

Happenings!

A Spiritual Retreat Topic: "Christ The Eternal Tao"

Friday & Saturday, November 6 & 7. St. Barnabas Antiochian Orthodox Church, 3515 Cadillac Ave. #G-3. Costa Mesa 92626. **Presenter:** Hieromonk Damascene (an Eastern Orthodox Christian monk and scholar – spiritual child of the famed Fr. Seraphim Rose of St. Herman of Alaska Monastery, Platina, CA) Note: Capacity is limited and spaces are filling up quickly. Interested participants should register online as soon as possible to be assured of a seat. For registration form please go to this link: (<http://www.stbarnabasoc.org/tao/register>) For more information, please go to: (<http://www.stbarnabasoc.org/tao>)

The Theology and Liturgy of Funerals: East and West

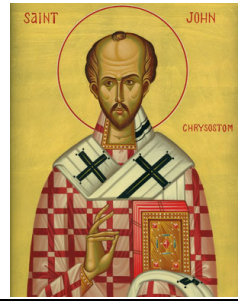
Saturday, November 14, 10 a.m./12:30 pm. St. Maria Goretti Parish, 3954 Palo Verde Ave., Long Beach 90808. **Presenters:** Msgr. Liam Kidney, Pastor, Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church, Pacific Palisades & the Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Alexei Smith, Pastor, St. Andrew Russian-Greek Catholic Church & St. Paul Melkite Mission, El Segundo. A business meeting of SSSC—Western Region follows. Participants may bring a brown bag lunch. Contact person: Anne Petach: 818 347 0758 or apetach@sbcglobal.net.

Light of the East

Newsletter of the Society of Saint John Chrysostom
Western Region Edition

Volume 4, Number 1

Fall, 2009



SSJC Workshop: Married life East & West

Intimacy of married life linked to perfect communion of love in the Holy Trinity



By Anne Petach

Presbytera Joy Corona, of St. Gregory of Nyssa Greek Orthodox Mission, El Cajon, linked the communion and intimacy of married life to the image of the perfect

love in the Holy Trinity, and emphasized the self-emptying that inspires daily married life and which leads to the Kingdom of heaven. She reminded that the Orthodox marriage service includes the crowning of husband and wife as both king and queen of their home, the domestic church, and also as martyrs who take up their cross and follow Christ. Both in marriage and martyrdom one dies to self to live for the other. Each lifts up the other when they fall. Married saints show the extreme value of mutual assistance, accountability and encouragement for the fulfillment of marriage: holiness.



Brother Daniel Sokol OSB of Prince of Peace Abbey, stressed the blessing that holy parents are for their children as they interceded in prayer for them.

After a summary of the canonization process in the Roman Church, he called to mind that Pope John Paul II, who beatified many, "called for recognition of the heroic virtues of Christian marriage ... a sign of Christ's love, a mirror of the Lord's love for aa

his Church and a reminder that one and all are called to lives of holiness."

As examples he cited: St. Gianna Beretta Molla (1922-1962) a pediatrician. Despite life threatening complications early in her fourth pregnancy she chose the life of her baby over her own and died a few days after giving birth of a healthy daughter; Blessed Luigi Beltrame Quattrocchi (1880-1951) a lawyer, and his wife Blessed Maria Corsini (1884-1965) a professor and writer, parents of four, active in many apostolic and charitable works; beatified Oct. 2001, Saint Cecelia martyred in 117 who was forced into marriage by her parents, converted her husband and when he and his brother were martyred for burying Christian martyrs, was arrested and martyred for burying the brothers; Blessed Anna Maria Taigi (1769-1837) working class mother of seven, married for 48 years, worldly and vain early in her marriage and had an adulterous affair but was later inspired to repentance and became a helper of the poor, mystic, and spiritual counselor; St. Isidore the farmer and his wife St. Maria de la Cabeza; and St. Olga "the beautiful," first Christian queen of Kievan Rus. He recommended www.saints.sqpn as a "gold mine" about the saints.

