



## UNITY IN THE CHURCH

OTSA Annual Meeting, November 7-9, 2019  
Saints Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church, Glenview Illinois

[www.otsa.org](http://www.otsa.org)

\*See SHUTTLE schedule attached

*Thursday, Nov 7, 2019*

**Registration begins at 2:45**

**Fellowship Hall**

*Afternoon Session: Biblical Connections*

**High School Room**

**3:20 Welcome and Opening Prayer**

**3:30-4:00 Can We Still Speak of a Unified Early Church?: Some Reflections on the Contemporary Study of Early Christianity**

Jordan Henderson, PhD Candidate, Florida State University

In the last century, historians of early Christianity have increasingly come to challenge the vision of an original unified early Church, orthodox in belief and practice, which remained steadfast in purity in the face of later departures from the Church by heretics and schismatics. This is the vision presented by the Book of Acts and Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. By contrast, scholars in recent decades have portrayed early Christianity as characterized by a great diversity of beliefs and practices. Images of a unified early Church are rather seen as later constructions which have more to do with meeting the writers' needs in their own time than with accurately describing the past. While acknowledging the diversity evident in early Christianity, I will argue that the recent focus on diversity at the expense of unity has obscured, more than it has clarified, our understanding of early Christianity. While various forms of Christianity developed in the first three centuries, all of which certainly deserve to be studied on their own terms, nevertheless, we can see beginning in our extant Christian writings of the first century, and continuing in certain documents of the second and third centuries, great concern given to faithful transmission of the apostolic kerygma, and unity of all churches in the truth of the Gospel. I will, therefore, propose that traditional terms deemed outdated by much modern scholarship— catholicity, orthodoxy, heresy, etc.— remain essential in understanding the history of Christianity in the first three centuries.

#### **4:00-4:30 Theological Bubble Language: A Literalist View of the Fall and Its Connection to the Denigration of the Human Condition**

Fr. Philip Zymaris, Assistant Professor of Liturgics, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology

The Orthodox are not totally unified in their approach to scripture. Especially regarding how we interpret Genesis there are plenty of discrepancies. Certain theologians such as Athanasios Vletses, Arsenios Meskos, and Christos Yannaras have pointed to a hermeneutical lacuna especially regarding how the Orthodox interpret the Fall. The main problem I see, however, is not a lack of Orthodox unity regarding these issues, but rather a disjoint between Orthodoxy and the rest of the world. Theologians are happy to discuss theological issues among themselves within an Orthodox bubble in their own ghetto lingo and feel no need to dialogue with the rest of the world. They are especially ignorant of the many scientific discoveries that touch upon anthropology, indeed, they prefer to avoid whatever does not fit into their preset schemata. In this way theology, called to communicate to the world the message of hope that "Christ is Risen" and that the whole universe will ultimately be transformed into the Kingdom of God, has not fulfilled its role, it has "missed the mark," (sinned) since we only dialogue with the "other" on our terms. The rest of the world perceives our insistence on our comfortable "planet theology" and therefore does not really bother with us in a serious way either. The Fathers of the Church did not live in such a fatuous theological bubble, rather they were privy to a well rounded education and were aware of contemporary developments in all fields and employed into their worldview critically whatever knowledge was available to them. We need to do the same today. I will present a modern example of such a fruitful dialogue originating from a place we would not expect.

#### **4:30-5:00 Unity, Mediation and the Immediate God**

Edith M. Humphrey, William F. Orr Professor of NT, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

A major point of contention between the ancient Church and Protestants has been mediation of the saints, and prayers for those who are asleep in the LORD. However, the continued belief and practice of human mediation present a question even for those who embrace them, given the prophetic characterization of the new covenant as one in which "no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD, for they shall all know [Him], from the least of them to the greatest'" (Jer 31:34). This paper will propose that mediation in the Church may be most fruitfully understood as an ecclesial, rather than a soteriological matter. Concentrating upon 1 Timothy 2, and patristic commentary on this chapter, we shall explore how the continued practice of mediation serves as an emblem of the life of the Church, and an intimation of its essential unity.

