IN THIS SERIES:

1 CHURCH IN FINLAND.
The History, Present State and Outlook for the Future of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. 1989.

2 DIALOGUES with The Evangelical Free Church of Finland and The Finnish Pentecostal Movement. 1990.

3 CREATION.
The Eighth Theological Conversations between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and The Russian Orthodox Church. 1989.

4 THE FINNISH LUTHERAN - ORTHODOX DIALOGUE.
Conversations in 1989 and 1990.

5 JÄRVENPÄÄ 1992.
The Ninth Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church.

6 THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN FINNISH SOCIETY.

7 THE FINNISH LUTHERAN-ORTHODOX DIALOGUE.
Conversations in 1991 and 1993.

8 KIEV 1995. The Tenth Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church. 1996.

9 DIE EVANGELISCH-LUTHERISCHE KIRCHE FINNLANDS.
Beiträge zur Stellung der Kirche in der Gesellschaft. 1996.

Distribution:
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Church Council
Box 185
FIN-00161 HELSINKI
Fax + 358-9-18 02 454

ISBN 951-789-004-4
ISSN 0785-8558

KIEV 1995

THE TENTH THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND AND THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

DOCUMENTS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND

8

KIEV 1995

THE TENTH THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND AND THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

DOCUMENTS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF FINLAND 8

KIEV 1995

THE TENTH THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND AND THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Translated from Finnish into English by Tuire Valkeakari

HELSINKI 1996
Church Council for Foreign Affairs
Church Council

ISBN 951-789-004-4
ISSN 0785-8558

CONTENTS

COMMUNIQUÉ
ON THE TENTH THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND AND THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH 7

SUMMARY
ON THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH 12

SUMMARY
ON THE CHURCH'S WORK FOR PEACE VS. NATIONALISM 15

Archpriest Boris Pivovarov
A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES 17

Juhani Forsberg
THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH TODAY 36

Bishop Ioann
THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION: ECCLESIOLOGICAL AND CANONICAL ARGUMENTS 49

Eeva Martikainen
Antti Laato
COMMENTS ON THE PRESENTATION "THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION: ECCLESIOLOGICAL AND CANONICAL ARGUMENTS" 61

Juha Seppo
NATIONALISM AS A HISTORICAL PROBLEM OF THE CHURCH 64

Archbishop Makari
THE CHURCH'S TASK AS RECONCILIATOR AND THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITY 78

Simo Kiviranta
GOD'S PEOPLE AND NATIONS: THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS 87

Heikki Jääskeläinen
THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND AND THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN 1970-1995 100

COMMUNIQUÉ

on the Tenth Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church.

The tenth theological discussions between the delegations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church were held at the Convent of Christ's Ascension-Florov in Kiev, Ukraine, on August 27th - September 5th, 1995.

The first theological discussions between these two churches were held at Sinappi, Turku (Finland) in 1970; the second in Zagorsk (Russia/USSR) in 1971; the third at Järvenpää (Finland) in 1974; the fourth in Kiev (Ukraine/USSR) in 1977; the fifth in Turku in 1980; the sixth in Leningrad (Russia/USSR) in 1983; the seventh in Mikkeli (Finland) in 1986; the eighth at the Orthodox Convent of Dormition at Piukhtitsa (Estonia/USSR) and in Leningrad in 1989; and the ninth at Järvenpää in 1992.

***

The members of the delegation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF) were as follows: the Most Rev. Dr. John **Vikström**, Archbishop of Turku and Finland, Hon.D.Th. of the St Petersburg Theological Academy (Head of the delegation); the Right Rev. Dr. Voitto **Huotari**, Bishop of Mikkeli; the Rev. Dr. Juha **Seppo**, Professor of Finnish and Scandinavian Church History at the Faculty of Theology of Helsinki University; Dr. (Ms) Eeva **Martikainen**, Professor of Ecumenical Studies at the Faculty of Theology of Helsinki University; the Rev. Dr. Juhani **Forsberg**, Executive Secretary for Theology at the ELCF Department for International Relations; the Rev. Dr. Antti **Laato**, Senior Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland; and M.Soc.Sci. (Ms) Helena **Manninen-Visuri**, Secretary for International Programmes at Finnchurchaid.