Presbytera's examples were: Sts. Joachim and Anna, generous, humble, faithful to God. Their icon shows them in a holy embrace, the ideal of marital relationship; Sts. Gregory of Nazianzen, the Elder and his wife Nonna, parents of holy children, including St. Gregory the Theologian who said of them "there was no marriage more harmonious," "no less a union in virtue than in the body;" and Sts. Timothy and Maura, early martyrs in Egypt, who, betrayed to authorities 20 days after their

Continued on page 8

The Society of Saint John Chrysostom

The Society of St. John Chrysostom is an ecumenical group of clergy and lay people which promotes Eastern Christianity and Ecumenical Dialogue between the Eastern and Western Churches. It sponsors the *Eastern Churches Journal* and the annual *Oriente Lumen* Conference. It has been in existence since 1997 in the United States and for over 70 years in England.

THE GOALS OF THE SOCIETY ARE TO:

- Make known the history, worship, spirituality, discipline and theology of Eastern Christendom.
- Work and pray that all Christians, particularly the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, will attain the fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires.
- Develop educational programs which present information about the Eastern Churches.
- Organize and conduct pilgrimages and conferences that encourage ecumenical dialogue.
- Contribute to fund-raising activities which support Eastern Christian communities and other programs in need of financial aid.
- Publish books, brochures, and other information which help explain Eastern Christianity.
- Encourage and support the study of the writings and liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.
- Promote scholarships for the study of Eastern Churches in Catholic and Orthodox seminaries.

WESTERN REGION

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Light of the East

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A message from the President of SSJC-Western Region

On the blood of Martyrs

Are we on the cusp of the fullness of time in which a confluence of forces, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, will bring down the wall of separation between the Eastern, Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Churches under the omophorion of the Bishop of Rome? Why pose the question in this way? In the past many international theological consultations have taken place. These consultations involve theologians from the Churches. The Bishop of Rome has also met with individual Orthodox patriarchs and bishops. The wall of separation remains. However, as noted by a 'monk of the Eastern Church': "human barriers do not reach up to heaven."

Now it seems a next step has been suggested following a meeting, described as "remarkably harmonious," between Pope Benedict XVI and Archbishop Hilarion of the Moscow Patriarchate. (See page 3 for details.) Both men are described as scholars, theologians, liturgists, and lovers of music. In addition, Archbishop Hilarion is a world famous gifted composer. Also, following a meeting between the Archbishop and Cardinal Kasper, the Cardinal suggested that a conference of Orthodox European bishops could possibly form a partnership in dialogue between the Churches in the future. A conference of Orthodox bishops would elevate succeeding talks from one on one encounters of individual Patriarchs to a more unified Orthodox witness, voice and consensus.

Remarks made by Archbishop Hilarion in the catacomb of St. Callixtus were also reported. Under attack from Godless paganism and immorality, the early Christians "... brought the fruit of holiness and martyr heroism. The Holy [undivided] Church was built on their blood shed for Christ." The de-Christianization of contemporary Europe [and the world], materialism, moral relativism, and secularism may well be the focal point rallying the Apostolic Churches toward unity in today's world.

Archbishop Hilarion stated that the sins of mankind are the cause of all separation. The unity of the Churches can be reestablished only by way of sanctity. "Each of us, conscientiously fulfilling a task the Church has given him or her, is called to personally contribute to the treasury of Christian sanctity and work to achieve God-commanded Christian unity." This is the ministry of the members of the Society of St. John Chrysostom. Our apostolate is to bring all who call themselves followers of Christ to holiness. When the Church exited the catacombs unity was lost. Unity can only be restored by re-entering the catacombs. The blood-shedding of the upcoming New-Martyrs may simply be to live fully a life in Christ in a pagan world. Such a life in Christ would make up the new-catacombs.

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Full Member \$50 (Voting privileges) for members of canonical apostolic jurisdictions Associate member \$40 (No voting privileges)

Student or Monastic \$_____ (Donation)

Mail to: SSJC c/o Bob Greenwell, 2700 Katherine St., El Cajon, CA, 92020.

Or - E-mail rjgreenwell@sbcglobal.com

“Many reasons to move past divisions” says Archbishop Hilarion

ROME, SEPT. 21, 2009 (Zenit.org)- Russian Orthodox Archbishop Hilarion Alfeyev says there are so many reasons for Catholics and Orthodox to cooperate in our de-Christianized world that it is time to move past divisions and competition and exist in solidarity and mutual and love.