#### **Dinner 5:00**

**7:00**     *Joint Session with OCAMPR: His Grace the Right Rv. Irinej (Dobrijevic), MDiv, Bishop of Eastern America, New Rochell N.Y.*

**8:15-9:00 Reception (For afterwards, see SHUTTLE Schedule)**

*Friday, November 8, 2019*

**\*See SHUTTLE schedule.**

**Orthros 7:45-8:30 a.m.**

**Nave**

**8:30-8:50 Coffee**

**Fellowship Hall**

***Morning Session: Ecumenical Relations and Women's Ministry***

**High School Room**

**8:50-9:00 Welcome** Will Cohen, President of OTSA, Associate Professor, Department of Theology & Religious Studies, University of Scranton

**9:00-10:00 North American Orthodox Unity:** Conversation with His Grace Bishop Irenej (Serbian Eastern American Diocese), the Assembly of Bishop's liaison to OTSA, and Nicholas Anton, director of the Inter-Orthodox, Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations department of the GOA

**Coffee 10:00-10:15**

**10:15-10:45 Ecumenical dialogue and the Christological Dogma:**

**The influence of St. Cyril of Alexandria on Western theological circles of 20th century**

Dn. Jovan Anicic, Ph.D., Director of the Department of Christian Education, Serbian Eastern American Diocese

The question of the mystery of the Church and Christian unity is foremost an ecclesiological question. The Orthodox participation in the movement to restore unity with other Christians in the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church is in no way foreign to the nature and history of the Orthodox Church. Recognizing the need for convergence of the (divided) Christian world, the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1902 addressed Christians of the world, asking them to make efforts in the reconciliation between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox, as well as between Anglicans and Orthodox Christians. The Roman Catholic Church expressed the Spirit of Vatican II (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) in that it was not modernism but a return to the biblical, patristic, and early-medieval tradition. It is the existential language of the early Church Fathers about the Christ's incarnation that emphasized the unity of two natures in Christ as an event blissfully connected with human salvation. The importance of human salvation and the recognition of the apostolic diaconia of two Churches has given necessary energy to move beyond scholasticism and return to the early Church Fathers. In this paper I would like to elaborate on the term "unity" through the reception and influence of the theological works (experience) of St. Cyril of Alexandria in western theology of 20th century.

**10:45-12:00 Panel: How important is unity and/or uniformity in the ministry and lives of women in the Church?** Organizer and moderator: Carrie Frederick Frost, PhD,

Lecturer, Global Humanities and Religions Department, Western Washington University;  
Adjunct Professor, Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Seminary

In recent years, some ministries of women in the Orthodox Church have grown organically, such as the increase of women in parish leadership, as choir directors, and in catechetical roles. This is true to different degrees in different places, but it is broadly the case across jurisdictions and around the world.

But other ministries have been, and continue to be, only discussed and considered, not grown, except in certain pockets of the church, such as women in minor orders (as readers, etc.) or in tonsured positions (as chaplains) or as deaconesses. Furthermore, some jurisdictions and churches have changed prayers and practices that affect women's lives, such as advice given to women around menstruation and communion and the content of the Forty Days after the Birth of a Child and Miscarriage prayers, but other churches have not addressed these and their related concerns. What is the significance of the variation across jurisdictions and churches when it comes to these matters? How important is it that the Orthodox Church achieve unity and/or uniformity when it comes to the ministry and lives of women in the Church? These questions and others will be explored in this panel session.

Teva Regule, PhD, women in minor orders  
Deacon Nicholas Denysenko, PhD, women in the diaconate  
Carrie Frederick Frost, PhD, church practice and prayers  
Father Gabriel Rochelle, PhD, women's role in parish life

**Lunch 12:00-1:00**

***Afternoon Session: Politics and Contemporary Challenges to Unity***      **High School Room**

**1:00-1:30 The Eclipse of Eucharistic and Holographic Ecclesiology in Contemporary Orthodox Ecclesiology: Ukrainian and Global Consequences**

V. Rev. Laurent Cleenewerck, Prof. of International Administration and Theology (EUCLID)

As a student, John Zizioulas made in 1965 a major contribution to the restoration and de-pseudomorphosis of Orthodox ecclesiology by re-identifying “church” as the local bishop-led assembly and distinguishing other levels of ecclesiastical organization erroneously labeled as “church.” Noting Zizioulas’ still active influence in the affairs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (as Metropolitan of Pergamon), it now seems that his “eucharistic ecclesiology” principles were forgotten in the case of the current Ukrainian crisis. In 2007, OCA cleric Laurent Cleenewerck further clarified Zizioulas’ eucharistic ecclesiology as “holographic ecclesiology” in his book *His Broken Body* (and subsequent) JES article. Both of these fundamental - but seemingly neglected - paradigms of biblical and Orthodox ecclesiology are considered in light the current crisis affecting the Orthodox communion.

