

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
The Diocese of Eagle River and the Northwest
Antiochian Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

كنيسة البشارة الأرثوذكسية الأنطاكية

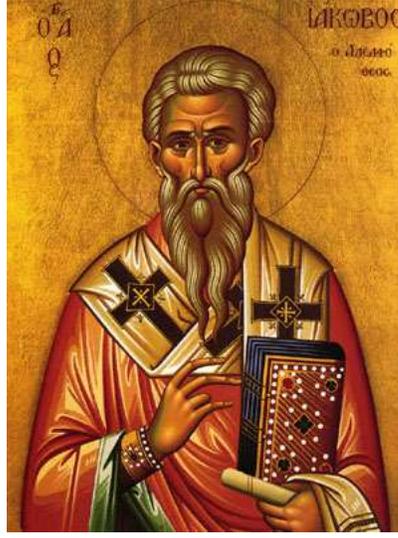
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Sunday October 9th, 2016



Saturday Service: Vespers at 6 PM

Sunday Services: Matins 9:30 AM, Divine Liturgy 10:30 AM

الأحد السادس عشر بعد العنصرة والأحد الثالث من لوقا

تذكار القديس الرسول يعقوب بن حلفا

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost & Third Sunday of Luke

The Holy Apostle James, Son of Alphaeus

Changes in the Liturgy

تغييرات في القداس

الايصوديكون

هلم لنسجد ونركع للمسيح ملكنا والهنا، خلصنا يا ابن الله يا من قام من بين الاموات، لنرتل لك هلوليا!

Entrance Hymn

O Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ.

Save us, O Son of God, who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

طروبارية القيامة (باللحن السابع)

حَطَمْتَ بِصَلَابِكَ الموتَ وَفَتَحْتَ لِلصِّمِّ الفردوسَ. وَحَوَّلْتَ نَوْحَ حَامِلَاتِ الطيبِ إِلَى فرح. وَأَمَرْتَ رُسُلَكَ أَنْ يَكْرِزُوا مُنْذِرِينَ، بِأَنَّكَ قَدْ قُمْتَ أَيُّهَا المَسِيحُ الإله. مَانِحاً العَالَمَ الرَّحْمَةَ العَظْمَى.

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone Seven)

Thou didst shatter death by Thy cross; Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy, and didst bid Thine apostles proclaim a warning that Thou hast risen, O Christ, granting to the world the great mercy.

طروبارية القديس يعقوب الرسول (باللحن الثالث)

أَيُّهَا الرسولُ القديسُ يعقوبُ تشفِّعْ إِلَى الإلهِ الرَّحِيمِ، أَنْ يُنْعِمَ بِغَفْرَانِ الزَّلَّاتِ لِنَفُوسِنَا.

Troparion of St. James the Apostle (Tone Three)

O Holy Apostle James, intercede with our merciful God, to grant our souls forgiveness of sins.

Troparion of the Annunciation – Tone 4)

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace. Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos, Rejoice, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee.

(للبيشارة – باللحن الرابع)

اليوم رأس خلاصنا، وإعلان السر الذي منذ الدهور، لأن ابن الله يصير ابن البتول، وجبرائيل بالنعمة يبشر، فلذلك ونحن معه لنهتف نحو والدة الإله، إفرحي أيتها الممتلئة نعمة الرب معك.

القداق لوالدة الإله (باللحن الثاني)

يا شفيعَةَ المسيحيينَ غير الخازية، الوسيطةَ لدى الخالقِ غيرَ المردودة. لا تُعرضي عن أصواتِ طُلبائِنا نحنُ الخطاة، بل تدارِكينا بالمعونَةِ بما أنكِ صالحة، نحن الصارخينَ نحوكَ بإيمانٍ. بادِري إلى الشفاعةِ وأسرعِي في الطلِبَةِ يا والدةَ الإله، المتشفعةَ دائماً في مُكرَميكِ.

Kontakion of the Theotokos (Tone Two)

O protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the Creator most constant, O despise not the suppliant voices of those who have sinned; but be thou quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession, and speed thou to make supplication, thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

الرسالة للأحد السادس عشر بعد العنصرة

Epistle for the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

The Lord will give strength to his people!

Bring to the Lord, O sons of God, bring to the Lord honor and glory!

The Reading is from Saint Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians (6:1-10).

Brethren, working together with him, then, we entreat you not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation." Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

الرَّبُّ يُعْطِي قُوَّةً لَشَعْبِهِ!