The archbishop affirmed this after he met in the Vatican on Friday with Benedict XVI and on Thursday with Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The cardinal invited the archbishop, who since March has been the chairman of the Department of External Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Archbishop Alfeyev was already well-known at the Vatican, having previously been the Russian Orthodox Church's representative to the European Institutions in Brussels. He is also an accomplished composer, using his music to bring East and West together. His interpretation of St. Matthew's account of the Passion was performed at the Vatican before Easter in 2007; his Christmas oratorio premiered that year at a Catholic Church in Washington, D.C..

With his new role in the Russian Orthodox Church, the archbishop met with the Pope on Friday, later telling a group of journalists that he hopes the Holy Father and Patriarch Kirill will be able to meet soon.

"We support the Pope in his commitment to the defense of Christian values" he said. "We also support him when his courageous declarations arouse negative reactions on the part of politicians or public figures or they are criticized and sometimes misrepresented by some in the mass media."

"We believe that he has the duty to witness to the truth and we are therefore with him even when his word encounters opposition," the archbishop affirmed.

"Personally, I hope that sooner or later the meeting that many are awaiting between the Pope and the patriarch of Moscow will take place. I can say with responsibility that on both sides there is the desire to prepare such a meeting with great care," he said.

This meeting, Archbishop Alfeyev acknowledged, would represent a major step forward in relations between Catholics and Orthodox.

MUCH TO DO

The Orthodox prelate re-emphasized that at present there are enormous possibilities for cooperation between the two Churches.

Before us, he said, there opens the vast expanse of "today's de-Christianized world."

"All Christians, and especially we Orthodox and Catholics, can and must respond together to these challenges," the archbishop affirmed. "Together we can propose to the world the spiritual and moral values of the Christian faith. Together we can offer our Christian vision of the family [and] affirm our concept of social justice, of a commitment to protect the environment [and] to defend human life and its dignity."

The Church "is not a supermarket of the spirit," he continued; the Church "makes life fuller, more human and divine."

The archbishop then expressed his hope that the relationship between Catholics and Orthodox develops more intensely and that the problems that remain between the two traditions be soon overcome.

He further pointed out that the patriarch of Moscow would like to open a new page in relations between the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, pursuing an open and sincere dialogue.

CONSTRUCTIVE TIES

The archbishop was on his first visit to Rome since his appointment to the external affairs office.

Cardinal Kasper spoke to Vatican Radio after his meeting with the Orthodox representative, affirming that "the meeting reflected the new situation between the Catholic Church and the Patriarchate of Moscow: We have overcome all the tensions that existed in past years and at present we have a normal relationship, tranquil and even positive, constructive."

"From the beginning, Hilarion expressed his high esteem for Pope Benedict XVI, who is much appreciated in the Russian Orthodox Church; later we spoke of our relations, especially the theological dialogue that will take place in Cyprus in the coming weeks," the cardinal explained.

The International Mixed Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church as a whole will meet next month for its 11th plenary session. The Church leaders will examine a draft document outlined during a 2008 meeting in Crete. At present, the commission is reflecting on the role of the Bishop of Rome in the communion of the Church in the first millennium -- before the Great Schism of 1054.

This was the topic of discussion during the 10th plenary assembly of the Mixed Commission which, in 2007, brought together 30 Catholic delegates and 30 Orthodox to reflect on the ecclesiological and canonical consequences of the sacramental nature of the Church.

During the Ravenna meeting, the delegation of the Patriarchate of Moscow decided to withdraw because of conflict among the various members of the Orthodox delegation.

Cardinal Kasper explained that situation has been resolved: "Now [the Russian Orthodox] wish to return to dialogue; they have overcome these tensions between Moscow and Constantinople on the case of Estonia, and wish to collaborate normally."

He continued: "[W]e also spoke about our bilateral relations: By way of example, a concert they wish to have here in Rome; I suggested, [in turn] that we might also have an exhibition in Moscow.

"We have spoken of the exchange of priests, of theologians and of all that which might help to improve relations and also to overcome the prejudices and resistance that exist in Russia against the Catholic Church and ecumenism; however, little by little, we can also overcome this."

"Both sides are determined to go forward," Cardinal Kasper affirmed, admitting that "for the moment, a papal visit to Moscow is not on the agenda," though "they do not reject a meeting with the Pope."