**1:30-2:00 Ukraine and the Problem of Unity: The Conflicts of 1054 and 2018 in Dialogue**

Nicolas Kamas, PhD, Medieval Institute, University of Notre Dame

News outlets as diverse as Reuters, the Financial Times, Christianity Today, and the National Review, as well as the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate itself, have compared the current conflict between the bishops of Constantinople and Moscow with the much older division between the Eastern Patriarchates and Rome, popularly dated to 1054. This paper will examine these claims. To what degree does the current conflict mirror the earlier one in terms of the classical markers of schism? How were each of the conflicts subsequently received by the Christian faithful at large? And

what lessons for the present conflict, if any, can be taken from the failed attempts at reunification during the second half of the Middle Ages?

### **2:00-2:30 For the Healing of Orthodoxy's Wounded Body: New Approaches to Reconciliation Beyond Old Rituals**

Dn. Nicholas Denysenko, Emil and Elfriede Jochum Professor & Chair, Valparaiso University

The events of 2018-19 in global Orthodoxy led to public warnings of the arrival of a new and great schism. The body of the Church remains mostly intact, but the wound is visible and painful for all, opened by the Russian Orthodox Church's decision to sever communion with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in response to Constantinople's decision to grant autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

The break in communion exposed many problems in the Orthodox Church. The Church's difficulty in healing schisms and accomplishing reconciliation among the broken members of the Church's body is one of the most formidable challenges confronting the Church. Reflection on recent events in the Church illuminated several schisms that have taken place in the last century, and some of those remain unresolved.

The Church's public response to schisms observes the canonical and liturgical tradition. Church leaders call upon schismatics and opponents to repent and return to the bosom of the Church. Typically, such appeals refer to historical antecedents of schismatics repenting of their sin and returning to the bosom of the Church. In modernity, however, many of these schisms persist for decades or remain unreconciled. In some instances, complete healing has not taken root following reconciliation in the Church, as evidenced by the occasional ruptures in communion between Moscow and Constantinople. This paper proposes new approaches to reconciliation that have the capacity to truly heal the brokenness caused by divisions and schisms in the church. The paper occurs in three parts. Part 1 examines the anatomy of schisms, with particular attention to the ongoing Ukrainian crisis, to illustrate the complexity of a contemporary schism, especially the problem of historical memory. Part 2 surveys the results of appeals for repentance and dialogue and the flaws of the power dynamics that shape such petitions. Part 3 turns to ecumenical and non-religious examples of reconciliation the Church can consult and adapt as a necessary complement to established liturgical rituals to make true and lasting reconciliation possible.

**BREAK 2:30-3:00**

**Fellowship Hall**

### **3:00-3:30 St. Ilarion of Kyiv: Unity in the One True Church of Christ and Equality of all Baptized Peoples before the Lord.**

Fr. Roman Bozyk, Dean of Theology, St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg

St. Ilarion of Kyiv was the first native-born leader in Rus'-Ukraine to hold the position of Metropolitan of Kyiv (1051-1054 AD.). He is most known for his great Paschal Sermon **Slovo o zakoni i o blahodati/ Sermon Concerning Law and Grace**. While theologically comparing and contrasting the Law of Moses to the Grace of Christ, St. Ilarion of Kyiv, in the 11th century Church of Rus'-Ukraine, spoke of the joy of being part of the One True Church at the same time as he spoke of the greatness and worthiness of his own nation of Kyivan-Rus'.

St. Ilarion has much to offer a contemporary discussion on the topic of Unity in Orthodoxy in light of the need for the equality of all nations in the Church. One does not need to deny his/her own nation to prove that one is Orthodox.

