. But the concept of the *ecclesia* includes a strong element of visibility. Therefore the expression "invisible Church" contains a contradiction *in-adjecto* (internal contradiction). There cannot be any sort of invisible Church. One can participate only spiritually in the invisible but in the *ecclesia*, not otherwise than with the body."¹¹

Let us now consider the attributes of the Church as they are presented in the Symbol of Faith.

The Oneness of the Church

"I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church." The word "one" can be understood both in the sense of singularity' and in the sense of internal unity. The Greek words "eis mian" signify one, i.e. ~ a single Church and exclude the existence of several Churches.

From all that we have said so far about the name of the Church, it is sufficiently clear that this name includes the concept of it as something: separated from the rest of mankind and one in the sense of its uniqueness. The Savior spoke of creating the Church in the singular number, and faith in it as the Body of Christ and in Him as its Head excludes the existence of other Churches.

All of those organizations and communities which lay claim to the name of churches cannot possibly be such. Therefore Metropolitan Anthony was correct when he put the question in the following way in his correspondence with Gardiner about the unification of the churches: "First of all one must establish the truth that only one of those communities which calls itself such can be the genuine Church of Christ* After assimilating this truth one must investigate which of the churches can genuinely be recognized as this one true Church/¹³

Fr. E. Akvilonov expressed the same thought: "if the true Christian religion and Church exist on earth, then they must exist in Orthodoxy alone, in Roman Catholicism alone, or in Protestantism

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹³ *Lectures on the History of the Early Church** part I, St Petersburg, 1907, p. 18.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

alone. Consequently, the true life exists and is possible for those who seek it only in one of the given confessions, or else it does not exist at all on earth."

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The Apostle Paul very clearly expressed such a faith in one Church "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all Who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:5-6). Here the uniqueness of the true Baptism which leads one into the Church- is inferred from faith in one God.

Belief in the uniqueness of the Church is being especially denigrated now in connection with ecumenism. Even among Orthodox a certain lack of clarity has appeared in the understanding of this dog-^{*} ma as a result of incorrect conclusions drawn from the practice of economy, i.e. condescension from strictness in the reception of heretics and schismatics into the Church. Because a succession of heretics was received into communion with the Church not through Baptism, the conclusion was drawn that their Baptism outside the Orthodox Church was a real one. When all the emphasis is placed on nothing more than the significance of the correct *formula*, for Baptism, independent of the situation of the people who are performing it, then this formula acquires something like the status of a magic spell, which has force in and of itself, or else it implies the Protestant doctrine that those communities which have separated themselves from the Church nevertheless in some way still belong to it.

But what is Baptism if not incorporation into the one true Church after renouncing the devil and confessing the Orthodox Faith? In Baptism we are immersed in the death and resurrection of the Lord three times, so that, in the words of St. John Damascene, "we, as we follow in His steps, may by adoption be made what He is by nature, namely -sons and heirs of God and co-heirs with Him."¹⁵

That Baptism received outside the one true Church does not make anyone a member of it is clearly stated in the sixty-eighth canon of the Council of Carthage on the reception of those baptized by the Donatists through renunciation of their errors and the laying on of hands. It says about them that by this ancient rite they "are received into the one Church, which, as has been said, is the dove, the only Mother of Christians, and in which all the eternal and life-giving mysteries are received unto salvation; but those who remain in heresy are subject to great condemnation and punishment." By these words the Fathers¹³

¹³ "Answer to the Third Letter of the Secretary of the International Conference of the Episcopal Church in America," *Faith and Reason*, 1916, p. 878. и *The Church*, St. Petersburg, 1894, p. 26.

¹³ *Exposition of the, Orthodox Faith*, Book IV, Ch. 13.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

at Carthage warned as it were of a possible incorrect conclusion which might be drawn from the practice of condescension which they had adopted in regard to schismatics.

This thought is clearly expressed in the first canon of St. Basil the Great, confirmed by the Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils. He writes there of the 'Cathari' that although "their separation was initiated by a schism,... when they had separated from the Church they no longer had the grace of the Holy Spirit in themselves. For the communication of grace had failed, because the lawful succession was broken. For the first who withdrew had been ordained by the Fathers and they had this gift of the Spirit through the imposition of their hands. But once they fell away, they became laymen and no longer had the power to baptize or ordain, and they could not pass on to others the grace of the Holy Spirit from which they themselves had fallen away." The holy Father observes that therefore "those of old command that such people be cleansed anew by the true Baptism of the Church." Despite such a position in principle, St Basil nonetheless recognizes that it is possible to receive these people into the Church without a new Baptism for reasons of pastoral condescension and spiritual expediency.

Hence it is evident that the practice of condescension in receiving heretics is not at all a recognition that they have already received the gift of incorporation into the Church through their own baptism. They are permitted to become members of the mystical Body of Christ by a different rite, without repeating their triple immersion. Khomyakov -explained this well in his third letter to Palmer: "All mysteries", he writes, "are completed only in the bosom of the true Church, and it matters not whether they be completed in one form or another. Reconciliation with the Church renovates the mysteries or completes them, giving a full and Orthodox meaning to the rite that was before either insufficient or heterodox, and the repetition of the preceding mysteries is virtually contained in the rite or fact of reconciliation."¹* Khomyakov's explanation and St. Basil's first canon are confirmed in the *Nomocanon* in the "Canonical Answers of Timothy, the Most Holy Archbishop of Alexandria" (Chap. 60).

The Holiness of the Church

The holiness of the Church is determined by the very fact that it is the Body of Christ and the repository of Divine Grace, which sanctifies

¹* *Russia and the English Church*, Vol. I, London, 1896, edited by W J Eibek, p. 62.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

all its members. In the sense of people sanctified by grace Christians are called saints in the New testament. Thus, in the Acts of the Holy Apostles we read that St. Peter "came to the saints living in Lydda" (9:32, cf. 9:13, 26:10, I Pet. 2:9,*etc.). Sanctity is a norm for Christians, and their personal sinfulness is each one's departure from that norm. Christians are people who are not perfect, but who are on the way of moral perfection. The sins of members of the Church are their own sins; in no way are they sins of the Church. The Apostle Paul writes, "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27).