قَدِّمُوا لِلرَّبِّ يَا أَبْنَاءَ اللَّهِ، قَدِّمُوا لِلرَّبِّ مَجْدًا وَعِزًّا!

فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول الثانية إلى أهل كورنثوس (6:1-10).

يا إخوة بما أننا معاونون نطلب إليكم أن لا تقبلوا نعمة الله في الباطل * لأنه يقول إني في وقت مقبول استجبت لك وفي يوم خلاص أعنتك. فهوذا الآن وقت مقبول. هوذا الآن يوم خلاص * ولسنا نأتي بمعترة في شيء لئلا يلحق الخدمة عيب * بل نظهر في كل شيء أنفسنا كخدام الله في صبر كثير في شدايد في ضرورات في ضيقات * في جلدات في سجون في اضطرابات في أتعاب في أسهار في أصوام * في طهارة في معرفة في طول أناة في رفق في الروح القدس في محبة بلا رياء * في كلمة الحق في قوة الله بأسلحة البر عن اليمين وعن اليسار * بمجد وهوان، بسوء صيت وحسنه * كأننا ماضون ونحن صادقون، كأننا مجهولون ونحن معروفون، كأننا مائتون وهان نحن أحياء، كأننا مؤدبون ولا نقتل * كأننا حزان ونحن دائماً فرحون، كأننا فقراء ونحن نغني كثيرين، كأننا لا شيء لنا ونحن نملك كل شيء.

الإنجيل للأحد الثالث من لوقا

Gospel of the Third Sunday of St. Luke

The Reading of the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (7:11-16).

At that time, Jesus went to a city called Nain, and many of his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large crowd from the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." And he came and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And Jesus said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up, and began to speak. And Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people."

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس لوقا الإنجيلي البشير، التلميذ الطاهر (7:11-16).

في ذلك الزمان كان يسوع مُنْطَلِقاً إلى مدينة اسمها نايْن وكان كثيرون من تلاميذه وجمع غفير مُنْطَلِقِينَ معه * فلما قَرُبَ مِنْ بابِ المدينة إذا ميّتٌ محمولٌ وهو ابنٌ وحيدٌ لأُمِّه وكانت أرملةً وكان معها جمعٌ كثيرٌ مِنْ المدينة * فلما رآها الربُّ تَحَنَّنَ عليها وقال لها لا تبكي * ودنا ولمَسِ النَّعْشَ (فوقفت الحاملون). فقال أيُّها الشابُّ لك أقول قُمْ * فاستوى الميِّتُ وبدأ يتكلَّمُ فسَلَّمَهُ إلى أُمِّه * فأخَذَ الجميعُ خوفٌ ومَجَّدوا الله قائلين لقد قام فينا نبيٌّ عظيمٌ وافتقدَ اللهُ شَعْبَهُ.

Bless My Enemies O Lord

St. Bp. Nikolai Velimirovich

Taken from OrthodoxyToday.org

Bp. Nikolai Velimirovich was a Serbian bishop in the last century who spoke out courageously against Nazism until he was arrested and taken to Dachau.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them.

Enemies have driven me into your embrace more than friends have.

Friends have bound me to earth, enemies have loosed me from earth and have demolished all my aspirations in the world.

Enemies have made me a stranger in worldly realms and an extraneous inhabitant of the world. Just as a hunted animal finds safer shelter than an unhunted animal does, so have I, persecuted by enemies, found the safest sanctuary, having ensconced myself beneath your tabernacle, where neither friends nor enemies can slay my soul.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them.

They, rather than I, have confessed my sins before the world.

They have punished me, whenever I have hesitated to punish myself.

They have tormented me, whenever I have tried to flee torments.

They have scolded me, whenever I have flattered myself.

They have spat upon me, whenever I have filled myself with arrogance.

Bless my enemies, O Lord, Even I bless them and do not curse them.

Whenever I have made myself wise, they have called me foolish.

Whenever I have made myself mighty, they have mocked me as though I were a dwarf.

Whenever I have wanted to lead people, they have showed me into the background.

Whenever I have rushed to enrich myself, they have prevented me with an iron hand.

Whenever I thought that I would sleep peacefully, they have wakened me from sleep.

Whenever I have tried to build a home for a long and tranquil life, they have demolished it and driven me out.

Truly, enemies have cut me loose from the world and have stretched out my hands to the hem of your garment.

Bless my enemies, O Lord. Even I bless them and do not curse them.