### **3:30-4:00 Church Unity as Political Unity**

Emil Salim, Ph.D., Associate Lecturer, Reformed Theological Seminary, Indonesia

The image of the Church as a holy city is present both in the Scriptures and in the writings of the holy fathers (e.g., St. Cyril of Alexandria and St. Augustine). If the church is a polis, the unity of the Church must, in some ways, although not exhaustively, be a political unity. My paper explores how the Church manifests its unity insofar as it is a polis. Aristotle, for example, sees the unity of the city in terms of the subscription of the accepted constitution and in terms of justice and political friendship. Might something similar obtain in the case of the Church? With a more profound understanding of the unity of the Church in political terms, one might find insights into how Orthodox churches can better relate to one another, i.e., to strengthen unity and to avoid schism or excommunication.

### **Business Meeting 4:00-5:15**

**5:30-6:15 Vespers**

**Nave**

**6:30-7:45 Dinner**

**Fellowship Hall**

**8:00 FLOROVSKY LECTURE**

**Nave**

### **"Recovering the Fullness of Synodality: Lay Participation in the Conciliar Process."**

**Paul Gavrilyuk, Ph.D.**

Founding President, International Orthodox Theological Association

Aquinas Chair in Theology and Philosophy

Theology Department

University of St Thomas

**Reception Following (until 9:45) in Fellowship Hall**

**\*See SHUTTLE Schedule attached**

*Saturday, November 9, 2019*

**\*See SHUTTLE Schedule attached**

**7:45-8:30 Orthros**

**Nave**

**Coffee 8:30-9:00**

**Fellowship Hall**

***Morning Session: Picturing Unity In and Outside the Church***

**High School Room**

**9:00-9:30 Synodality and Local Unity**

Fr. Radu Bordeianu, Associate Professor of Theology, Duquesne University

Etymologically, synodality suggests a Church whose members travel together along the same path, thus growing in unity. Synodality is most prevalent in Orthodox local churches understood as the parish, diocese, and national church. Orthodox theology tends to approach synodality exclusively from episcopal and canonical perspectives. But the image of the parish community gathered around the Eucharist, with the active participation of all the faithful together with the priest, is the most common synodal experience of the Church, being intrinsically linked to other ministries, including synodal decision-making bodies such as the parish council and the general assembly. While the role of the laity gradually decreases, synodality is also present in the diocese and at national level, including in clergy-laity conferences (sobors); pan-Orthodox initiatives such as IOCC, OCM, OCF; Episcopal Assemblies; and synods of autocephalous churches, the latter being the most effective instance of episcopal synodality sustained by a real primacy. Synodality also represents an antidote for nationalism, clericalism, congregationalism, and various forms of discrimination, as all members of the Church travel together in unity along the same path (*syn-odos*).

**9:30-10:00 Theology and the New Urbanism**

John C. Tompkins, Senior Lecturer in Technical Communication for the Lyles School of Civil Engineering at Purdue University

This paper argues that a theology of urban planning may be articulated from the Charter for the New Urbanism. Modern urban planning has little truck with theology of any sort, much less Orthodox theology. Concerned as it is with the portioning off of zones for work, play, and residence, the discipline seeks to organize human activity into discrete areas, accessible through motor transport. The New Urbanist movement works against the partitioned world of modernist city planning by encouraging the creation of neighborhoods that encourage pedestrian activity and a mix of human activities within a shared urban environment. This human scale invites a consideration of the Incarnation as it appears in the built environment. If we see in the icon a unity that draws the beholder towards the divine, or if the architecture of a church captures the union of heaven and earth, may not the neighborhood or even the city express a unity of peoples and uses that direct toward harmony? We can certainly attest to the existence of the contrary.

**Break 10:00-10:30**

**Fellowship Hall**

## **10:30-11:00 Iconographic Imaging of Orthodox Unity?: Picturing Church Councils**

Prof. Richard Schneider, School of Orthodox Theology, U. of Toronto, St. Vladimir's Seminary

Principles of theological ecclesiology, canon law, and Scripture which promote – or even compel – unity of the Orthodox church are well known. However, a much less clear-cut genre of theological apologetic for unity, viz. iconography, has not been put forward as “making the case” for Orthodox unity. In fact, at first look it is difficult to think of more than a few iconographic subjects or treatments whose theme unmistakably reflects the unity among Orthodox churches.

