

**On the cover of
our Parish Weekly Newsletter
we find the following
short description of our parish:**



**PARISH WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
Byzantine Rite**



**"Catholic" comes from the Greek:
"according-to-the-whole" or "universal"**

"Rite" or "Ritual Church" means "One of the twenty-one Eastern Catholic Sister Churches, who are simultaneously in Communion with the Church and Pope in Rome, while living their own distinctly non-Roman (non-Latin), and yet equally Apostolic, Tradition (Theological, Spiritual, Liturgical & Canonical Heritage)."

What follows here is being offered as a guide for those who wish to know more about the deeper implications of our self-identification as "Eastern Catholics"

Some Reflections on Who We Are And the Faith We Hold

by Rt. Rev. Mitered Protopresbyter Andriy Chirovsky, S.Th.D.

Eastern Catholics are those Orthodox Christians of the East who live in full and visible communion with the See of Rome. The Eastern Catholic Churches each have their own theology, liturgical-sacramental systems, their own spirituality and their own canonical tradition. This diversity is not a weakness, but rather a gift from God, discernible from the earliest ministry of the Apostles, preaching in a variety of tongues to the multitudes present on the day of Pentecost. The one Gospel message was incarnate very early on in a wide array of cultures, but the various local Churches remained united in communion with one another, looking to certain apostolic sees for guidance and leadership.

The Second Vatican Council, which took place in the 1960's, had much to say about the Eastern Churches. Let us look at a few passages from the teachings of that Council.

“The Catholic Church holds in high esteem the institutions, liturgical rites, ecclesiastical traditions and the established standards of the Christian life of the Eastern Churches, for in them, distinguished as they are for their venerable antiquity, there remains conspicuous the tradition that has been handed down from the Apostles through the Fathers and that forms part of the divinely revealed and undivided heritage of the universal Church.” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, Decree on the Eastern Churches, #1 Vatican II)

“Between these [Eastern and Western Catholic Churches] there exists an admirable bond of union, such that the variety within the Church in no way harms its unity; rather it manifests it, for it is the mind of the Catholic Church that each individual Church or Rite should retain its traditions whole and entire and likewise that it

should adapt its way of life to the different needs of time and place.”
(Ibid. #2)

“These individual Churches, whether of the East or the West, although they differ somewhat among themselves in rite (to use the current phrase), that is, in liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline, and spiritual heritage, are, nevertheless... of equal dignity, so that none of them is superior to the others as regards rite and they enjoy the same rights and are under the same obligations, also in respect of preaching the Gospel to the whole world (cf. Mark 16, 15) ...”
(Ibid.#3)

“Means should be taken therefore in every part of the world for the protection and advancement of all the individual Churches...
“(Ibid. #4)

“The Sacred Council, therefore, not only accords to this ecclesiastical and spiritual heritage the high regard which is its due and rightful praise, but also unhesitatingly looks on it as the heritage of the universal Church. For this reason it solemnly declares that the Churches of the East, as much as those of the West, have a full right and are in duty bound to rule themselves, each in accordance with its own established disciplines, ... “(Ibid. # 5)

“All members of the Eastern Rite should know and be convinced that they can and should always preserve their legitimate liturgical rite and their established way of life, and that these may not be altered except to obtain for themselves an organic improvement. All these, then, must be observed by the members of the Eastern rites themselves. Besides, they should attain to on ever greater knowledge and a more exact use of them, and, if in their regard they have fallen short owing to contingencies of times and persons, they should take steps to return to their ancestral traditions. “(Ibid. #6)

“Eastern Churches in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome have a special duty of promoting the unity of all Christians, especially Eastern Christians... by prayer in the first place, and by the example of their lives, by religious fidelity to the ancient Eastern traditions, by a greater knowledge of each other, by collaboration and a brotherly regard for objects and feelings.”(Ibid. #24)

In 1991, the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* [CCEO] was promulgated by Pope John Paul II for all of the Eastern Catholic Churches. This was a step towards the concrete working out of the canonical implications of the Second Vatican Council. There are three parts to Eastern Catholic Canon Law: the General Law (common to all of the Eastern Catholic Churches), the Particular Law of each Eastern Catholic Church, and the *Ius Speciale ad tempus* (which governs the relationship between members of an Eastern Catholic Church outside its traditional territory with its synod and patriarch). Much of the second and third parts of Eastern Catholic canon law are still being worked out.