Bless them and multiply them; multiply them and make them even more bitterly against me:

so that my fleeing to You may have no return;

so that all hope in men may be scattered like cobwebs;

so that absolute serenity may begin to reign in my soul;

so that my heart may become the grave of my two evil twins, arrogance and anger;

so that I might amass all my treasure in heaven;

ah, so that I may for once be freed from self-deception, which has entangled me in the dreadful web of illusory life.

Enemies have taught me to know what hardly anyone knows, that a person has no enemies in the world except himself.

One hates his enemies only when he fails to realize that they are not enemies, but cruel friends.

It is truly difficult for me to say who has done me more good and who has done me more evil in the world: friends or enemies.

Therefore bless, O Lord, both my friends and enemies.

A slave curses enemies, for he does not understand. But a son blesses them, for he understands.

For a son knows that his enemies cannot touch his life.

Therefore he freely steps among them and prays to God for them.

From **Prayers by the Lake** by Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, published by the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitanate of New Gracanica, 1999. This article can be found on the [Regeneration](#) website.

❖ Church Announcements

- **Sunday School Luncheon**: this Sunday, the Sunday School will have a thanksgiving Luncheon after Liturgy. \$10 per family. The funds will go to support the Sunday school project.
- **A service of Thanksgiving**: visit: [Antiochian.org](#), Thanksgiving Akathist.
- **World Food Day 2016: Canned Food Drive** requested by the Archdiocese from October to December. Please bring a nonperishable food and body hygiene items to donate to Inn from the Cold and other needy people.
- **Youth Month**: October is Youth month, all the youth will read the epistle and do the collection plus will welcome and seat people. All teens, please, see Mary Basmajian to read and usher.
- **Next Sunday** October 16th is Special Olympic Sunday. There will be a special collection.
- **Young Adults**: Friday October 14th at 7 PM.
- **Family Night**: **is canceled** this Friday.
- **Church School is canceled this Saturday October 8th**.
- **Father is working on stablishing an Orthodox Chaplain at the UC campus.**
- **Giving back to God**: Our church depends on your generous giving back to God for all His blessings in your life. **Please, give generously and regularly and God will bless you back a 100 times.** Make sure you support your church even during the summer, the bills don't stop during the summer. **Give a percentage of your income.** Write your name on the envelope for a receipt.
- **University Students**: Father would like to revive the OCF (Orthodox Christian Fellowship) chapter at UC. If you are a student at UC please talk to Jessica Basmajian. Also, Father Dahdouh is working on starting a college conference here in West Canada. If you like to help, please see Father.

- **Church School:** Every Saturday at 4.30 PM we will have Sunday School. The church school needs your financial support. We need to buy dividers and mats for the floors. If you like to help our children to learn the Faith, please see Ky. Manal.
- **Youth Trip to Edmonton:** Tentatively on Saturday November 12th, if you like to go, talk to Mary.
- **Fr. Joseph Purpora:** will be visiting our parish for youth activities on the weekend of November 18th. Fr. Joseph is the Director of the Youth Department for the Archdiocese.
- **Please say your baptismal name when you come to communion.**
- **University Students:** Every year in December university students from all over the US and Canada get together for a retreat at three different locations. Also, for Spring Break 2017, please visit www.OCF.net/realbreak2017. Father is trying to start one here in Calgary.
- **We need to attend the Liturgy from the beginning. Try to be at church at 10:30 AM. Those who partake of Holy Communion should stay until the final blessing and say the thanks giving prayers after Holy Communion. Liturgy starts with “Blessed is the Kingdom”, and ends with the final blessing and kissing of the cross.**

The Lionheart: COMING SOON TO A CHURCH NEAR YOUR HEART! “The Lionheart”

The challenges of Fatherhood and becoming a great role-model to your children are immense. What about the value of being a loving and caring husband to your wife? Sicknes OR health, remember that? Men, you will gain appreciation from your family, by engaging in a most meaningful course as the “Lionheart”. This is a “Pursuit of God” put together by the Orthodox faith. For ages 18+, as you may be a husband or father, so prepare for it. Society is at times, suffocating with social problems: drugs, depression and lack of Leadership in our homes and place of worship. Within a short 4 week term, you will likely find many problem-solving techniques to becoming a better man. We can learn from the DVD or from each others experiences, hopefully in confidence. We can communicate our feeling, or we can just listen and learn. After this program you will thank our Lord for the experience! **Lou Salloum** is assisting Father in forming a Christian men group. Please, sign up with Lou Salloum.