To be sure, a few outstanding examples of a program were deliberately designed to express the “unity” theme; often these are so explicit as to have a nearly polemical quality. (An example is the program painted 1946-7 by Sr. Joanna Reitlinger in the chapel at Ladbroke Grove). But apart from such deliberate statements about “unity” among Orthodox cultures, it is hard to identify a traditional iconographic subject whose primary theme would be read as “Orthodox unity.”

However, in one subject with a long tradition and many exemplars in Orthodox iconography “unity” can be read as its primary meaning, viz., the numerous representations of church councils, Ecumenical, local and scriptural. Through the use of τάξις, arrangement and “behavior” of figures, composition, and so on a clear theme emerges from these many images that the church in its essence must be unified; indeed, the core image shows heretics as “disunifiers.” This iconographic type, unique to Orthodox illustration, is a visualized model of “church.”

This argument is imperfect; nowhere, even in depictions of the first three ecumenical councils, do we see any representation of unity among the Patriarchates, effectively excluding the “Oriental Orthodox” from imaged “unity.” However, we could bring into the discussion examples of pictured parallelism between Ecumenical councils and local regional councils as a possible step in the direction of more local inclusion in overall unified order. Another problem for any modern appeal to the “council” image as a platform for illustrating “unity” would be the centrality of the secular ruler – emperor, king, etc. – in medieval council images; what would be the modern replacement for this Byzantine necessity?

## **11:00-11:30 Compassion and the Claims of Justice**

Fr. John D. Jones, Professor, Philosophy Department, Marquette University

Associate Priest, SS. Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church, Milwaukee

Is compassion at all connected with justice? Yes and no. I'll give a nod to the ‘no’; but I'll focus on the ‘yes.’ In light of a fundamental contrast between compassion and pity, I want to present an understanding of compassion as a holistic disposition of radical non-judgmental openness to others oriented to acting with and for their sake, I want to show that

- 1) Compassion provides a ‘lived’ reinforcement and validation of a fundamental claim of justice: that all people are to be afforded equal dignity, respect and equality of honor (*homotimos*).
- 2) Compassion plays a central role in the search for restorative justice and social justice since it serves to challenge and undermine the many invidious distinctions which can illegitimately marginalize people and groups in a social world.

Compassion, then, extends beyond “personal charity” by providing a fundamental guiding orientation to human life in its political and social dimension.

## **11:30 Closing Discussion**

**11:45 Lunch**

**Fellowship Hall**

**Safe Travels! \*The SHUTTLE Schedule is attached.**



## Shuttle Schedule for OCAMPR and OTSA participants, November 7 – 10, 2019

Rides will be between the Sheraton and Saints Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church, 1401 Wagner Road, Glenview; about 3 miles away.

The shuttle runs daily from 7am to 11pm. The hotel may be contacted at 847-480-1900.

Conference Attendees: **Please gather in the lobby 10 minutes before shuttle time** in order to see if we need to utilize additional car-pooling with those who have vehicles. Those who have vehicles should let others on the shuttles first. Thanks for your cooperation!

A maximum of 25 people can ride on most runs. One van can carry 11 people; the other van can carry 14.

### Thursday, Nov. 7

Leave Sheraton:	2:30pm	(1 van)
Leave Sheraton:	5:30pm	(2 vans)
	6:00pm	(2 vans)
	6:30pm	(2 vans)

Leave Church:	8:30pm	(2 vans)
	9:00pm	(2 vans)
	9:30pm	(2 vans)

### Friday, Nov. 8

Leave Sheraton:	7:30am	(2 vans)
	8:00am	(2 vans)
	8:30am	(2 vans)
Leave Church:	8:00pm	(2 vans)
	9:30pm	(2 vans)
	10:00pm	(2 vans)

### Saturday, Nov. 9

Leave Sheraton:	7:30am	(2 vans)
	8:00am	(2 vans)
	8:30am	(2 vans)
Leave Church:	6:00pm	(2 vans)
	6:30pm	(2 vans)
	7:00pm	(2 vans)