When attempts have been made to interpret the holiness of the Church in terms of the sanctity of its members living on earth, they have ended in schism, for a person's very consciousness that he is a member of a society of those who already are saints implies pride on his part. Only those who have already completed their earthly path and entered into the habitations of the righteous can be called saints in the sense of victors over sin.

The attribute of the Church's holiness is vividly presented in an ancient work of early Christianity called the "Shepherd" of Hermas.

In a vision Hermas was shown a tower which was under construction. It was being built of brilliant square stones; they were smooth and were so positioned one to another that their joints were not noticeable. Other, less perfect stones, signifying sinful people, were not put into the tower, but were placed to one side, while some were broken up and thrown far away from the tower. Only perfect stones were put into the tower.

Hermas asked the older woman who was accompanying him, "But who are those stones which were set aside and put near the tower?" She answered, "Those are people who have sinned and wish to repent; they are not thrown far away from the tower, because they will be useful in building it if they repent; they will be firm in the faith if they repent now while the tower is being built. When the construction is completed there will no longer be a place for them, and they will be cast away: they will just lie near the tower" (III, 5:5). This indicates that repentance becomes impossible only after the conclusion of a person's earthly existence.

Elsewhere the "Shepherd" speaks of a review of the stones which already have been placed during which not all of them were found to be perfect. The master struck them three times with a rod. Some of the stones then became as black as soot, some rough or

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

cracked, some uneven so they did not resemble the other stones, while others were covered with many spots. The master commanded that these stones be taken out and put near the tower, that they be cleansed, and then that those stones which could not be fitted to the rest be placed back in. Many stones were found to be restored, and when they were put into the tower, it seemed as if it had been made from a single stone (6:1-5; 7:1-2, 4-5).

Thus, the immaculate condition of the members of the Church symbolically is thought of only in the future age, when no one who commits lawless acts will be left in the Church, and the people of God will be pure. Along with this the vision is a testimony to the possibility of repentance. The earthly position of the Church is represented as a society of people who are becoming perfect, and only the persistent sins of iniquity are rejected.

This teaching of the "Shepherd" of Hermas was not changed in the later life of the Church, but it was supplemented in connection with the schisms of the Novatianists and the heresy of the Montanists when a dispute arose over the so-called "power of the episcopal keys," i.e. when there began to be disputes about the possibility of forgiving those who had fallen. In the works of the first three centuries of Christianity this proud rigorism finally was rejected* As V. Troitsky writes, "In the Church people are only striving for sanctity; through the judgment of the bishop it cleanses them from their sins by the authority which the Lord gave to the Holy Apostles and which is preserved after them by inheritance in the hierarchy."¹⁷

Catholicity

Just who is called to be a child of the Church? From the beginning of Christianity it has been established that this call is directed to all nations. But how can these children judge the extent to which one teaching or another genuinely expresses the voice of the Church?

The West has given two answers to this question. Rome announced that only what is proclaimed as such by the Bishop of Rome, i.e. the Pope, is true. This teaching culminated in the Vatican dogma of 1870 * Protestantism, on the contrary, does not *recognize* indisputable truths, leaving the decision about them to each Christian at his own discretion. The Orthodox Church answers this with the teaching that it itself is both Catholic and Apostolic as a whole.

In recent decades, influenced to some extent by Protestantism the Revolution of 1917, and renovationism, the thoughts of some of our Orthodox Christians have been drawn astray from the correct under

¹⁷ Op. cit p. 446.

♦ The dogma of papal infallibility.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

standing of the Church as catholic. Forgetting that the original language of the Symbol of Faith is not Slavonic, much less Russian, but Greek, they have focused their attention on the derivation of the word "sobornyja" in Russian meaning "catholic" or "conciliar," used in the Symbol of Faith from the word "sobor" in Russian, "council". Understanding this word in the Russian sense of an assembly, they have transmuted the profound theological meaning of the Greek "ty Katholos" (meaning "according to the whole") to the narrow, almost administrative sense of collective, and often even democratic, government. In the name of catholicity (sobornost) in this sense, supposedly confessed in the Symbol, we have more than once heard calls for a democratic reduction of episcopal authority. To a great extent the replacement of the concept of service in the Church by the concept of rights serves as the spiritual basis of such a diversion of thought from dogma to administration.

Here again it is useful to return to our faith in the Church as the Body of Christ. In speaking of various kinds of service in the Church the Apostle Paul writes, "For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ" (I Cor. 12:12). The Apostle teaches that in the Church, as in the body, each member has his own function: "If the foot shall say, 'Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body'; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? But now God has set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased Him" (I Cor. 12: 15-18). The Apostle concludes: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God has set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers" (I Cor. 12: 27*28).

These words of the Apostle Paul were made the basis of the sixty-fourth canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, according to which: "A layman should not pronounce a sermon before the people or teach, and thus take upon himself the dignity of a teacher, but he should be obedient to the order handed down from the Lord, open his ears to those who have received the grace of the word of instruction, and learn divine things from them."

But let us return to the terminology which will help us to a correct understanding of the Church as catholic.

The Full Catechism poses the question in this way: "Why is the Church called catholic, or which is the same thing, universal?" And it gives the answer: "Because it is not limited to any place, or time, or people, but contains the true believer of all places, times, and peoples." Thus there is not a word in the Catechism about the application of the word "catholic" to the Church in the sense of collective government in which laymen democratically would participate. Nor

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

will we find a single canon which mentions such participation.