BEGINNING TO LOVE

On Sept. 17, Archbishop Alfeyev attended afternoon prayer with the Sant'Egidio Community, in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere, addressing a greeting to those present.

On that occasion, thanking the members of the community for their "contribution to dialogue" and their commitment to the poor and the neediest, he spoke of the common challenge represented by "a de-Christianized world," dominated by "consumerism, hedonism, practical materialism and moral relativism."

"Only united will we be able to propose to the world the spiritual and moral values of the Christian faith; together we will be able to offer our Christian vision of the family, of procreation, of a human love made not only for pleasure; to affirm our concept of social justice, of a more equitable distribution of goods, of a commitment to safeguarding the environment, for the defense of human life and its dignity," said the Orthodox prelate.

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Metropolitan Jonah calls for full communion with New Anglican Province

By Michael Heidt, Special to Virtueonline,
www.virtueonline.org. 6/24/2009

Speaking on Wednesday morning to the Anglican Church in North America (ANCA) Assembly, His Beatitude, Jonah, Metropolitan of All America and Canada and leader of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), called for a "full... intercommunion" with the Anglican Church in North America. "What will it take," he asked, "for a true ecumenical reconciliation? That is what I am seeking by being with you today." This marks the potential resumption of an Orthodox/Anglican dialogue that began a hundred years ago between two missionary bishops, St. Tikhon of Moscow and Bishop Grafton of Fond du Lac, only to be broken off in the 1970s with the ordination of women. Metropolitan Jonah spoke as the successor of Tikhon, "I come to you as the successor of Tikhon... with the same openness, the same invitation, the same love and desire to unify Anglicanism and Orthodoxy."

What would it take for this reconciliation to occur? The Metropolitan was explicit: Full affirmation of the orthodox Faith of the Apostles and Church Fathers, the seven Ecumenical Councils, the Nicene Creed in its original form (without the filioque clause inserted at the Council of Toledo, 589 A.D.), all seven Sacraments and a rejection of 'the heresies of the Reformation.'

His Beatitude listed these in a series of 'isms': Calvinism, anti-sacramentalism, iconoclasm and Gnosticism. The ordination of women to the Presbyterate and their consecration as Bishops has to end if intercommunion is to occur. These are controversial words, especially given the make up of the Assembly, which is admittedly divided on key issues such as the ordination of women, the nature and number of the Sacraments and perhaps the essential character of the Church itself. Still, the delegates welcomed his candor with applause, perhaps because His Beatitude was self-evidently "speaking the truth with love." Less controversially, he called for a true renunciation of sin and immorality, "We must eliminate any shred of immorality in our lives," not least because sin "kills and maims the soul," likewise immorality, which destroys the soul and "demoralizes our culture." Coming from a faith tradition fully alive to the aggressive threat of militant Islam, the Metropolitan issued the following warning: a culture demoralized by immorality "cannot stand up to the strict asceticism of Islam."

He then spoke to the current blurring of gender identity. Homosexuality not only "destroys authentic masculinity, it

destroys authentic womanhood." Again, "gay ideology is neither from nurture or nature... we cannot accept their lifestyle or validate their unions." These are not something healthy, but "something to be healed". His Beatitude was equally emphatic on abortion, "Abortion not only rips out the soul of the fetus from the body of a woman, it rips out her own soul also... We must stand together in an absolute condemnation of abortion." The Assembly rose in thunderous acclamation. There should be no doubt whatsoever that ACNA stands for the life of the unborn child.

The Metropolitan's words on the unity of the Church were equally well received. We must find, "unity of vision, unity of life, unity of being in Jesus Christ" in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is to be found in true orthodoxy, which means, for Jonah at least, not simply "right opinion", but also "right glory", which is discovered in the worship of God. This gives the faithful entry into the liturgy of the Angels and Saints as revealed to Moses, Ezekiel and St. John, being a true participation on earth in the worship of heaven. The same meeting of heaven and earth is to be found in the Church; this "is not simply human, it is divine," and to be believed in as we believe in Jesus Himself - not merely as a man made institution, who may or may not "like the same prayer Book", but as the organic union of Christians with Our Savior in the Body of Christ. Again, this was met with spontaneous applause.



Metropolitan Jonah

The same approval was given to his Beatitude's description of faith and the necessity of surrendering to Christ.