In 1996, the Holy See’s Sacred Congregation for the Eastern (Catholic) Churches published a set of *Instructions* for the implementation of those aspects of the canons that had to do with liturgical-sacramental questions. It is worthwhile to read at least a brief quotation from that document.

“In every effort of liturgical renewal, therefore, the practice of the Orthodox brethren should be taken into account, knowing it, respecting it and distancing from it as little as possible so as not to increase the existing separation, but rather intensifying efforts in view of eventual adaptations, maturing and working together. Thus will be manifested the unity that already subsists in daily receiving the same spiritual nourishment from practicing the same common heritage.”[26] (Sacred Congregation for the Eastern Churches: *1996 Instructions for the Liturgical Implementation of the Canon Law of the Eastern Churches*, III)

Divine Providence has placed the Eastern Catholic Churches in a unique and often precarious position, as a catalyst between the two realities of worldwide Orthodoxy and Catholicism. The Eastern Catholic Churches have a special role to play in helping the Catholic world to know the Orthodox Tradition of the East and simultaneously in assisting the Orthodox world to come to know the Catholic Communion. At the same time, the eastern Catholic Churches know that their existence in each individual case is a contingent reality, since the division between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches is a sinful condition that is contrary to the will of God. Once this great division is healed, each of the Eastern Catholic Churches will need to re-examine its place in the worldwide communion. Many will doubtless choose a kenotic route of voluntary integration with newly re-united Churches. The key here is the word “voluntary,” since several Eastern Catholic Churches, among them the Greco-Catholic Church of Ukraine, have experienced (as recently as during the 20th century) severe and bloody attempts at integration of their structures with other Churches by force. The Second Vatican Council hints at this contingency of everything it says about the Eastern Catholic Churches when it states:

“The Sacred Council feels great joy in the fruitful zealous collaboration of the Eastern and the Western Catholic Churches and at the same time declares: All these directives of law are laid down in view of the present situation till such time as the Catholic Church and the separated Eastern Churches come together into complete unity.” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, Decree on the Eastern Churches, #30 Vatican II)

Theology

Theologically, Eastern Christians tend to think in terms that are more synthetic and intuitive rather than analytical. We usually prefer paradox (antinomy) to the “precision” of some philosophical-

ly-based thought, but that does not mean that our theology is fuzzy. It is experientially focused, anchored in the living Tradition of the Church.

As Eastern Catholics we often face the question of how we reconcile our Orthodox and Catholic loyalties. This is an area that is still being worked out in light of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council on the fact that the Eastern Catholic Churches have their own theology. Some of us would express it thus: we hold Orthodox positions on all theological matters, **except** when they are in conflict with the expressed teachings of the Holy Roman See. In **that** case, by virtue of the full and visible communion that exists between our Church and Rome, we cannot ignore the Roman teaching on a given subject, but must find a way to reconcile positions.

Canonical tradition

It is in the very structure of our Church as a self-governing Church within the Catholic Communion that we first see the seeds of Church particularity. The various Eastern Catholic Churches are to govern themselves in a way that allows for the gospel message to be preached more effectively and the Kingdom of God to be established more solidly in the lives of the faithful. In the case of the Church of Kyiv that means a Church governed by the Synod of Bishops drawn from both Ukraine and the diaspora, and chaired by its Father and Head, the Patriarch of Kyiv-Halych and All Rus'-Ukraine.

There are many more issues in which the distinctive canonical tradition of the Kyivan Church comes through. One of these is the ordination of married men to the priesthood. While priests never marry, most of the Eastern Churches have preserved the ancient divinely instituted apostolic tradition of married clergy. Jesus chose married men as his apostles. Our Lord cured Peter's mother-in-law (and there is only one way to get a mother-in-law!)