A profound explanation of this term in the Symbol is given by Khomyakov. Fr. Akvilonov quotes him almost word for word. Khomyakov begins by excluding those conceptions which would limit the meaning of the word "catholic" too much. It would not have occurred to the Teachers of the Slavs, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, whose translations are used to this day, to limit the meaning of this word geographically, as by "universal" (the Slavonic equivalent of which is "vselennaya" corresponding to the Greek "ecumenicos"), nor ethnically, as by "embracing all nations." Of myself I will add: even less could they have had any sort of democratic rule in mind, since it is totally foreign to the Greek original. Khomyakov writes, "They settled for the word 'sobornaya' (catholic); 'sobor' (council) expresses the idea of a gathering not only in the sense of a manifest, visible union of many people in one place, but also in the more general sense of the perpetual possibility of such a union; in other words it expresses the idea of unity in multiplicity... The Catholic Church is the Church in everything or in the unity of all."¹⁹

Practically this means that when we wish to express the teaching of the Church we do not look for it in the tradition of any single local church, much less in the opinion of the majority which may be dominant at a given moment in time, but in the teaching which has existed in the Church from the beginning. According to the well-known formula of St. Vincent of Lerins, that teaching which has been held always, by all, and everywhere is recognized by the Church as Orthodox. This was the method of determining the Church's teaching at the Seven Ecumenical Councils.

The Apostolic Church

I still must say a few words about the last characteristic of the Church in the Symbol of Faith: about its apostolicity.

In calling the Church apostolic, the Symbol indicates one of the external attributes which simultaneously also determines its internal structure, i.e. derivation from the Apostles, who organized and governed it when they were on earth.

On the basis of Scripture and early patristic texts, V. Troitsky clearly and concisely has expounded the teaching that the bishops continue the work of the Apostles: "The Lord Jesus Christ was sent into the world by God the Father. Jesus Christ sent the Apostles. The Apostles established the episcopate and entrusted to it full control over the churches which they had founded themselves."²⁰

In a series of epistles the bishop of apostolic consecration, St. Ignatius the God-Bearer, called the faithful on this basis to maintain the^{*18}

¹⁸ *The Church, op. cit.*, pp. 155-156.

¹⁸ *Works, op. cit.*, Vol II, p. 312.

⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 211

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

position of their bishops, because the hierarchy is the protector of the purity and integrity of the Christian teaching of the Church. Only through the hierarchy are we united with Christ. St. Irenaeus of Lyons also expressed the idea that the truth can be preserved only in a living union with the organism of the Church through obedience to the bishop.

Thus the truth of the Church externally is certified by the apostolic inheritance of its episcopate, which receives divine grace for teaching and for the primary preservation of the truth. As the second canon of the Seventh Ecumenical Council states, "For the essence of our hierarchy consists of the words of divine tradition, that is, the true knowledge of the Divine Scriptures, as Dionysius the Great proclaimed." The episcopal grace is passed on from the Apostles by inheritance from one bishop to another in so far as they remain in union with the Church. Grace is not a personal and irrevocable possession of the bishop or priest — it belongs to the Church, not to him. The first Apostolic Canon reminds us this when it indicates that episcopal consecration is not performed singly by one individual, but by several bishops collectively.

A bishop or priest can transmit the gifts of grace to others to the extent that he preserves them himself. Deposition or prohibition put an end to the possibility of performing the Mysteries, just as electric current cannot be transmitted through a disconnected wire.

In governing his diocese a bishop enjoys great authority, which is a result of his great accountability before God, for according to the thirty-ninth Apostolic Canon "the people of the Lord are entrusted to him, and he will answer for their souls."

But however much the Church's canons affirm the fullness of the spiritual authority of the bishop in his diocese, they do not in any way establish an absolute autocracy. Each bishop is limited by the control and authority of a Council, while the harmonious hierarchical structure of a local church is crowned by the position of its primate. This was anciently established by the thirty-fourth Apostolic Canon: "The bishops of each nation must acknowledge the first among them and recognize him as their head and undertake nothing exceeding their authority without his consent: but let each undertake only that which concerns his own diocese and the localities belonging to it. Nor may he who is first undertake anything without the consent of all. For thus there will be unanimity, and God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, will be glorified through the Lord in the Holy Spirit"



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The Church and the World

The Church bring/i the light to the world, but is not commingled' with the world. The Apostle John exhorts us: "Love not the world nor the things that are in the world If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him For all' that is in the world: the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16),

When it was created the world was very good, but as a consequence of sin its original harmony was destroyed and it has become an arena of constant warfare. We can and should love all the excellent things which the Lord created, but the Church has not been directed to transfigure the world by earthly means. It plants the Kingdom of God within us and adorns the world by the influence of its holiness, but in no way is it commingled with the world.

Therefore it must be our task to create an environment in which we can live according the Church-s laws and principles, even if we are surrounded by its enemies, but not to create worldly institutions even in subjection to the Church. What we can say is that Holy Russia was not for the most part created by an Intentional, planned organization but rather by a way of life, by the prayerful labor of the saints and the imitation of them in various levels of society in the world.

But the Church has not been promised an earthly victory over this world in the sense of subjugating it. On the contrary, the Savior prophesied

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

to His disciples that they would have sorrows in the world (John 16:23). The Church's victory is not defined in the material plane; it means, rather, that there always will be children of the Church who are overcoming the evil of this world and that the power of hell will never be able to destroy it. It will be preserved on earth until the Terrible Judgment, even though it may be as a very small flock. Only then will its full victory be discerned.

Then, in the general resurrection and glorification of the children of God, there will be an end to their struggle for holiness and the beginning of their joyful and endless growth in perfection in the life of the age to come.

The Decline of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism

The life of the Orthodox Church on earth, as I have shown in the -first part of my paper differentiates her in principle from anything in the surrounding human society. At the present time this inherent difference of its nature from the world's is especially noticeable. In the USSR atheistic materialism, diametrically opposed to the Church and its concerns, is systematically introduced from top to bottom. In the West the same principles more and more are making themselves known, except they are being advanced without the crude violence of a governmental apparatus. In such circumstances, above all, indifference to truth and the consequent decline in morals may influence our flock. It may be no less spiritually destructive.

This manifestation of decay is primarily expressed in the Western confessions; however, modernism and ecumenism to some extent also have penetrated the Orthodox milieu. The truth of Orthodoxy and its traditional character have rendered its faithful less susceptible to these evils; but still Orthodox Christians do not have complete immunity to errors, especially when such corruption of morals is everywhere around us.