"Faith... is the knowledge of the heart (that) I have died and my life is hidden in the heart of God... it is only Jesus that matters." This means a total self-oblation: "We have to surrender to God in the depths of our being," and this "is that spiritual quest... to be transformed by the Spirit." The corollary of this is radical forgiveness and a giving up of all resentments against those "who have offended ... abused... (and) slandered you... When you forgive like that, you liken yourself to Jesus Christ."

"We have to surrender to God in the depths of our being," and this "is that spiritual quest... to be transformed by the Spirit." The corollary of this is radical forgiveness and a giving up of all resentments against those "who have offended... abused... (and) slandered you... When you forgive

like that, you liken yourself to Jesus Christ." This, in the end, was at the heart of Metropolitan's message. He called on ACNA to embrace Christ in His totality - in His Church and Sacraments, in the Faith and Morals handed down by Jesus Himself to the faithful throughout the ages, and in that true repentance which is nothing other than complete surrender of self to the mind and Person of Our Lord. With such a spirit in place, his vision of unity between loyal Anglicans and Orthodoxy may be realized. There can be no question that the invitation is on the table, and the prize is big, nothing less than the recognized integration of the Anglican Church in North America with historic Catholicism. Will ACNA rise to the challenge?

Orange County News

Pentecost Ecumenical Prayer for Unity

In 2010 all churches - Eastern and Western - will celebrate Pascha/Easter on April 4th.

This also means that we will all celebrate Pentecost on the same day: May 23rd.

An Ecumenical Service of Prayer For the Unity of the Church in conjunction with the Feast of Pentecost will be celebrated on Friday, May 21st at 7 p.m. at St. Michael Archangel Coptic Orthodox Church in Santa Ana.

Mark your calendars!

Orthodox/Catholic Study Fellowship

The Orthodox/Catholic Fellowship meets monthly at St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church, 4949 Alton Parkway in Irvine, 9260r and at St. John Neumann Roman Catholic Church, 5101 Alton Parkway, Irvine 92604. This year's remaining schedule is:

November 10th – St. Paul's at 7PM

The Holy Fire: The Story of the Fathers of the Eastern Church by Robert Payne

December 8th – St. Paul's at 7PM

The Winter Pascha by Thomas Hopko

January 12th – St. Paul's at 7PM

Love's Immensity: Mystics on the Endless Life by Scott Cairns

February 9th – St. Paul's at 7PM

Clowning in Rome by Henri J.M. Nouwen

March 9th – St. Paul's at 7PM

The Way of Silent Love by A Carthusian

April 13th – St. Paul's at 7PM

Interior Prayer by A Carthusian

May 11th - potluck at SJN at 6:30PM

Ages of the Spiritual Life by Paul Evdokimov

The Study Fellowship is open to all who may be interested in learning more about one another's traditions and theology, East/West. For additional details contact St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church: www.stpaulsirvine.org

Attention SSJC members: Did you remember to pay your dues?

Our treasurer, Bob Greenwell, reminds us that our annual dues are now due. Membership is \$50. Associate membership (non-voting) is \$40. \$10 is sent to the National Society of St. John Chrysostom while the remainder is used to fund this newsletter and all of our local events. The newsletter costs approximately \$500 per issue, so your assistance is truly needed to help keep our organization alive and our newsletter publishing. Many thanks for your support!

2010 Oriente Lumen Conferences

“The Councils of the Church”

**June 7-10, Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey**

+

June 21-24

**Pope John Paul II Cultural Center
Washington D.C.**

+

July 5-8

Constantinople (Istanbul) Turkey

The Oriente Lumen Conferences started in 1997 in Washington, DC. These ecumenical conferences are a "grass roots" movement among lay persons and clergy to provide a forum for Christians to learn about the "light from the east." They allow Eastern Orthodox, Eastern Catholics and Roman Catholics to meet and pray together, learn from each other's traditions, and become friends together searching for a common goal: "that they all may be one" in the One Church of Christ.