The delegates of the Russian Orthodox Church were: His Beatitude Metropolitan **Vladimir** of Kiev and All Ukraine (Head of the delegation); His Eminence Archbishop **Makari** of Vinnitsa and Mogilev-Podolsk; His Grace Bishop **Ioann** of Belgorod and Staro-Oskol, Dean of the Kursk Theological

Seminary; Archpriest Boris **Pivovarov** from the Diocese of Novosibirsk; Prof. A.I. **Osipov** from the Moscow Theological Academy; Prof. K.E. **Skurat** from the Moscow Theological Academy; Mr. V.A. **Chukalov,** Assistant to the Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations, Director of the Division for Protestant Church Relations; and Ms E.S. **Speranskaia,** a researcher at the Moscow Patriarchate's Division for Protestant Church Relations.

The observers invited by the Russian Orthodox Church were the Rev. Sergei **Preiman** from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR), and Vicar Achim **Reis** from the German congregation in Kiev of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States (ELCRAS).

The advisors to the ELCF delegation were the Rev. Dr. Risto **Cantell,** Executive Director of the ELCF Department for International Relations, the Rev. Kosti **Laitinen,** Dean of Hamina, and the Rev. Heikki **Jääskeläinen,** Secretary to the Archbishop.

The secretaries of the ELCF delegation were Mr. Timo *Frilander,* a student of theology, and Ms Minna *Väliaho,* Administrative Assistant at the ELCF Department for International Relations.

The secretary to the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church was Archpriest Viktor *Liutik* from the Moscow Patriarchate's parish of the Protection of the Mother of God (Pokrov) in Helsinki. The secretaries from the Diocese of the Metropolitan of Kiev were Archpriest Vasili *Zaev,* Archpriest Anatoli *Zatovski,* and Archpriest Nikolai *Kobets.*

Ms Helena *Pavinski* and Ms Tarja *Leppäaho* worked in the discussions as interpreters, and the Rev. Jaakko *Kuusela* as a translator.

***

The tenth theological discussions were opened on Tuesday, August 29th, at the Convent of Christ's Ascension-Florov. In his opening speech, Metropolitan Vladimir said that he has participated in many inter-church negotiations, but has been particularly impressed by the thorough and devoted work of the ELCF representatives in this series of discussions. The results achieved so far in this process contain much that benefits and enriches the relations between our churches and nations, he said, expressing his wish that the tenth theological discussions would also promote cooperation and mutual understanding between these churches and nations.

In his speech of reply, Archbshop Vikström said: "In the Russian Orthodox Church, you have adopted a beautiful habit of calling these discussions by the name of the place where their first round was held, that is, by the name of the ecclesiastical conference centre 'Sinappi', which is located in my archdiocese. Thus, we are now about to begin the tenth round of the Sinappi discussions. Through this naming of our process, you, our honoured hosts, draw attention to the fact that an essential dimension of the Church of

Christ has always been continuity and communion with the legacy of our predecessors. Today, we are particularly grateful to those predecessors of ours who, already in the 1960s, gave the first impetus to these discussions. We recall and honour the contribution of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksi I and of Archbishop Martti Simojoki, who were the heads of our respective churches at that time."

Metropolitan Vladimir read to the participants a letter of greeting from His Holiness Patriarch Aleksi II of Moscow and All Russia, and a telegram from Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations.

The participants in the discussions sent a telegram of greeting to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksi II of Moscow and All Russia, to Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations, and to Archbishop Mihail (Mudiugin), who has many years' experience of these discussions.

In the opening ceremony, the delegates were also greeted by the observers. The greeting of Ukraine's Ministry of Nationalities, Migration and Cults was read by D.F. Malyi.

***

Throughout the discussions, the delegations held morning and evening prayer services, by turns in accordance with the Lutheran and the Orthodox tradition. On Sunday, August 27th, which was the eve of the commemoration day of the Dormition of the Mother of God, the delegations attended a vigil in the church of the Convent of Christ's Ascension-Florov. On Monday, August 28th, which marked the day of the Dormition of the Mother of God and the feast of the Kiev-Pechery Lavra (the Monastery of the Caves), the delegations prayed in a liturgy officiated at by Metropolitan Vladimir in the ruins of the Dormition Cathedral of the Lavra. On Tuesday, August 29th, the participants visited the Convent of the Protection of the Mother of God (Pokrov), and prayed in a service held in commemoration of the burial of the Mother of God. On Wednesday, August 30th, a Lutheran communion service was conducted by Bishop Voitto Huotari. On Thursday, August 31st, which was the commemoration day of the saints and martyrs Florus and Laurus (and thus also the day of the Convent's Temple Feast), the delegations prayed in a liturgy held in celebration of this occasion at the Convent of Christ's Ascension-Florov. Metropolitan Vladimir concelebrated the liturgy with the other Orthodox bishops who participated in the discussions. On Friday, September 1st, the delegations worshipped in a service of prayer conducted by Metropolitan Vladimir, which opened the academic year of the Kiev Theological Seminary and Academy. Metropolitan Vladimir and Archbishop John Vikström greeted the students of these theological schools. On Sunday, September 3rd, the delegations attended a service of the German ELCRAS congregation in Kiev,

which was officiated at by the Vicar Achim Reis. The congregation was greeted by Archbishop John Vikström on behalf of the ELCF, and by Archbshop Makari on behalf of His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine.