The Roman Church also practiced the ordination of married men to the priesthood until the eleventh century, but ceased at that time for various reasons, and instituted universal enforced celibacy. The Eastern Catholic Churches decided not to follow this Western innovation. In the Ukrainian Catholic Church there has always been a great respect between the monastic clergy who are celibate and the parochial clergy who are by vast majority married.

Liturgy

Our liturgical tradition is based on the experience of the beauty and glory of God's plan for us.

Our ancestors in the faith long ago decided that it was through worship and beauty that the True God was found. The Story of the Conversion of Rus', as related in the *Kyivan Primary Chronicle*, focuses on this reality.

Volodymyr, Prince of Rus', sent out emissaries to find true religion. They went throughout the world and tested various faiths, but reported to their ruler that they had found no glory, ... until they arrived in Constantinople. When they returned to Kyiv the emissaries reported to the Prince what had happened there in the great Cathedral of Holy Wisdom -- the Haghia Sophia.

"They took us where they worshipped their God, and we did not know whether we were in heaven or upon earth, for there is not upon earth such sight or beauty. This much we do know, that there, God lives among men, and we can never forget that beauty..."

St. Volodymyr accepted Christianity in its Orthodox or Byzantine (Constantinopolitan) form for himself, his boyars (courtiers) and his people, who were baptized in 988. It is through beauty and the glory of God that we still primarily relate to the Lord. Our services are sung and they are never rushed. Even in a tiny parish such as ours, great care is taken to try to preserve and

promote beauty and depth in our liturgical life. However, it is really God who acts in liturgy. At a certain point we need to get out of His way.

Spirituality

The Spirituality of the Kyivan Church has been characterized as particularly kenotic. Kenosis is a Greek term that refers to the self-emptying of Christ, who “did not think equality with the Father something to be grasped at” but rather humbled Himself, becoming one of us (see Philippians 2:5-8).

The first saints to be canonized in Kyivan Rus’ were two sons of Prince Volodymyr, Boris and Hlib. They were murdered by their brother, who apparently saw them as potential rivals for the Kyivan throne. The two princes had an opportunity to defend themselves, but sent their military retainers away, preferring not to raise weapons against their brother, and accepting an unjust death. The newly Christian populace saw in these victims a clear echo of the self-sacrifice of Christ. Throughout the tragic history of the next ten centuries many opportunities would present themselves for self-sacrifice and non-violence amid a people who had heard the Gospel message of the meek inheriting the earth. In the twentieth century, this same church went through its bloodiest and most woeful persecution at the hands of the Bolshevik regime of the USSR, only to rise again in unprecedented glory as that government rotted away.

Living in the midst of a post-modern secularism in North America, there should be nothing triumphalistic about the approach of our Church to the questions of the day. We are sinners in a world of sinners. The only difference between us and those who do not bother with the things of God is that we know that we are sinners... and that for some reason God loves us.

Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, the sinner.

Conclusion

I hope these simple reflections on who we are as Ukrainian Catholics and the faith that we hold can prove helpful in spurring discussions, in helping you to find some answers and to develop a desire to ask more questions. In short, I hope this little text will be a beginning of your enquiry into these issues rather than an end.

Andriy, sinner-priest

Mitered Protopresbyter Andriy Chirovsky, S.Th.D.

Interim Pastor of

St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Parish, Tuscon, Arizona

St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Parish is an Eastern Catholic Church. It is part of the St. Nicholas Eparchy of Chicago, which is part of the Philadelphia Metropolia for Ukrainian Catholics in the United States of America. The Philadelphia Metropolia is itself part of the worldwide Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church, headed by its Synod of Bishops under the leadership of His Beatitude, our Blessed Father Lubomyr (Cardinal Husar) Patriarch of Kyiv-Halych and all Rus'.

The Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church is in full and visible communion with the Holy See of Rome and recognizes the Pope of Rome as the worldwide leader of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is itself a communion of Churches, the Roman (Latin) Church and the various self-governing (sui-iuris) Eastern Catholic Churches, all of which are equal in stature, despite differences in size.