In the first part of my paper I tried to present the positive Orthodox teaching about the nature of the Church, touching on modern morals only to the extent that it seemed to me useful in order to provide a background to make the presentation of the truth more comprehensible.

But now in the second part of my paper I must turn to the temptations which surround us and which may be reflected in our life. The more they grow, the dearer it becomes how important it is for us to preserve our Orthodox principles despite whatever difficulties for us might be connected with this.

For the Church as the simultaneously divine and human organism living in the world which lies in evil, confusion of itself with this world is the most dangerous threat. Even under the Byzantine and Russian monarchies, which were based on theocratic principles, the Church

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

always suffered if its hierarchy passed from being the spiritual guide* of the state to a servile position. Subjection to a non-religious state, not to mention a state whose goal is the destruction of all faith, has an even greater effect on the Church's life. We can see this clearly in the examples of the renovationists of fifty years ago in Russia and of the Moscow Patriarchate in our days.

One can say that the contemporary *errors regarding* the Church arose above all from Papism. At the root of these errors is a loss of living faith in the both divine and human nature of the whole Church not only in heaven, but also on earth, and in the resolution of problems in the life of the Church without a perception of this unity. In the effort to perfect and strengthen the Church organizationally according to the elements of this world, its earthly portion became almost self-sufficient in the Roman understanding. The authority to bind and loose, given to the holy Apostles by the Savior, does to some extent extend the force of their decisions from earth to heaven, but by ascribing this authority primarily to the Bishop of Rome and by extending it, Roman Catholicism logically and, from an earthly standpoint, rationally was obliged to elevate the Pope to the position of Head of the Church and to endow him in this capacity with infallibility. The Pope's simultaneous role as a head of state led to a further secularization of the Roman Church. It became a religious empire instead of the Body of Christ. The bestowal of infallibility on the Pope at the First Vatican Council was the culmination of this process. From a practical standpoint the Latin's considered it necessary to proclaim this right as a dogma to strengthen the Pope's authority in the fight with Protestantism and other anti-ecclesiastical tendencies. Whatever arguments Catholics might put forward to justify this dogma, nothing can change the fact that pride, legalism, and rationalism lie at the base of its definition

In their Church Catholics merged the concept of the ecclesiastical society with that of the Pope as monarch, while Protestantism, on the other hand, was a revolution in which the people rose up against that monarch. Protestantism opposes free individualism to the juridical unity of Rome. In it the personality and its opinions were placed above dogmas and the unity of the Church. Consequently, from its very beginning Protestantism was destined to a constant process of division.

After Rome fell away from Orthodoxy, the Western world long retained many Christian virtues and values through inertia, but it was on the way to obvious catastrophe. The strength of Khomyakov's works on the western confessions is found in the fact that he discovered and exposed this process.

"With every day," he wrote, "their moral debility becomes more

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

palpable. In the face of the general danger 'threatening them, an involuntary terror dominates the rationalist sects of the West, the Papacy and the Reformed. They are still fighting with each other (since they cannot stop fighting), but they have lost any hope of victory, for they have come to understand more or less clearly their inner weakness. Unbelief is growing rapidly before them, and it is not the unbelief of the eighteenth century, the unbelief of rulers, the wealthy, and scholars, but the unbelief of the masses, the skepticism of ignorance; and this is the legitimate offspring of rationalism... The terror which has seized the western religious parties is not forcing them toward a reconciliation '(this being impossible), but to negotiations for a temporary association; but in this way their weakness is only exposed, the realm of doubt extended, and the threatening danger grows greater."²¹

Now, more than a century after Khomyakov wrote these lines, we are eyewitnesses of this destructive process.

Roman Catholicism, eroded by the waves of Protestantism and living by rationalism, is now itself becoming a Protestant religion. This process, which has long existed, although it was invisible to the superficial observer, began to develop with unbelievable speed after the Second Vatican Council.

Modernism

Now what was written in refutation of Roman Catholicism fifty years ago is already out of date, not because it was incorrect, but because Roman Catholicism has changed so much. The waves of ecumenism, which long ago covered Protestantism, are now eroding even the stronghold of the Vatican. And they can threaten us too insofar as the Orthodox Churches have entered the ecumenical movement. This movement has less effect on Protestants, since it is an embodiment of their own teaching about the Church.

It is difficult to express with sufficient strength the full depth of the dissolution which was introduced into the western world by the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. We might not have touched on this point if it were not for the fact that, because our flock lives in a western environment, it is involuntarily brought into contact with those who are being corrupted spiritually by these reforms. They are reducing to nothing the last remnants of Church-consciousness which the western confession inherited from Orthodoxy.

What has called forth this process at the present time?

Lack of faith in the power of grace and in one's own Church. The surrounding world seems so strong that it produces fear for the continued existence of one's Church organization by any other than earthly means. This is the one source of the desire for accommodation

²¹ Works, *op. cit.*, Vol II, p. 86.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

with the world even though one's basic principles suffer as a result. But the accommodation of the Church to this world is unavoidably connected with a break with tradition and with doubts which undermine the stability of Church order.

Let me give you an example which confirms this general rule. When Pope Pius V issued a new missal on July 19, 1570, he issued a decree which was supposed to remain in force forever to the effect that nothing could ever be added to it and nothing could be omitted from it. "At no time whatsoever in the future," wrote the Pope, "may any priest in the world or in a religious order be required to celebrate mass using any other form of service." He proclaimed that "by virtue of our Apostolic Authority we order and define that our present directive and decree must be observed unchangingly and may never lawfully be revoked or altered in the future." The Pope's decree was issued for all time and threatens anyone who might violate it with the anger of God and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Let us imagine the reaction of a Catholic who knows this decree when he now is presented with a choice of several new "experimental" liturgies with the approval of the lawful successor of Pope Pius V. In the course of such experiments a Catholic will see a jazz mass, a mass in the kitchen, a mass for children with dolls and other toys. The credibility has been shattered. What is left?