***

On Friday, September 1st, the Heads of the delegations visited the Finnish Ambassador to Ukraine, Mr. Erik Ulfstedt.

During their stay in Kiev, the participants in the discussions also had the opportunity to visit the Ukrainian capital city's monuments and sights. On Sunday, September 3rd, they went to see the Park of Finnish-Ukrainian Friendship, and visited there the Chapel of Christ's Ride to Jerusalem, which is dedicated to the memory of Chernobyl victims. They also visited a baptismal chapel, and the Church of St Michael the Archangel, which is under construction.

***

The agenda of these discussions was based on two main themes: 1) **the Mission of the Church**, and 2) the Church's Work for Peace vs. Nationalism. In connection with the first theme, papers were read by Archpriest Boris Pivovarov on the subject **"A Brief Survey of the History of the Russian Orthodox Church's Missionary Activities"**, by the Rev. Dr. Juhani Forsberg on **"The Mission of the Church Today"**, and by Bishop Ioann on "The Orthodox **View of the Church's Mission: Ecclesiological and Canonical Arguments"**. These presentations were commented on by Prof. A.I. Osipov, Prof. Eeva Martikainen and the Rev. Dr. Antti Laato. In connection with the second theme, papers were read by Prof. Juha Seppo on **"Nationalism as a Historical Problem of the Church"** and by Archbishop *Makari* on **"The Church's Task as Reconciliator and the Question of Nationality"**. These presentations were commented on by Prof. K.E. Skurat and Bishop Voitto Huotari. The participants also received copies of the paper **"God's People and Nations: Theological Aspects"** written by the Rev. Simo Kiviranta, Licenciate in Theology, ELCF.

The results of these discussions are included in the two summaries which are appended to this communiqué and deal with the two above-mentioned main themes.

***

The documents of the discussions were solemnly signed on Monday, September 4th, on which occasion Metropolitan Vladimir and Archbishop John Vikström both gave a speech.

***

The tenth theological discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church coincided with the commemoration of the Dormition of the Mother of God. Participation in the rich life of worship of the Orthodox Church provided a good basis for theological work.

The participants in the discussions expressed their awareness of the great changes which have taken place in Ukraine, and paid attention to the situation of Ukraine's churches. They expressed both their sorrow about the division among the Orthodox and their common hope that this problem could soon be resolved.

The delegations of the Kiev discussions concluded their work with gratitude to God, and expressed their unanimous view that these theological discussions should continue.

Kiev, September 4th, 1995

John Vikström Archbishop of Turku and Finland	Vladimir Metropolitan of Kiev and all Ukraine

The Tenth Theological Discussions between
the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
and the Russian Orthodox Church
Appendix 1 to the Communiqué

SUMMARY
on
the Mission of the Church

1. Mission is part of the essence of the Church. It has a trinitarian foundation; and is based on a special commission and promise given by the Risen Lord (Matt. 28:18-20). The Son has received all authority from the Father ("All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me";[1] Matt. 28:18), and the Son has promised to be with his Church through the Holy Spirit ("I am with you always, to the end of the age"; Matt. 28:20). The essential elements of mission are the teaching of the apostolic faith, and baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2. The source and motivation of mission is the love of the Triune God. Love prevails between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Triune God loved the world when he created and redeemed it, and he continues to love the world in sanctifying it. Because of his love, the Father sent his Son to the world to save it: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16).

3. Mission has an eschatological perspective. What mission aims at is the salvation of the world, humankind and the whole of creation. The Triune God brings that which has originally been his back into communion with him (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rom. 11:36). God has authorized his Church - which is "one, holy, catholic and apostolic", as the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed says - to carry out mission. Only this kind of Church can conduct mission in accordance with the teaching of Christ.

4. The essential elements of the mission of the Church are baptism and the eucharist, in both of which believers are united with Christ: "We were all baptized into one body... and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). "... one body... one baptism" (Eph. 4:4-5). "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10:17). The eucharist also involves the eschatological dimension of mission: "As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26).

[1] Translator's note: Throughout this volume, biblical quotations follow the New Revised Standard Version.

5. The Church is God's people, which is called to proclaim the gospel, because it is "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people" (1 Pet. 2:9).