All are welcome. *One need not be ethnically Ukrainian to join any parish of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. We are a church that comes from the Ukrainian people, but is for the entire human race.*

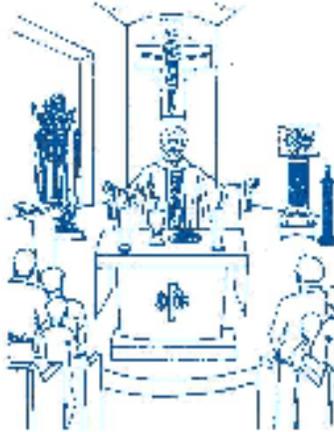
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Two Different Traditions — One Catholic Church —

ROMAN RITE TODAY

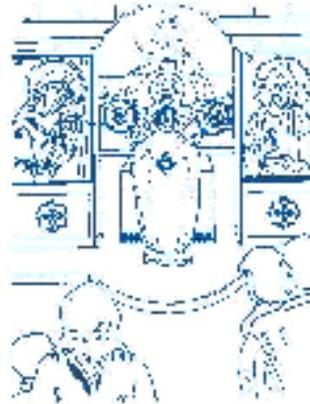
Priest faces people across the altar



The image is: gathering around the Lord's table here and now.

BYZANTINE RITE TODAY

Priest faces East, towards altar along with the people.



The image is: leading the people to the Heavenly Liturgy in God's Kingdom.



We like things that are new and modern, and use them in worship, too. Church buildings and services today use things from present everyday life and culture.

Prayers are kept simple, not repeated. Great care is taken to give the whole text of the service in programs or missalettes, so that the mind can grasp things clearly.



We like things that we have received from our ancestors. Services and church buildings, even new ones, are based on traditional and timeless models.

Prayers are repeated and sung. There is a lot of movement; many senses are used to get the whole self (mind and body) involved in worshipping God.

**IS ONE TRADITION BETTER THAN THE OTHER? NO!
BOTH TRADITIONS ARE GOOD, AND BOTH ARE CATHOLIC!**

The faith is the same, but we express it differently.

Byzantine Catholics include people of the following ancestry: Albanian, Armenian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Greek, Hungarian, Irish-American, Macedonian, Melkite Greek Eastern, Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Slovak, Ukrainian, but also many others.

Different – Yet The Same Two Traditions, But One Catholic Church

ROMAN RITE TODAY

There is a more relaxed feeling, very down to earth, using a lot of contemporary music. Liturgy has the feel of a shared celebration.

Emphasis: God is here with us, so go and live this out in the world.

~LITURGY~

The use of dramatic music and actions tries to lift people up to experience a 'taste of Heaven'.

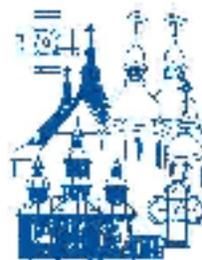
Emphasis: This is what God has in store for us in Heaven, so go and live this out in the world right now.

New Churches are usually built in a very simple style, with little adornment, and only a few pieces of art, to fit into the modern world and reflect modern tastes.



Emphasis: Each generation responds to God in its own way, and our current styles and fashions can give glory to God, just as the past styles did.

Even new churches with modern lines usually have domes and a lot of icons, emphasizing that traditions which the Church developed over the centuries are still meaningful today in the modern world.



~CHURCH BUILDINGS~

Emphasis: God has been with us through the centuries. Even though things change, God's love – and our response – are always the same, yesterday and today.

Contemporary artists are encouraged to let their individual experience of God come through their art. This encourages creativity and artistic freedom, but cuts down on the common ownership and understanding of this religious art by others.



Emphasis: Many different styles of art help us to express what God's love means for us.

Icons express the public teaching of the Church. The individual artist's ideas are secondary. Iconsographers have a somewhat limited freedom, but the basic message of salvation in the icon is more easily grasped, since its common symbols are learned.



Emphasis: There are things about God's love which we have all experienced and understand together.

**EASTERN AND WESTERN CATHOLICS CAN SHOW RESPECT
FOR ONE ANOTHER BY LEARNING MORE ABOUT EACH OTHER.**

We have the same Catholic faith, but we express it in different ways.

*Byzantine Catholics include people of the following ancestry: Albanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Croatian, Greek, Hungarian, Italian-American, Macedonian, Polish (Austro-Hungarian), Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Slovak, Ukrainian Greek Catholic, and many others.