In what name is this change, so destructive of the conscience of the faithful, made? — In the name of modernity. But this is not by any means the only reform which has shaken the foundation of contemporary Catholicism. It is now questioning everything. As a result, in the Catholic press priests deny the existence of the devil, write justifications of homosexuality, justify adultery and even cast doubts on the virginity of the Mother of God.

Once having entered onto the way of modernism, Catholicism frequently surpasses Protestantism in this respect. Despite their close contact with this tendency in the ecumenical movement nowhere are the Orthodox Churches as yet accepting modernism in as pure a form as is the western world. But the example is infectious and we already see signs of this infection in various places.

Renovationism and Ecumenism

In Russia modernism of the crudest sort was manifested in renovationism. Of course, above all it was a manifestation of opportunism, of serving the Soviet government, but in addition there was a tendency toward a complete Protestant reformation.

When the so-called Living Church was established, the program adopted by the constituent assembly in Moscow on May 29, 1922, indicated the following aims in addition to accommodation with Communism:

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

A review of the laws in force on Church government, a review of the Church's dogmatic theology of the Church's liturgy and of the Church's ethical theology. The object of this was "a reworking of the teaching on life in society as applied to the problems presented by the times in which we are living." Section II on the goals of the Living Church group concludes with point "e": "In general a review and alteration of all aspects of Church life, as is imperative^ required by contemporary life."²²

The accommodation to Communism according to this program was so crudely carried out that even in the softened form of the final years of its existence, renovationism was not accepted by the Russian people. Nevertheless it took twenty-three years before the renovationist church was formally liquidated as useless.

In another form, though, renovationism exists even now in the Moscow Patriarchate, which in 1945 accepted into its membership all the renovationist agents for whom formal obstacles did not completely close the way to a hierarchical position. As Levitin writes, "In a little while everything was once again back in its own place. The married bishops were made archpriests, the unmarried ones received dioceses."²³

Elements trained in opportunism and on the ideas of A. I. Vedensky, who wrote that the task of renovationism is "to find a form of Christianity in accord with the twentieth century — the century of radio and Darwin, of social problems and Einstein,"²⁴ poured into the Moscow Patriarchate in a broad wave.

Since the Moscow Patriarchate initially was directed by a man like Patriarch Sergius with such undoubted intelligence, but, simultaneously, with a flexible conscience, it rejected the crude violations of Orthodoxy which could be recognized by the simple faithful. He deviated from it while preserving the external forms of the Church and so had more success than Vedensky. But Patriarch Sergius also, perhaps unwillingly in the beginning, put the Church at the disposal of apostasy. He was denounced for this by numerous confessor bishops who opposed his declaration of agreement with the Soviet government in 1926. The further it goes, the more the Moscow hierarchy makes pronouncements which can be reduced to the presentation of atheistic darkness as light.

The Satanic character of Soviet atheism is sharply put before us

²² *Shishkin, A. A., The Essence and a Critical Evaluation of the Renovating Schism of the Russian Orthodox Church, Kazan University*

²³ *Krasnov, A., "The Decline of Renovationism" /1' Grani, No. 87-88, 1973, p. 264.*

²⁴ *Journal of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, 4, pp. 9-10.*

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

in the testimony of eyewitnesses, all of whom Solzhenitsyn surpasses in force. And the Patriarchate tries to present this hell to the world as a kind of ideal, while it condemns Solzhenitsyn for exposing it.

When Metropolitan Sergius's new renovationism arose, many bishops understood to what it would lead and they spoke out against it, following the Apostle Paul's testament: "Be ye not unequally yoked under a strange yoke with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?" (II Cor. 6: 14-15).

One of the bishops who exposed the Patriarchate's new direction taken in 1927 wrote, "From the Christian point of view the dictatorship of the proletariat as a government is the purest apostasy in all areas of material and spiritual life... A religion which worships man as god has appeared on the stage of history, and its development leads one, according to the Apostle Paul's thought, to terrifying prospects in international life (I Tim. 4:1-2; II Tim. 3:1-5) and to the appearance of the false messiah, the man who is worshipped as god, the beast (II Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13)." The "bishop who left [Metropolitan Sergius]" observed that, "It is deserving of especial notice that the new government has created a new class morality, has proclaimed a new Marxist conscience, based on Marxism-Leninism, a teaching on morality which not only does not fit into the framework of Christian morality, but does not even fit into the framework of general human morals."²⁵

Once again one may say that the two volumes of Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag* are a clear illustration of the accuracy of this statement.

The Moscow Patriarchate now tries to maintain an external appearance of Orthodoxy, e.g. in observing the canonical order of church services, but it has adopted the renovationist accommodation to Soviet principles of living and sometimes, by making dogmas out of them, it goes further than the renovationists along the path of evil and apostasy. As the Soviet author P. K. Kurochkin writes, "When, the Patriarchal Church was victorious over the renovationists, it was forced to assimilate the heritage of those who had been defeated not only in a political orientation, but also in the realm of ideological reformulation."²¹ Kurochkin justly writes of the agents of the Patriarchate: "In the pages of the Church press and in speeches to the faithful they began more and more often to proclaim the similarity, the closeness of Communist and Christian social and moral ideals." He cites an article by N. Ivanov in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*: "In the liquidation ... of capitalist relations between men, in the destruction of the²⁸

²⁸ *Chureh Life*, 1938, No. 7, p. 128: cited in G. Grabbe, *The Truth about the Russian Church at Home and Abroad*, Jordanville, 1961, p. 108 (in Russian). ⁿ *The Evolution of Modern Russian Orthodoxy*, Moscow, 1971, p. 80.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

exploitation of man by man, the Church sees man's approach toward the ideals which are proclaimed by the Gospel."²⁷

At the same time that external obedience to the canons is being preserved by the hierarchy of the Moscow Patriarchate, renovationist moods cannot help being alive among people who have grown up under their influence. This appears clearly in the strong desire to alter the church services which was expressed by Fr. S. Zheludkov. But a similar reform movement also exists to one degree or another in Greece, in the American Church, and among the clergy of the Church of Antioch.