6. When Christians fulfil their missionary task, they are themselves bound by the Word which they preach, "... so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified" (1 Cor. 9:27).

7. The apostolic faith must be proclaimed and interpreted in all situations in such a way that the listeners can understand its content and its significance for their own lives. However, this kind of contextualization cannot be achieved by intellectual efforts alone, but it also means living together in local cultures in accordance with the apostolic faith (1 Cor. 9:20-23). In the history of mission, it has not been unheard of that local cultures have been needlessly destroyed on the pretext of Christian faith, and replaced by the culture of missionaries. On the other hand, contextualization must not be distorted by turning it into syncretism either, because in that case the apostolic faith is distorted.

8. Mission includes both the proclamation of the gospel and the service of love, which cannot be separated from each other. Service or diaconia is one essential dimension of missionary work. Its aim is to serve all poor people, as well as those who suffer from injustices and evil. These can also manifest themselves in social structures. The Church cannot ignore this kind of evil; rather, it is called to promote justice through its proclamation and teaching. However, Christian faith must not be made political. As far as the theological foundations of diaconia and social ethics are concerned, there are difficult problems which must be dealt with more thoroughly in our churches' future discussions.

9. Ecumenically, churches have many opportunities to work together in fulfilling their task of global service. By bearing witness to the gospel in the world and by serving their neighbours unselfishly, Christians make their missionary work truly ecumenical. "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). Any missionary organization which takes advantage of people's distress in order to convert them to its own faith acts against the ecumenical principle of diaconia.

10. Inasmuch as the freedom of religion as a social principle guarantees the right of individuals and communities to practise religion, we support it unreservedly. Religious freedom establishes fundamental preconditions for the

realization of human rights and fundamental social rights, and it must not be used for their violation. The principle of religious freedom gives no support to proselytism, i.e., to attempts to convert baptized Christians from one denomination to another. In itself, however, the principle of religious freedom does not lead to true Christian freedom, even though it provides the Church with an external framework for its activities. The true Christian freedom is a gift of God. "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (John 8:31-32). "For freedom Christ has set us free" (Gal. 5:1). The Church's mission and its dialogue with non-Christian faiths and ideologies are not mutually exclusive but interconnected. The uniqueness of Christianity does not mean that tolerance, which is a necessary condition for peace, should be abandoned (1 Tim. 2:1-14).

11. Proselytism is against ecumenism. It destroys Christian love and is therefore in conflict with mission. Churches which aim at mutual communion and agreement should rather try to support each other in fulfilling their missionary task.

SUMMARY
on
the Church's Work for Peace vs. Nationalism

1. The Almighty God created the human being in his own image. Because God's image is present in every human being, all nations are equally valuable and have an equal right to live. The diversity of nations bears witness to the riches, goodness and wisdom of God in the created world. Therefore, all nations should respect each other and seek mutual understanding and cooperation.

2. In Jesus Christ, "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free" (Gal. 3:28). Thus, differences between "Greek", "Jew", "barbarian" and "Scythian" have disappeared in Jesus Christ (Col. 3:11). All become one in him and his Church. The fact that there are different nationalities is not annihilated by their members' joining the Church; however, all nations are equal before Christ. When the Church proclaims Christ, it invites nations to respect each other.

3. From the very beginning, the Church has understood itself as God's people, which consists of several nations. All nations are called to join the people of God in Christ. Christianity has crossed, and still crosses, ethnic, cultural and politico-social boundaries. Therefore, it is not in the nature of the Church to support hostility or patriotism of any kind.

4. According to the teaching of the Apostle Paul, God's law is written on the hearts of all human beings (Rom. 2:14-15). On this basis, all human beings have an idea of what is right and what is wrong. As a result of the Fall, however, nations' ability to understand each other has become distorted.

5. Inter- and intranational conflicts and disagreements are tearing our world apart, and cause suffering and pain. The original cause of these conflicts is sin. The Church not only tries to abolish these conflicts' destructive consequences, but also, above all, it fights against their original cause, sin. The Church of Christ is a community of reconciliation and peace in the world.

6. The universal Church of Jesus Christ is a community of believers, and its members come from all nations. Because the Church is the body of Christ, there is no room in it for national conflicts. All members of the Church are one in Christ and in his Church, regardless of racial, national and linguistic differences. As a consequence of sin, however, Christians have become divided in the course of history, but, nevertheless, they aim at the unity of the Church of Christ. Although national differences remain, the unity of the Church means agreement in faith and love.