For additional information go to:

www.olconference.com

Pilgrimage dedicated to the Mother of God, Searcher for the Lost, held at St. Andrew's Abbey by Holy Resurrection Monastery

By Hieromonk Maximos

The monks of Holy Resurrection Monastery have hosted an annual pilgrimage in honor of the Mother of God, "Searcher for the Lost" since 1996. On moving this year to live for several years as guests of the Benedictine monks of St. Andrew's Abbey, Valyermo, the Romanian Greek-Catholic monks were delighted to be able to bring the pilgrimage with them to their temporary home.

So it was that on the last weekend in September around 350 pilgrims came to St. Andrew's Abbey, Valyermo to sing hymns and offer prayers before the icon of the Theotokos, Searcher for the Lost. The event began on the evening of Friday, September 25 with Great Vespers in the Byzantine Rite. Abbot Nicholas of Holy Resurrection Monastery served in the presence of His Grace, Bishop John Michael Botean, bishop for Romanian Catholics in the United States. Later that evening pilgrims listened to a talk on the significance of monasticism for the wider Church given by Bishop John Michael.

On Saturday morning Bishop John Michael presided at Orthros (morning prayer) in the separate chapel set aside for the Byzantine monks on the Abbey's property. The texts for the services in honor of the Mother of God, "Searcher for the Lost" were composed several years ago by Hieromonk Maximos. As has become the custom at this pilgrimage, Orthros was sung by cantors representing local Melkite churches and were led by Father Justin Rose of St. Philip Melkite Church in San Bernardino, who is also a monastic associate of Holy Resurrection.

After Orthros Bishop John Michael and Abbot Nicholas led pilgrims from the Byzantine chapel to the outdoor area set aside for the main Divine Liturgy, which was scheduled to begin at 11:30 am. The procession was very beautiful, with singers from various traditions contributing their own hymns in honor of the all-holy Theotokos. In addition to hymns from the Latin tradition led by Br. Bede of St. Andrew's Abbey, there were also hymns sung from the Melkite, Ruthenian, Romanian and Ukrainian traditions.

The hierarchical Divine Liturgy began with the vesting of the bishop. Pilgrims, many of whom were witnessing their very first Eastern liturgy, participated with prayerful attention. A small group of cantors, drawn from both the Byzantine and Benedictine communities led the singing. Clergy from all over Southern California and beyond concelebrated. Bishop John



Bishop John Michael venerates icon

Michael spoke eloquently in his homily of what it means to be lost and found by the God of our vast universe, a God who allowed himself to be lost and found in his own life on earth.

Pilgrims made the most of the beautiful late summer weather, with most enjoying picnic lunches following the long Byzantine liturgical services on Saturday afternoon. The monks also provided food for the mind, with Fr. Luke Dysinger, OSB and Fr. Maximos of Holy Resurrection Monastery giving talks on various topics centering on theology and icons, in both the Eastern and Western traditions. Many pilgrims stayed on for Vespers that evening, which was also served in the outdoor chapel.

If the pilgrimage Saturday was "Byzantine Rite Day" the planners set aside Sunday as "Latin Rite Day." The monks of Holy Resurrection and their extended community of lay faithful attended services according to the Roman Rite in the main Abbey chapel. The pilgrimage then concluded with lunch in the Abbey refectory.

The two monastic communities were delighted to be able to give an example both powerful and practical of the deep unity of the Church in its Eastern and Western traditions. For this reason it is hoped that this pilgrimage may be repeated next year, and that it might attract an even wider attendance from Christians from around the Southland.



Procession from monk's chapel to outdoor shrine

THE SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

-Western Region-

The Theology and Liturgy of Funerals: East and West

Saturday, November 14, 2009,

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

St. Maria Goretti Parish

3954 Palo Verde Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90808; (562) 425-7459

+

Msgr. Liam Kidney,

Pastor, Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church, Pacific Palisades, CA.

and

Rt. Rev. Archimandrite Alexei Smith,

Pastor, St. Andrew Russian Greek-Catholic Church,

& St. Paul Melkite Mission, El Segundo, CA

A freewill offering will be taken

+

Business meeting of The Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region at approx. 1 p.m. Those attending should bring a brown bag lunch.

**For more information contact: A. Petach: 818.347.0758 (leave message);
apetach@sbcglobal.net.**

The Society of St. John Chrysostom-Western Region, is an ecumenical organization of laity and clergy of the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches and the Eastern Catholic and Roman Catholic Churches which was established to make known the history, worship, spirituality, discipline and theology of Eastern Christianity, and to work for the fullness of unity desired by Jesus Christ.