When Thinking Of Major Catholic Doctrines

WESTERN (ROMAN) CATHOLICS FOCUS ON:

EASTERN CATHOLICS FOCUS ON:

The Oneness of God,
who is also three Persons.

~ TRINITY ~

God as three Persons,
who are also One.

The Humanity of Christ invites us,
but He is also Divine.

~ CHRIST ~

The Divinity of Christ inspires us,
but he is also human.

The Pope is the guarantor of unity.
Dioceses are directly under his
jurisdiction.

~ CHURCH ~

Bishops in SYNODS (in communion)
with the Pope guarantee
the unity of the Church.

Mary as Virgin and Mother.
We relate to her sharing
in the earthly life of Jesus.

~ MARY ~

Mary as THEOTOKOS or Mother
of God since Christ is God.
She stands at the head
of all of God's creation.

Model: Lord's Supper;
down to earth atmosphere;
clear messages;
with simple words;
very frugal use of symbols;
focus on the here and now;
beauty in simplicity;
use of various musical
instruments in the liturgy.

~ LITURGY ~

Model: Heavenly Liturgy;
cosmic realities;
subconscious, holistic,
more use of senses;
repetition as a way into the deeper self;
focus on eschatology (i.e. - heaven on earth);
beauty in its fullness;
liturgies sung from beginning to end - the
human voice is the most important instrument.

More linear;
either - or;
often prefer juridical,
philosophical clarity
to poetic synthesis.

~ THINKING ~

More symbolic;
more paradoxical;
both - and;
prefer poetic synthesis to
philosophical analysis.

St. Peter



St. Andrew

Social justice issues
flow from Christ's
humanity.
We act towards one another
as Jesus of Nazareth did.

Social justice issues
flow from the communion
of the Trinity.
The Trinitarian community
of love is a model for us.

*Eastern and Western Catholics approach, teach and celebrate their faith
differently, but they share the same Catholic Faith.*

**EASTERN AND WESTERN CATHOLICS DO NOT CONTRADICT
EACH OTHER. THEY COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER.**

*The Catholic Church includes not only the huge Roman Church, but also many self-governing Eastern Catholic Churches: Armenian, Chaldean, Coptic, Greek Catholic (Melkite), Maronite, Syriac, Byzantine-Catholic, Byzantine-Catholic and a number of Churches of the Byzantine-Catholic tradition.

The following was originally printed in the commemorative book:
God's House Our Home: The Consecration of St Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church,
Tuscon, Arizona, November 15, 2009, pages 23-24.

OUR UNENVIABLE POSITION "BETWEEN" THE ORTHODOX AND CATHOLIC CHURCHES

It is instructive to look at the so-called *33 Articles of the Union of Brest*, drawn up over a period of several years in the 1590's by the Hierarchs of the Orthodox Metropolia of Kyiv. In fact, these were a set of principles for which the Orthodox bishops of Ukraine and Bielarus' wanted assurances before moving forward on a plan of Union with the Roman See. The hierarchy of the Metropolia of Kyiv knew full well that its actions might be misunderstood and misinterpreted. The Union that they entered into was not some plot hatched in Rome or in Warsaw to debilitate the Orthodox. In fact, the Union plans of the Kyivan Orthodox took the latin Catholics in Poland and in Rome by surprise. It is true that the polish Jesuits had a plan for the Orthodox Ukrainians and Bielarusans. The plan was to have them become Roman Catholics, adopt the Latin rite and to become progressively polonized.

The vision of the Orthodox Hierarchy of the Metropolia of Kyiv was quite different. They hoped for the restoration of the ancient communion between themselves and the Apostolic see of Rome. In the *33 Articles*, they comment on how the Romans and the Greeks cannot come to an agreement regarding the proper way to express the mystery of the Procession of the Holy Spirit "simply because they do not want to agree." They then say that they should not be compelled to make any profession of the faith other than that of the ancient Fathers, and thus they do not accept the insertion of the much controverted *Filioque* phrase into the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed. They also reserve the right to keep ordaining married men to the priesthood, according to ancient tradition. They set up the whole liturgical-sacramental system that they had

inherited from the Fathers as inviolable, because it is the very source of our living faith. They resist the infiltration of Latin practices which would have made the symbol system of their Church incoherent. And yet, they firmly cling to Union with Rome as a key for the future of the Church.