- **Attention all members: Please, sign up to offer the Holy Bread for your good health and for the health of your family. Choose a Sunday and see one of the ladies officers. Also, we should sponsor coffee hour after Liturgy, keep it light. Every family is asked to pick up a Sunday.**
- **Wednesday Vespers and Bible Study: Every Wednesday at 7 PM.** We will study together how the Bible came to existence and the Gospel of Mark. Come join us.
- **2017 Creative Festival Theme: The Bible Bowl will be the Gospel of Mark. Father would like to see teams going to Los Angeles next year to the PLC to represent our church. Ages of groups: Pre-Teens**

10-12, Teens 13-19, adults 20 plus no age limit. Also young people can compete in the Oratorical competition.

- **Church Cleaning:** Those who offer the Holy Bread also clean the church. Those who don't want to clean the church can pay to have it cleaned. Simon is willing to clean the church for \$50. Please, pay him directly.
- **Missing Sunday Liturgy:** Attending Sunday Liturgy should be part of our regular life as a family, we should not miss church unless we are really sick. Make attending church every Sunday an important part of your family life. **The family that worships together, stays together.**
- **In an Emergency:** If you go to the hospital or have a scheduled surgery, please call Fr. Dahdouh at 403/993-7945 anytime day or night 24 hours 7 days a week.

أومن بكنيسة جامعة

تأتي جامعيّة الكنيسة من كونها تمتدّ نحو كلّ العالم، وتطال شعوباً وأمماً في أمكنة مختلفة. من هنا فجامعيّة الكنيسة مرتبطة ارتباطاً وثيقاً بوحدتها. فإن كانت الكنائس المقامة في أمكنة وأوساط مختلفة لا تؤسّس الكنيسة الواحدة، لا يمكن لهذه الكنيسة أن تكون جامعة. الكنيسة جامعة بالمبدأ وبالفعل. بالمبدأ، من حيث إنّ دعوتها ومهمّتها هما ضمُّ العالم بكامله إليها، وجعلُ كلّ الناس أبناءً لله، ومن حيث إنّ المسيح وتعاليمه لا يتوجّهان إلى شعب واحد، أو ثقافة واحدة أو حقبة زمنية معينة، بل إلى البشريّة جمعاء. فابن الله تجسّد من أجل خلاص البشريّة كلّها، ومن أجل انتشار العالم كلّ من سقوطه وشقائه، ما يعني أنّ تعليم المسيح جامعٌ ويطلّ كامل حياة الانسان، ويجب على جميع أسئلته، ويمدّ الانسان بالحياة الحقيقيّة. «ليس بالخبز وحده يحيا الانسان بل بكلّ كلمة تخرج من فم الله» (متى ٤ : ٤). وهذا الواقع لازم الكنيسة منذ تأسيسها.

الكنيسة جامعة بالفعل، من حيث إنّها انتشرت انتشاراً واسعاً في كلّ العالم. هذا الأمر ابتدأ تحقيقه تدريجياً بواسطة الرسل أنفسهم، ويستمرّ حتى اليوم. وإن كانت جامعيّة الكنيسة من طبيعتها، يبقى أنّها ستُكشف في اليوم الأخير عندما «يكون الله الكلّ في الكلّ» (1كورنثوس ١٥ : ٢٨).

جامعيّة الكنيسة في الكتاب المقدّس:

لا يعرف الكتاب المقدّس مصطلح «جامعة»، لكن مفهوم جامعيّة الكنيسة واضح إن كان في العهد القديم أو الجديد. وعدّ الله ابراهيم بأنّ جميع الأمم سوف تتبارك بنسله (تكوين ٢٦ : ٤)، وجدّد الوعد ليعقوب (تكوين ٢٨ : ١٤). وجميع الأرض وعشائر الأمم سوف تنوب إلى الربّ وتسجد له (مزمور ٢١ : ٢٨-30). هذا المفهوم عينه نجده أيضاً عند الأنبياء (إشعياء ٢ : ٢-١١ : ١٠، دانيال ٢ : ٣٥، ...). يقول الإنجيليّ متى، في العهد الجديد، إنّ بشارة الملكوت ستُعلن في كلّ الأرض (متى ٢٤ : ١٤)، وهذه الدعوة يوجّهها يسوع إلى تلاميذه (متى ٢٨ : ١٩)، كذلك يفعل البشير مرقس (مرقس ١٦ : ١٥) وأيضاً لوقا (لوقا ٢٤ : ٤٧).