Melkite Catholics dialogue with Armenian Church leader hoping to enhance their working relationships

On Monday, August 3 a delegation from the Greek Catholic League headed by Auxiliary Bishop Michel Aabrass, met with his Holiness, Armenian Apostolic Catholicos Aram I at his summer residence in Bikfaya, Lebanon. The League is the lay organization of the Melkite-Greek Catholic Church. The delegation included experts in various fields. They discussed issues touching the everyday life of the Lebanese such as: relations between churches and their impact on the faithful, understanding the mission and vision of the church in responding responsibly to the current political, economic and social challenges.

Catholicos Aram I appreciated the visit and the concerns expressed by the members. While agreeing with them, he noted that the role of the churches in society has been usually ambiguous. Sometimes it has been viewed positively and other times negatively. He then continued: "In responding to the challenges of our societies we should describe and communicate the meaning of the mission of the church to our faithful. The church is mission in its being. It embodies spiritual, moral, ethical values for justice and peace. The only credible way for churches to express their mission is to review their relationships."

At the end of the meeting Bishop Michel Abrass thanked His Holiness, and proposed that as a concrete outcome of this meeting the two churches strengthen their working relationships. – *Press Release, Great House of Cilicia, Aug. 7.*

Married Saints: East & West

Continued from page 1

wedding, were hung on crosses opposite each other for 10 days during which they continually exhorted and encouraged each other.

Both speakers agreed that the working of holiness in one's life has "a ripple effect" on family and co-workers and that, within the universal call to holiness, the paths of marriage and celibacy are complementary. Brother Daniel also reminded that the dates when saints lived are less important than remembering their virtues shining to us from eternity as examples and inspiration.

(Texts of the talks may be requested from the speakers: Presbytera Joy Corona: toomanycoronas@sbcglobal.net, Br. Daniel Sokol: DanielSokolOSB@aol.com.)

Highly recommended by Presbytera Joy Corona:
 -*Marriage as a Path to Holiness,*
 by David and Mary Ford.
 -*Marriage and the Family,*
 by St. John Chrysostom.
 -*The Sacrament of Love,*
 by Paul Evdokimov.

Archbishop Hilarion

Continued from page 3

"Therefore, the time has come to move from a failure to meet and competition, to solidarity, mutual respect and esteem; I would even say, without a doubt, that we must move to mutual love," he stressed. "Our Christian preaching can have effect, can be convincing also in our contemporary world, if we are able to live this mutual love between us, Christians."

BOOK REVIEW

By Father James Babcock

Anyone who has ever attended a Byzantine Liturgy comes away awestruck by the movements, music, prayers, vestments and setting. The Byzantine liturgy incorporates much of the splendor the Byzantine royal court and is today a living remnant of those heady days of the Byzantine empire.

So how did the Byzantines themselves view all of this? In his book, *Through Their Own Eyes, Liturgy as the Byzantines Saw It*, the Right Reverend Archimandrite Robert Taft, S.J. gives us a glimpse of how those who lived in Constantinople might have seen all of this.

This material was originally presented at the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute, The Paul G. Manolis Distinguished Lectures. One of the goals of this book is to overturn some of the popular clichés concerning liturgy in the life of Byzantium. The author, however, does not discount historical descriptions of the liturgy purporting to be reliable eyewitness accounts, noting that even their

hyperbole is objective evidence which aims to see what the Byzantines themselves thought about their services. How they saw and described them, even if through tinted glasses. The first two lectures deal with popular participation in the liturgy. A more or less man-in-the-street view noting that the Byzantines themselves also participated in worship interiorly, "by contemplating the unfolding mysteries. The third lecture, "The Meaning of it all" unfolds how the Byzantines understood "Taxis" (order) as images or reflections of the celestial world and how it was ritualized and portrayed (in icons) and finally its contemplation in order to stimulate a personal response of faith.

Well documented, this is an eminently readable book that takes us back to the days of Byzantium, its lifestyle and liturgy and then theologically pulls it all together to assist the reader in understanding the purpose of it all even as the Byzantine liturgy is celebrated today in our modern world. It discounts the idea of some that Byzantine liturgy is a historical anachronism with no relevance to our modern society.

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