Worst of all, however, of course the refraction of Marxism in the theology of the Moscow Patriarchate. Having formulated a new theological discipline — "the theology of peace" — the Patriarchate is trying to formulate a teaching which would justify its service to world revolution. In Geneva Patriarch Pimen said that it is only propaganda hostile to Soviet society which keeps those in the West from seeing the indisputable advantages of the socialist way of life, in many ways supposedly "in harmony with the ideals of Christianity."²⁸ The so-called theology of peace is in essence chiliastic preaching of the Kingdom of God on earth with the aid of the dissemination of Communistic socialism. In an appeal to the Moscow Council before the election of the Patriarch in 1971 the priest Nicholas Gajnov and three laymen rightly raised a question about this in connection with the public statements of Metropolitan Nikodim and his co-workers. They cite his words about uniting people with one other "in the service of reconciliation" with the goal of thereby "seizing the Kingdom of God, coming in strength." The *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* wrote, "For the Christian religion there can be no indifferent or neutral spheres of action! Christianity views the changes which are occurring in the world as the action of Divine Providence, as manifestations of God's power with the goal of establishing the Kingdom of God on earth."²⁸

The peace for which the Moscow Patriarchate is pleading is political, not spiritual, and further, false, for the so-called theology of peace is tied to the Soviets' deceitful propaganda. In trying to second Communist propaganda, the Patriarchate involuntarily falls into preaching some sort of chiliasm, i.e. the attaining of a golden age and general peace by human means of a political character. The Savior said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all this will be added to you," but the Moscow Patriarchate puts it in the reverse order: the Kingdom of God should be attained through the exterior means of the Communist-socialistic order.

²² *IbuLf* p. 81.

²⁸ *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, 1978, No. 11, p. 61. ²⁸ *IbicL*, 1962, No. 12, p. 12.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

Thus, in 1963 at a regional conference of the peace movement in Holland, in a paper "Peace and Freedom", Metropolitan Nikodim called for rapprochement between the Church and the world. "From early times," he said, "apologists for the maintenance of unjust social relations began turning the thoughts of Christians to complete separation from the world with the aim of distracting them from burning social problems, from the fight to restructure society according to the principles of justice. Whole generations of narrow fanatics were trained under the continued influence of such pseudo-Christian preaching and grew up with a distorted conception of Christianity."³⁰

Whom does Metropolitan Nikodim renounce in these words? He renounces the holy fathers and ascetics of the past; he is trying to divert the Church from striving toward Heaven onto the path of earthly social problems. His Kingdom of God on earth is a Communist regime.

He is seconded by Prof. Archpriest V. M. Borovoy, who expressed himself even more sharply: "Systematic theology and the historic churches have never been on the side of revolution for the simple reason that they have been captives of a cosmos-centric understanding of reality, captives of a static understanding of an order established on earth once and for all. Only in recent decades when deep changes, in their own way a revolution, have occurred in philosophical, scientific, and theological thought as a result of an anthropocentric view of the cosmos, an evolutionary conception of the universe, and a new rethinking of the whole history of mankind — only after all that did the possibility of working out a theology of development and revolution appear."³¹

In the same journal another author, Archpriest P. Sokolovsky, wrote that the Churches "too long have been passive observers and have not participated in creating and strengthening a radically new society whose prototype is unknown to history. It was normal for the Churches simply to accept the past, which was connected with a specific tradition, as if it were consonant and identical with the will of God. The radically new was received by the Churches as a purely human matter, as if God's favor were not upon it and for this reason it ought not survive in history."³²

Thus the "theology of revolution" is a religious assimilation of revolutionary ideology, but even more it is a theology of opportunism which is based in essence on apostasy. It can be compared to the offering of sacrifices to idols and the attempt to combine that with Christianity. How can this be combined with faith in the Church as the Body of Christ?³³

32, *Ibid*, 1968, No. 1, p. 40. *Ibid*, 1966, No. 9, 78.

33, *Ibid*, 1907, No. p.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

In this apostate direction of the Moscow Patriarchate Christianity itself already has been lost, being replaced by the religion of this world. Despite the Savior's words (Matt 6:24), the Moscow Patriarchate is trying by compromises to serve two masters, and, as the Savior warned, it has come to the point that it neglects Christianity and is zealous for atheistic Communism.

Chiliasm appears in a more respectable form in ecumenism. This was clearly revealed and exposed in our Metropolitan Philaret's *Second Sorrowful Epistle* in 1972. I will allow myself to recall several of his words: "It is the belief in the renewal of the whole of mankind within a new and universal church that lends to ecumenism the nature of a chiliastic heresy, which becomes more and more evident in the ecumenistic attempts to unite everyone, disregarding truth and error,, and in their tendency to create not only a new church, but a new world."⁰

In this chiliasm a dogmatic teaching which already is taking shape, or are similar ideas espoused by the Patriarchate of Constantinople only to please ecumenists of various sorts? It is hard to answer this question; but whichever it is, and even if it is only an accommodation with the mighty ones of this world, it remains a betrayal of the Orthodox doctrine of the Church.

The Proposed New Paschalia

Following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Patriarch Athenagoras, Patriarch Demetrius is drawing close to the Roman Catholics in a most seductive way. He continues to call the Pope of Rome head of the whole Christian Church (one might ask of what whole Christian Church), and himself the senior hierarch of the Orthodox Church, representing the latter as only part of some universal Church headed by the Pope. These expressions are very unequivocal and go far beyond the bounds of frequently ambiguous Byzantine eloquence. According to reports in Greek newspapers the Patriarch has commemorated the Pope at Liturgy more than once, while Cardinal Willebrands read the Symbol of Faith during a Liturgy at the Phanar. In the churches of the Phanar Catholics have been given Communion. With all this in mind one must admit that it is difficult to consider Patriarch Demetrius or his predecessor Orthodox.

Patriarch Demetrio's latest act of betrayal of Orthodoxy is his proposal that Christian Churches change the paschalia so that they celebrate Pascha on the same day, and that it be a fixed, not a moveable date. This break with ancient tradition is motivated by a desire to unite all Christians in celebrating this at the same time. One cannot fail to see here efforts toward the practical implementation of ecumenism.