For this they were reviled by other Orthodox and looked down upon by the Roman Catholics. The former saw them as traitors, while the latter thought they had not really crossed the divide to become "real" Catholics. What is amazing is that in the 16th century when the Christian world was splintering into a dizzying array of denominations, these spiritual ancestors of ours, made the monumental step to go in the opposite direction, seeking the consolidation of the Church rather than any furthering of division. To this day the Church of Kyiv that is in full and visible communion with the Church of Rome, but retains an attachment to the fullness of the Orthodox Tradition, is so rarely understood.

In the 1990's an important ecumenical consultation took place among interested Hierarchs and theologians of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church on the one hand and the Great Church of Christ, the Patriarchate of Constantinople (and Churches affiliated with it) on the other. The extremely clear results of the work of the **Kyivan Church Study Group** were to establish beyond a doubt the sincerity of desires of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church to reestablish full and visible communion with her Mother Church in Constantinople without breaking the existing communion that she possessed with Rome.

For now this desire remains frustrated, because (as was the case with the *Filioque*) the Greeks and the Latins simply do not have a desire to agree. It is unfortunately as simple as that. To be sure, the proposal regarding so-called "Double Communion" is a complicated one, requiring the reassessing of many categories. But categories should exist to help us understand reality, rather than for

us to try to box reality into these categories.

Ukrainian Greco-Catholics (as heirs simultaneously of the great tradition of Kyivan Orthodoxy, itself inherited from the See of Constantinople and all the apostolic sees of the East, and also of the courageous spirit of the Kyivan Hierarchs of the 1590's) do not want to be some sort of *tertium quid*¹ between the Orthodox and Catholic Communion. Instead, we see ourselves as having been placed in a position (often painful, but at the same time very blessed) of being dual ambassadors. It is our lot to speak for the best of Catholic life in the Orthodox world, in the language that the world understands. At the same time, we speak unabashedly for Orthodox Tradition to the Western Catholics with whom we know how to communicate in virtue of the full and visible communion that we enjoy with each other. We realize that this is often confusing to both sides. We pray that this be a positive confusion, one that ultimately results in a new vision. We reject the label of "bridge Church" for numerous reasons. First of all, a bridge is something that people walk all over. That is not an ideal way for us to envision our identity. We have been stepped on enough, by both sides. While we accept kenotic spirituality² as a deep and positive reality within our Church, there is a boundary between voluntary

¹ **Tertium quid** (Latin loan translation of Greek "trítion ti" for a "third thing") was a term first used in the Christological debates of the fourth century to refer to the heretical followers of Apollinaris who spoke falsely of Christ as something neither human nor divine, but a mixture of the two, and therefore a "third thing".

² See above, page 8. Philippians 2:5-8 is the basis for kenotic spirituality. In Eastern Christian theology, *Kenosis* is the concept of the 'self-emptying' of one's own will and becoming entirely receptive to God and His perfect will. It is used both as an explanation of the Incarnation, and an indication of the nature of God's activity and condescension. In the Latin (Roman) Church, Mystical theologian St. John of the Cross' work "Dark Night of the Soul" is a particularly lucid explanation of God's process of transforming the believer into the icon or "likeness of Christ".

self-sacrifice and masochism that we would rather not cross. More positively, we would rather have ourselves understood as a catalyst for reconciliation between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. Catalysts cause a reaction, and they usher in change. What is clear is that the *status quo* of division between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches is a sinful condition, often caused by ignorance and to a large degree maintained by human pride. That is something we can never accept as normal.

And so, to our Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox friends we say: don't be surprised if occasionally we are "in your face" or make you uncomfortable. If you ask us: "Are you Catholic?" we will respond: "Yes, but we are also Orthodox." If you ask us whether we are Orthodox, we will reply: "Yes, and in full and visible communion with Rome." There will probably be much head shaking and shrugging of shoulders. And yet, one day we hope to be understood. Perhaps we are your past... and in some sense, your future.

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