جامعيّة الكنيسة في تعليم الآباء:

يحفظ لنا التسليم التعليم عن الكنيسة الجامعة في كتابات الآباء أيضاً. يُعلّم القديس إغناطيوس المتوسّح بالله أنّه حيث يكون المسيح، فهناك تكون الكنيسة الجامعة. أمّا القديس كيرلس الأورشليمي فيشرح، في عظته الثامنة عشرة، معنى القول بالكنيسة الجامعة بقوله: «تُدعى الكنيسة جامعة لأنّها تمتدّ إلى كلّ العالم، ولأنّها تُعلّم عالمياً وبلا خطأ كلّ العقائد التي ينبغي أن يعرفها الناس، والمختصّة بالأمر المنظورة وغير المنظورة، السماويّة والأرضيّة، ولأنّها تقود إلى الإيمان بالله جميع الإنسانيّة، الحاكم والمحكوم، المثقّف والأميّ، ولأنّها تُعالج وتشفي كلّ أنواع الخطايا التي ترتكبها النفس والجسد، ولأنّها تحوي بذاتها كلّ أشكال الفضيلة، إن كان بالقول أو بالفعل أو بكلّ أشكال المواهب الروحيّة».

على هذا الأساس، لا تُحصر جامعيّة الكنيسة بعدد المؤمنين، ولا بامتدادها الجغرافيّ، بل يُقصد بها بشكل أساس جامعيّة تعليمها وشموليّة حياتها التي تقود إلى الإيمان الصحيح بالله وإلى الشفاء من كلّ أمراض الخطيئة. لذلك يقول أحد اللاهوتيين المعاصرين (بول إفدوكيموف) إنّ تسمية المجمع بالمسكونيّة غير مرتبط بالامبراطوريّة المسكونيّة (أي يكون العالم المسكون ضمن امبراطوريّة واحدة مسيحيّة)، إنّما تعود التسمية إلى كون الكنيسة جامعة، لأنّ مسكونيّة الأمبراطوريّة أمر عرضيّ بينما جامعيّة الكنيسة مستمرّة ودائمة، وإن انفصلت مدينة أو بلد عن الكنيسة تبقى الكنيسة جامعة.

القديس الرسول يعقوب بن حلفى

هو أحد الرسل الإثني عشر. يُذكر اسمه في الإصحاح العاشر من إنجيل متى (الآية ٣) مع بقية الرسل. لا تُعرف هويته بالضبط، إلا انه غير يعقوب ابن زبدي الأخ الأكبر للإنجيلي يوحنا الذي يُذكر ضمن لائحة الرسل في إنجيل متى. ظنّ البعض أنه يعقوب أخو الرب أول أسقف على أورشليم، واعتبره البعض دون إثباتٍ أخا للإنجيلي متى لأن متى هو أيضًا ابن حلفى. نعرف القليل عنه من النصوص الليتورجية الخاصة بعيده في ٩ تشرين الأول. نعرف انه صُلب كالمسيح، وأنه ماثل السيد «في الآلام والموت». نعرف أيضًا أنه بَشَّر الأمم بالمسيحية ضد الوثنية، ومحا «ظلام عبادة كثرة الآلهة»، وطَهَّر «الخليقة كلها من عبادة الأوثان»، وأنار «الشعوب بأشعة معرفة الله».

The Orthodox-Catholic "Chieti" document on primacy

The document itself is available below as image files and [here](#) as a PDF. There are some interesting lines about Roman powers over the Eastern Churches that are worth reading.

(EP) The fourteenth meeting of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church was held from 16 to 21 September 2016 in Villa Maria, Francavilla al Mare (Chieti). The meeting was generously hosted by His Excellency Bruno Forte, Archbishop of Chieti-Vasto, a member of the Commission, with the support of the Italian Bishops' Conference.

All the Orthodox Churches, with the exception of the Patriarchate of Bulgaria, were represented, namely the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Patriarchate of Antioch, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate of Moscow, the Patriarchate of Serbia, the Patriarchate of Romania, the Patriarchate of Georgia, the Church of Cyprus, the Church of Greece, the Church of Poland, the Church of Albania and the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia. A corresponding number (26) of Catholic members, coming from different countries, were present.

The Commission worked under the direction of its two co-presidents, Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and Archbishop Job of Telmessos, of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, assisted by the co-secretaries, Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate) and Msgr. Andrea Palmieri (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity). Since the last plenary meeting, Archbishop Job had replaced Metropolitan John Zizioulas who had retired for health reasons. The Commission expressed its profound gratitude to Metropolitan John Zizioulas for his long and dedicated leadership of the Commission as co-president.