* *Church Life*, 1972, No. 14, p. 25.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

For the Orthodox a common celebration would not only be a violation of a tradition confirmed by the holy canons, but it would also be a certain form of joint prayer with heretics.

The time of the celebration of Pascha was established once and for all by the Council of Nicaea. The first canon of the Synod of Antioch says that all who dare violate the decision of this Council "on the holy festival of the saving Pascha shall be cut off from Communion and cast out of the Church if they continue facetiously to oppose this good rule." It speaks thus about laymen, while it pronounces beforehand an especially severe judgment on bishops and members of the clergy who might dare to celebrate Pascha differently from the regulation of the Ecumenical Council. The Council not only "suspends from priestly function" all such in advance, it also condemns all "who dare to be in communion with them after their deposition from the priesthood." Such severity is warranted in this case by the fact that in changing the paschalia one breaks a centuries-old ecclesiastical and liturgical unity and flouts tradition. In his ninety-first canon St. Basil the Great warns against similar novelties: "for if we undertake to deny unwritten traditions as if they do not have great power, then without noticing it we will damage the Gospel in primary matters or even more will constrict our preaching only to the name, without the thing itself."

A disregard of such definitions on the preservation of tradition is characteristic of all sorts of renovationism. Based on self-conceit and arbitrariness, it sees no obstacles in the way of any sort of reform.

The Pentecostals

One may think that the question of altering the paschalia has been raised in the hope that faithfulness to tradition is already so feeble that this matter will not attract any great attention from the flock. We shall hope that the bishops who have been drawn away from genuine piety are mistaken in this. Ecumenism is more an intellectual than a spiritual phenomenon; its Laodicean indifference to truth is unable to stir up real inspiration, zeal, or effort among the laity.

Accordingly, social and political tasks have begun to acquire such a predominant place in comparison to religious ones for the World Council of Churches that there has begun to be concern over a crisis in the Ecumenical Movement.

Moscow itself, which above all influenced the Council's preoccupation with social questions and its adoption of such leftist political decisions as aid to black terrorists in Africa, has begun reminding the Council of the necessity of paying more attention to religious questions. But this concern is not a manifestation of zeal for the faith, but rather the fruit of a practical assessment of the situation: if the Council

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

of Churches lost the externals appropriate to a religious association, it would become too weak a tool for world revolution.

Religious indifference, the unavoidable result of modernism, has produced its familiar opposite reaction which, however, is directed toward a new heresy, not toward a genuine rebirth. Recently the Pentecostal movement, which includes Protestants, Catholics, and Greek Orthodox, has begun to grow. Joint conferences are accompanied by joint prayer and unite people of various confessions in a faith "shared by all", in renewal by the "gifts" of something they presume to call the Holy Spirit, which are received extra-confessionally and not necessarily through their hierarchies.

The founder of this movement among the Greeks is Fr. Eusebius* Stephanou. Not long ago he was disciplined by the Archdiocese for his critical attitude toward ecumenism and his condemnation of Archbishop Iakovos's modernism. Now having made an about-face he has become *persona grata* to him.

At an inter-confessional conference in Ann Arbor in 1973 Fr. Stephanou praised the Pentecostal movement and said that a new descent of the Holy Spirit is charismatically renewing the Church. "Believers in all churches," he said, "are beginning to rediscover the Third Person of the Holy Trinity as the source of new vitality... Those who have been filled with the Living Water that Jesus gives now discover in each other a unity which is more than 'ecumenical' in the ordinary sense of the word."³⁴

It is worth noting that Fr. Stephanou is not speaking here only of Orthodox, but of "the faithful in all churches." It is also typical that the Catholic organ of this movement is called the *New Covenant*, i.e. the New Testament, having in mind the testament of their "Holy Spirit" Many speeches of the new Pentecostals speak of the beginning of the era of this third covenant.

An important, and obviously for many an attractive feature of the life of this heresy is the acquisition of the "gift of tongues." Entry into the rank of the adepts of the movement is accompanied by laying on of hands for the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," during which laymen also lay their hands on members of the clergy.

Much is written about how after such a laying on of hands people receive the gift of tongues, but it is manifested by their pronouncing words in no known language. This is hardly the gift which the Apostles received on the day of Pentecost and which sometimes was given to certain Christians at that time in Baptism. In his first sermon for the Day of Pentecost, St. John Chrysostom poses the question: What does

8« *New Covenant*, June, 1973, p. 19.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

it mean to speak in tongues? He answers, "The one being baptized began at once to speak in the language of the Indians, the Egyptians, the Persians, the Scythians, the Thracians."³⁵

Thus, similarly to the Apostles, Christians received the gift of speaking in various languages for the preaching of the Gospel. But this was a gift of actual living languages, not of pronouncing sounds which no one comprehends, more a characteristic of hysteria or possession.

In this Pentecostal movement we see again the fruit of distortion of the dogma of the nature of the Church. These people no longer believe in one Baptism, but in two; for, while they are in the Orthodox Church and have received Baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity and the seal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Chrismation, they are looking for another new baptism of the "Holy Spirit," thereby contradicting the Symbol of Faith in which we confess one Baptism for the remission of sins.

Conclusion

The first part of my paper was devoted to a positive exposition of the dogma of the nature of the Church. Of course, only to a small degree could I fulfill this task in the time available. Fr. Akvilonov and Abp. Marion each devoted several hundred pages to it and still one cannot say that they have exhausted this subject. After explaining the attributes of the Church, I have now presented a very brief review of phenomena in Church life in which this dogma is violated in our time.

To evaluate them and for a practical conclusion about what we should do to preserve our Orthodoxy in difficult times, not infrequently and not without reason called apocalyptic, it seems to me useful to turn once again to the concept of the Church as the Body of Christ.

When the Fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council briefly set forth our faith in the Church, they indicated its attributes. Almost all these attributes, like rays of the sun concentrated by a magnifying glass, can be derived from the name of the Church and from faith in it as the Body of Christ. But here one must say that in the Symbol itself the doctrine of the Church is not exhausted by the ninth article.