7. In the course of its long history, the Christian Church has created prerequisites for nations' independent lives and for the development of their original cultures. The Church has been, and still is, a great educator of nations. It respects their national traditions and cultures - although this principle of respect has not, unfortunately, always been obeyed in the history of the Church.

8. The Church invites all nations to participate in the realization of love and justice that are in accordance with God's will. One part of this is the abandonment of selfish interests, and the willingness to act towards other nations and ethnic groups according to the "do to others as you would have them do to you" principle (Matt. 7:12). In wartime and during other crises, the Church is called to be particularly watchful, so that it cannot be used as an instrument of self-serving nationalistic aspirations by anyone.

9. The reconciliation of humankind in Christ has established the prerequisites for the reconciliation which the world needs. The life of the body of Christ, i.e., the Church, is where participation in this reconciliation brought about by Christ takes place. The Church is in the service of reconciliation in the world when its members lead Christian lives, pray for peace, and take part in the eucharist - the sacrament in which both the gift of reconciliation with all people and an invitation to this reconciliation are present.

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

Archpriest Boris Pivovarov, the Diocese of Novosibirsk

The Book of Acts outlines the Church of Christ in the image of the Heavenly Church, says Archimandrite Makari (Glukharev; 1792-1847), a Russian Orthodox preacher of God's word who has been given the title 'equal to the apostles'. He writes: "The entire Church was apostolic. The number of its active members far exceeded the twelve or seventy apostles, and went on increasing surprisingly fast. All the faithful either worked in the Church in the same way as the apostles did, or were otherwise involved in its activities, helping the apostles... But just as the Lord Jesus Christ, who has promised to be with his people to the end of the age, remains one and the same forever, in the same way his first Church sets an example which the Christian Church must follow through the ages. The external manifestations of the gospel's spirit may vary, but, in the authentic Church of Christ, this spirit nevertheless always remains one and the same, its essence being love for God and people in Christ Jesus. The more manifestly the Church abounds with this spirit of God's pure love, the more powerfully Christ's life and light is present in it. And the more powerfully Christ's life and light is present in the Church, the more eagerly, persistently and skilfully the Church can spread God's blessed kingdom on earth, and the more fruitful the term 'apostolic' attached to it proves to be."[1]

In the Creed, the Church of Christ is called apostolic. Indeed, the Church is apostolic throughout. Its essence is the same as that of the Church which emerged on the day of Pentecost and is depicted in the Book of Acts - not only because its members are "built upon the foundation of the apostles" (Eph. 2:20), or because its apostolic succession passes on God's blessing, but also because the number of its members keeps growing all the time, and because the Lord makes new people participants in the Church and salvation through baptism every day (Acts 2:47).

The words of the gospel show that the history of Christ's Church in general can be studied as a history of apostolicity - or a history of mission, which is the same thing. At the very beginning of the history of the Church, the

[1] *Pisma arkhimandrita Makariia Glukhareva, osnovatelia Altaiskoi Missii.* [Letters of Archimandrite Makari Glukharev, the Founder of the Altai Mission.] (Kharlampovich, K.V. [ed.]. Kazan, 1905, pp. 162-163.)

Saviour said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20). And the end will not come until "this good news of the kingdom" is proclaimed "throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations" (Matt. 24:14).

The above-mentioned Archimandrite Makari (Glukharev) eagerly wanted to consider the Russian Orthodox Church as a special and distinctive part of the apostolic Church. A man filled with the zeal characteristic of the apostles, he wished to work for this distinctiveness. He regarded his church as apostolic, and called it apostolic. So, if we are to speak about the high apostolic authenticity of the Russian Orthodox Church, it is imperative that we are familiar with the rich history of this church's mission. We must familiarize ourselves with the stories of the lives of its holy men and women equal to the apostles, and with the brave and renowned deeds these men and women have performed in proclaiming the gospel. When we carry out such an endeavour, one of the most important things we ought to do is consult written sources, which bear witness to the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church's missionaries have an experience of more than a thousand years of spreading the light of faith in Christ within and outside the Russian borders. It was not by accident that, as early as in the nineteenth century, S.V. Eshevski (1829-1865), a professor of Moscow University, wrote the following words after he had given permission for the printing of the volume *Memorial to the Written Works of Russian Orthodox Preachers/Pamiatnik trudov pravoslavnykh blagovestnikov russkikh* (which also contains notes written by Archimandrite Makari during his journeys): "The most important obstacle which prevents us from writing a thorough survey of the history of the preaching of Christianity in Russia is that there are no people [alive] who could give information about those who actually conducted this mission. Nor are there any detailed accounts left of the stages of the progress of this work, or of the various incidents which took place under both the favourable and unfavourable circumstances encountered by the missionaries."[2]

For this reason, it is necessary that we familiarize ourselves especially with the following sources when we study the missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church:

- in respect of the ancient history: chronicles
- in respect of the more recent history: works written by missionaries themselves.