At the opening plenary session held on Friday, 16 September, the Commission was warmly welcomed by the host, Archbishop Forte, and by the Mayor of Francavilla al Mare, Sig. Antonio Luciani.

The two co-presidents expressed their gratitude for the hospitality offered by the Archdiocese and underlined the will to continue the journey towards the unity of the Churches, in order to strengthen Christian witness in the world and to bring the healing message of the Gospel to suffering humanity.

On Saturday, 17 September, the Catholic members celebrated the Eucharist in the Cathedral of Saint Justin of Chieti, presided over by Cardinal Kurt Koch, in the presence of the Orthodox members and many local authorities and people of the area. They were later welcomed by the mayor of Chieti, Sig. Umberto di Primio, in the Municipal Theater where they attended the traditional "Miserere" of Selecchy,

performed by the chorus of the “Sacro Monte dei Morti” Confraternity. Later they were hosted by the Prefect, Dott. Antonio Corona, in the Palazzo del Governo, where a dinner was offered by the Governor of Abruzzo, Hon. Luciano D’Alfonso.

On Sunday, 19 September, the Orthodox members celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the Shrine of Manoppello, where the precious relic of the Holy Face is preserved. The celebration was concelebrated by Archbishop Job of Telmessos, together with His Grace Bishop Ilia of Philomelion (Church of Albania) and His Eminence Archbishop George of Michalovce and Košice (Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia), in the presence of the Catholic members. Present at the Divine Liturgy were a large number of faithful from the local Orthodox parish, as well as numerous Catholic faithful. The Capuchin Friars, guardians of the Shrine, offered a lunch and gave each participant a souvenir of the visit.

In the afternoon, the Commission visited the church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Vasto where they venerated the relic of the Holy Thorn. They visited the co-cathedral of Saint Joseph and paid homage to a revered triptych of the Virgin, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Catherine of Alexandria painted in the 14th century, of Albanian origin. On various occasions the area of Chieti-Vasto was described as a bridge between the two shores of the Adriatic, between the traditions of East and West. The Commission then visited the historic monastery of San Giovanni in Venere, a 13th century Benedictine Abbey now cared for by the Passionist fathers. These visits offered the participants an insightful experience of the profound devotion of the people of the Archdiocese and of their attachment to the Church and their Archbishop.

On the first day of the meeting, as is customary, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox members met separately to coordinate their work. The Commission then met in plenary session to examine the Amman text on the exercise of synodality and primacy in the first millennium, which had been revised by the Drafting Committee in June 2015 and further revised by the Joint Coordinating Committee in September 2015. A first reading of the text brought numerous suggested amendments and revisions, which were then elaborated by a Drafting Committee composed of three Orthodox and three Catholic members. This revised text was then submitted to the plenary, which discussed it in detail and reached agreement on the document, called “Synodality and Primacy in the First Millennium. Towards a Common Understanding in Service to the Unity of the Church”. Disagreement with some paragraphs of the document was expressed by the delegation of the Georgian Patriarchate.

The discussion focused on the significance and interrelatedness of synodality and primacy in the history of the Church in the first millennium in the varied and changing situations in East and West. While recognizing diversity present in the Church’s experience, the Commission acknowledged the continuity of theological, canonical and liturgical principles, which constituted the bond of communion between East and West. This common understanding is the point of reference and a powerful source of inspiration for Catholics and Orthodox as they seek to restore full communion today. On this basis, both must consider how synodality, primacy and the interrelatedness between them can be conceived and exercised today and in the future.

In discussing the future of the dialogue, the Joint Commission agreed that the Coordinating Committee will meet next year in order to decide on the theme and issues to be further elaborated in the dialogue.

Throughout these days, the members of the Commission prayed often for the suffering populations of the Middle East, where many of the Churches present are rooted, as well as those in Europe and other parts of the world. The martyrdom and kidnapping of many people, including Metropolitan Pavlos of Aleppo, a member of this Commission, and of Metropolitan Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, was deeply felt as a witness to the profound unity of all Christians and as an incentive to work all the more for progress on the path to full communion between the Churches.

The members of the Joint Commission greatly appreciated the generous hospitality of the host Church and the spirit of friendship and solidarity of all present. They trust that their work will contribute to hastening the day when the prayer of Jesus at the Last Supper, “That all might be one”, will be fulfilled. They ask all the faithful to pray for this intention.

Chieti, 21 September 2016. (If you like to read the document, go to <http://byztex.blogspot.ca/2016/09/the-orthodox-catholic-chieti-document.html#more>)