Of course, the tenth article: "I confess one Baptism, for the remission of sins," also has a clear relationship to it. It confirms what was said earlier about the uniqueness of the Church. In this article we confess that only the Baptism of the Orthodox Church is the true Baptism which unites us to the Body of Christ and thus cannot be repeated. This is not just a disciplinary rule. Therefore it does not say here "I observe" or "I recognize," but "I confess." The forty-seventh Apostolic Canon states clearly that one cannot baptize a second time "anyone who has been baptized truly," but on the contrary, the canon commands that anyone baptized by heretics be baptized.

^M *Works*, St. Petersburg, 1896, Vol. II, ? . 601.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

The last two articles of the Symbol: "I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come" can be related to eschatology, the doctrine of the end of the world, but there are more grounds for relating them to the Church. The seventh article on the second coming, to judge the living and the dead, is related to eschatology, while the resurrection of the dead is the beginning of the new existence of the Church after the conclusion of world history. While the earth and everything on it will be consumed by flames, the souls will be united with transfigured bodies in the resurrection. The Church's battle will cease; in glory and joy her peaceful existence in the unending perfecting of the members of the Body of Christ will begin.

In the last two articles of the Symbol it is revealed that the existence of the Church will not cease with the end of this visible world; rather the Church will pass to a new period or new condition.

It is the misfortune of our contemporary non-Orthodox ecclesiologists to be unable to tear their thoughts away from the present material world. They want to create a new earth with their own human hands, and for this reason they do not recall the words of the Apostle Peter that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Pet. 3:10).

If we proceed from the fact that the Church was not established by our Lord Jesus Christ only to assist us in arranging our lives on earth securely, but rather that we might be saved as living members of an organism, both divine and human, and that we might receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit within it, then we will find guidance for solving all our spiritual problems in this fact. It will be a faithful compass in our search for the Orthodox way.

There is a general law that only what is related to an organism belongs to it. Therefore, if a local or regional Church is a part of the Universal Church, then its healthful life in grace depends on its observing those principles which are characteristics of that organism. There is a complete parallel to the human body here. Hunger or gluttony, infection and all sorts of over-indulgence produce sickness. Exactly the same thing can be observed in the life of the Church: schisms and heresies are the result of breaking the laws of her existence. In view of this it is especially important for us to seek agreement and unity with the holy fathers who have shone forth from all ages and not just with the majority of our contemporaries. When, for example, we consider Constantinople, we see such leaders in Proclus, Chrysostom, and Photius, but not in Athenagoras or Demetrius. The breaking of the Church's rules, and especially pride and the diminution of love, produce disunity and temptation.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

I remember how, before the beginning of the rebellion in the Church in 1926, when we were discussing in our conversations what might happen in regard to Metropolitan Evlogy's claims, we imagined that at least he could not directly defy the Synod or, even more, the full Sobor, because in that case sanctions might follow. It seemed to us that suspension was a threat before which anyone would have to bow. Who, we said, would risk suspension, and who would follow a suspended bishop? But Metropolitan Evlogy showed that with pride and egotism it is easy to break the Church's rules. From that time the disease of rebellion, in which suspension is treated as an insignificant matter, has been rampant among us.

Similarly, once modernism, with its contempt for tradition, has been introduced into the life of the Church everywhere before our eyes, it unavoidably has led to divisions and to a lowering of the level of spiritual life. It is based on a loss of contact with tradition and on minimalism in spiritual matters. The new-style calendar was introduced so it would not be hard to observe Church holidays (especially the Nativity) for those who live among the non-Orthodox; the clergy are ordered to dress in suits like western clergymen so they will not stand out in a crowd; modernists do not serve full services so they will not be bothered with "too much" standing or with studying the rubrics. Generally speaking, modernism is a fight against confessionalism and spiritual endeavor, which, if they consider it worthy of attention at all, they do so only as an "outmoded, non-obligatory" virtue.

However, no one has ever attained anything significant if he has decided beforehand to apply only the minimum effort. The Savior calls us to a higher perfection, not to a middling or moderate one. He says, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt.-5: 49); in other words, He places an unremitted goal before us. No teacher in a classroom will be of benefit if beforehand he gives himself the task of acquainting his students only with that level of knowledge which they already have attained. But this is precisely what the modernists are doing, with the most tragic consequences. From the example of the collapsing Western confessions we see how a gradual easing of fasting led to its complete abandonment, while the tendency to make the labor of prayer easier, leads to blasphemous forms of services and, finally, to flight from the priestly vocation, from monasteries, and from the church. If nothing else, this situation should of itself serve as a warning for us.

Just as in our personal spiritual life, so too in the common life of the Church any intentional weakening of zeal and devotion leads us to hell, not towards heaven.

THE DOGMA OF THE CHURCH

Unfortunately, as I tried to show above, we are more and more 'surrounded by a complete betrayal of Orthodoxy, not only among western heretics, but also on the part of those who call themselves Orthodox. We must look at this with our eyes open. It is better for us to be isolated than to allow ourselves to be drawn into a spiritual quagmire.

Let our bishops show us how to effect this in a practical way — we can only testify to our determination to preserve pure Orthodoxy, whatever trials for us might be connected with it.

We are often reproached for supposedly being prideful when we state the desire to follow the way which is faithful to Orthodox tradition. But we know we have nothing about which to be proud: we display much weakness and disorganization; we make mistakes. But it is these which convince us of the need for faithful trust in the traditions of holy Orthodoxy. And to free ourselves insecurely from reproach must we enter onto the path of disregard toward the principles and tradition of the Church?

I have been asked in passing why my paper on a dogmatic topic was included in the agenda of the Council. It may be that I have carried out my task poorly, but I understand it as a commission to recall those eternal principles which we absolutely must observe in solving our various problems.

In every case let us pose this question to our consciousness and our consciences: what sort of decision must be reached **90** that it will be not only expedient, but also consistent with the nature of the "one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?"