The first work to be mentioned here is the *Tale of Bygone Times* of the blessed chronicler Nestor. It contains evidence of SS Cyril and Methodios' written

[2] Eshevski, S.V. *Missionerstvo v Rossii/Sochineniia po russkoi istorii.* [Missionary Work in Russia/Works on the History of Russia.] (Moscow, 1900, p. 348.)

works which passed on the good news. These saints, both equal to the apostoles, were true teachers of the Slavic peoples: they preached in the Slavic language, translated books for the Slavs, and left behind disciples who could continue their work. The missionary work of these two saints became a model and example to St Stephen, Bishop of Perm, the apostle of the Zyrians; to St Innokenti (Veniaminov), Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna, the enlightener of several American and Siberian peoples; to Archimandrite Makari (Glukharev), the first apostle of Altai; to Bishop Dionisi (Khitrov), an enlightener of the Yakut; to Metropolitan Nestor (Anisimov), an apostle of the people of Kamchatka; and to many other Russian Orthodox Church's preachers of the gospel. In accordance with the word of Christ, these missionaries went among peoples who had not yet been baptized, proclaimed the resurrection of Christ in these peoples' mother tongues, created alphabets for these languages, made the first translations of prayers, of the Bible's gospels, and of liturgical texts, and founded the first schools and libraries. They also baptized people, taught them evangelic virtues, enlightened them with the light of the truth of Christ, and established an ecclesiastical foundation for their lives.

After the baptism of Rus in 988, Kiev became the most important centre of missionary work. Both St Prince Vladimir and St Princess Olga were given the title 'equal to the apostles', and while a chronicler referred to St Princess Olga as the "dawn" preceding the Christianization of Rus, the people called St Prince Vladimir, the Baptist of Rus, their "dearly beloved sun". The great and well-known Kiev-Pechery Lavra (Kiev's Monastery of the Caves) raised the first well-known preachers of the gospel to proclaim the good news to peoples living near those Eastern Slavs who were baptized in 988. One of them was blessed Kuksha (d. 1114), the enlightener of the people of Vyatka and the baptist of this Slavic tribe. Together with his disciple Nikon, he suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Vyatkas.

Another Kievan ascetic, the blessed monk Gerasim of Vologda, left the Kiev-Glushev monastery in 1147 and settled by the Vologda River. He founded a monastery and built a church dedicated to the Holy Trinity, and spent many years preaching the name of Christ to the peoples of the harsh North. In Rostov, Christianity was established by Bishop Leonti of Rostov in the latter half of the eleventh century.

From the twelfth century onwards, the Monastery of Anton in Novgorod became the most important centre of missionary activities. For several centuries, it served as a significant source of spiritual enlightenment for the northern peoples. Most missionaries who proclaimed the gospel to the Finns, Karelians and other peoples of the North had received their education at the Monastery of Anton.

The thirteenth century saw the Tatar-Mongol invasion of Russia, and several Russian territories were under the Tatar-Mongol yoke for a long time. However, it was not totally unheard of that the Mongols themselves were influenced by the Orthodox faith. In 1261, the Russian Orthodox Church

managed to establish an episcopal see in Sarai, at the heart of the Golden Horde, and chroniclers give examples of baptisms of Tatar *murzy* (princes) in the era of Metropolitan and Bishop Aleksi of Moscow.

In the fourteenth century, the light of faith in Christ reached Valamo. The Valamo Monastery, founded by the blessed monks Sergi and St Herman of Valamo, became the centre for spreading the light of Christianity in Karelia and Olonetsk (Aunus). Later, this monastery's missionary monks continued their work in America.

An extraordinarily significant role in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church's mission was played by the Trinity-St Sergi Lavra founded by St Sergi, Hegumen of Radonezh. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, this monastery became a pivotally important seat of Christian learning. Later, many clergymen who had been educated at this monastery went to the sparsely populated areas of north-eastern Russia, in order to found new monasteries and bear witness to the Saviour through both their preaching and their example of a Christian way of life.

One of the most successful episodes in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church's mission goes back to a friend of St Sergi, namely, St Stephen of Perm, the apostle of the Zyrians. In 1375, he started his work of apostolic service as a hieromonk (i.e., priestmonk) in the land of Perm, and became its bishop in 1383. In order to make the word of God accessible to the Zyrians, St Stephen created the Zyrian alphabet and translated books of the Bible into the Zyrians' native language. He built a church dedicated to the Most Holy Theotokos [Mother of God] in Ust-Vym, and founded a school in which he taught the newly converted to read and write, to read the Psalter and an eight-tune hymnary, to sing and recite hymns and liturgical texts, and to make copies of manuals on the liturgy. Those who were to become priests he trained in the skills of Christian ministry. It should be noted that the history of Christian mission in Russia knows only few missionaries who ever promoted Christianity so wisely, and built such a strong foundation for it, as St Stephen did. His work in the field of biblical translation into the Zyrian language, and his successful efforts to establish the life of the Church in the midst of the Zyrians made him a true follower of SS Cyril and Methodios, and earned him the name "the father of the Permians".

From the mid-fifteenth century onwards, the spiritual centre of northern Russia was the Solovets Monastery. Owing to the faith and pious deeds of the blessed ascetics Zosima and Savvati of Solovets, seeds of faith in Christ were sown and fostered among the Lapps.

In the sixteenth century, the coastal areas of Kazan and the Volga were incorporated into Russia. This new situation afforded opportunities to preach Christianity among the Muslims. The Zilantov Monastery became the first mission school of Russia. According to its monastic rule, established by Guri, Bishop of Kazan (d. 1563), those living in the monastery were to teach children to read and write, and make them familiar with the liturgy. At Sviiazhsk by the

Volga, St Herman of Kazan founded a monastery in which he baptized Muslims and pagans, and also taught their children to read and write.

Especially after the conquest of the Astrakhan Khanate in 1577, the spiritual and educational work of the monasteries of Kazan extended its influence to several regions in Russia. In 1573, a monastery with three churches was founded in Astrakhan to carry the torch of Orthodoxy there. Archbishop Pitirim of Nizhegorod (d. 1738) became famous for his proclamation of the gospel of Christ among peoples who lived on the shores of the Volga.

Under the leadership of Archimandrite Dimitri (Sechenov), missionary work was also started among the native inhabitants of Kazan, Nizhegorod and Voronezh. The task assigned to the missionaries of this area was to teach prayers and the Creed to those who converted to Christianity, and to open schools in which the children of the newly converted could learn to write and to practise religion. In order to make their goals achievable, these missionaries published a short catechism as a result of their hard work between 1803 and 1805. This catechism contained prayers, the Creed and the Ten Commandments in the languages of the Cheremiss, the Chuvash, the Mordvinians, the Karelians and the Persians. In 1814-1820, the New Testament also appeared in all these languages.

In the nomadic villages of the Kalmyks, the gospel of Christ was proclaimed by Hieromonk Nikodim, who knew the Kalmyk language very well. After him, the work of Christ was continued by the hard-working Archpriest Andrei Chubovski, who also mastered the language. In 1741, a Kalmyk-Russian school was opened in Stavropol. Prayers and books of worship were translated into the Kalmyk vernacular, and the New Testament was also published for this people.

In the eighteenth century, two missions were stationed among the Ossetians; one was led by Archmandrite Pakhomi, the other by Archpriest Lebedev. The Ossetian children studied in a school located in Mozdok. In the churches of the region, the divine liturgy was conducted in the Ossetian vernacular.

From 1825 to 1830, Archimandrite Veniamin (Smirnov), the Superior of the Glukhov Monastery, worked tirelessly in the Arkhangelsk Diocese. He translated the New Testament into the language of the Mezen Samoyeds, and also wrote a grammar and dictionary of this Samoyedic language.

The eighteenth-century Orthodox missions in Siberia had a very significant role in the history of the Russian Church's missionary activities. This area, in particular, abounds with good examples of authentic apostolic proclamation of God's word to peoples who had not previously heard the name of Christ.

The Church in Siberia can present the names of the following well-known missionaries: Metropolitans Filofei (Leshchinski) and Ioann (Maksimovich) of Tobolsk, Bishops Innokenti (Kulchitski) and Sofroni (Kristalevski) of Irkutsk, and Metropolitans Innokenti (Veniaminov) and Makari (Nevski) of Moscow.

And, in addition to them, many other great preachers also proclaimed the gospel to the peoples of Siberia.

The blessed endeavour of the missionaries who worked in Siberia deserves to be studied most carefully.

In the eighteenth century, the spiritual and administrative centre of Siberia was Tobolsk. Metropolitan Filofei (Leshchinski) served as its bishop from 1702 to 1710 and from 1715 to 1721. "If it is appropriate to regard St Nina, equal to the apostles, as the enlightener of Georgia, or to consider St Grigori as the enlightener of Armenia, or to refer to St Patrick as the apostle of Ireland, or to Willibrord as the apostle of Holland, or to Ansgar as the apostle of Sweden and Denmark, then it is no less justified to call Metropolitan Filofei the enlightener of Siberia", says Archpriest A. Sulotski, an eminent nineteeth-century church historian.

At the turn of 1702 and 1703, Metropolitan Filofei opened a provincial school at his residence in order to educate the children of priests; this school was the first of its kind in Siberia, and the second in the whole of Russia. The children of the newly baptized Ostyak and Nenets parents also received education in this school, which was turned into a seminary in the mid-eighteenth century.

In 1705, Metropolitan Filofei sent to Kamchatka a group of missionaries led by Archimandrite Martinian.

In 1709, due to a serious illness, the hierarch Filofei became a schemamonk and took the name Feodor. He retired to the Monastery of the Holy Trinity, which he had founded in Tiumen, but, as a result of God's providence, he was soon called to missionary service again.

Namely, before long, Metropolitan Ioann (Maksimovich; 1711-1715), the successor to Metropolitan Filofei, asked him and some priests and monks to proceed with the proclamation of the word of God to Siberian peoples. Having equipped these missionaries with ecclesiastical objects, he sent them first to northern Siberia, then to southern and eastern parts of this vast area. He himself also continued the apostolic endeavour of the untiring hierarch Filofei in a dedicated fashion by taking care of the education of those priests who had been trained in Siberia. He also sent the first Orthodox missionaries to Peking; this group was led by Archimandrite Ilarion (Lezhaiski).

During his activity as a missionary, Metropolitan Filofei made six important journeys for promoting the cause of Christian mission. After the death of the hierarch Ioann, Metropolitan Filofei (Schemametropolitan Feodor) was appointed the Bishop of Tobolsk again. In 1726, at the age of 76, he made his last missionary journey to Obdorsk (nowadays Salekhard), in order to proclaim the gospel to the Ostyak, who were pagans. During this journey, he also visited churches he had built, to strengthen the newly converted in their faith.

This apostle of Siberia died at the Tiumen Monastery of the Holy Trinity on May 31st, 1727. According to his own wish expressed in his will, he was

buried near the doors of this monastery's church. In his lifetime, this distinguished hierarch had baptized 10,000 people in Siberia, and had had thirty-seven churches built for them. As testified by his contemporaries, he had never resorted to intimidation or threats in calling the pagans to turn to God, but had used only "the proclamation of the gospel and his own deeds" as his tools. One of his fellow advocates of faith, Grigori Novitski, an ascetic and a great missionary, wrote a book called *A Short Description of the Ostyak People (Kratkoe opisanie o narode ostiatskom),* which is an excellent ethnographic study and one of the most important milestones in the history of missionary literature in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

Another significant eighteenth-century missionary in Siberia was Bishop Innokenti (Kulchitski; d. 1731), who was the first bishop of Irkutsk. In 1722, when he was the Bishop of Pereiaslav, he was sent as the head of a missionary enterprise to China, "the Empire of the Khan". However, the Chinese Emperor did not admit this hierarch to his empire, and so Bishop Innokenti had to stop at the Monastery of the Transfiguration of Christ by the River Selenga behind Lake Baikal. During his negotiations with the Chinese authorities - which lasted for several years - he learned the Buryat (or Buriat) language. Later, he founded a Russian-Mongolian school at the Monastery of Ascension in Irkutsk. The first teacher of the Mongolian language in this school was Archimandrite Antoni, the Superior of the Monastery. (In 1736, the number of pupils attending this school was already seventy.)

In 1725, it became obvious that the Chinese authorities did not want to admit the leader of a missionary enterprise to the empire, and in 1727 the Synod appointed Innokenti, for the second time, as the incumbent of the re-established episcopal see of Irkutsk. In this office, Bishop Innokenti worked particularly hard to Christianize the Buryats in the region around Lake Baikal. He helped these people in every possible way, and because of his enthusiasm he received the name "the preacher of faith to the pagans of Mongolia".

The successors to St Innokenti were the dedicated missionaries Bishop Innokenti II (Nerunovich; 1732-1741) and Bishop Sofroni (Kristalevski; 1754-1771).

When the latter sent missionaries to regions beyond Lake Baikal, i.e., to Kamchatka and Yakutiya, he told them to focus on improving the lives of the newly baptized: "Make the human world warmer through your preaching and with your torch of love, because love catches fire only from love. Love brings with itself an inclination towards God which takes various forms."

In the mid-eighteenth century, missionary activities were started again in Kamchatka. In 1745, a missionary delegation of nineteen members, led by Hieromonk Ioasaf (Khotuntsevski), came there from the Diocese of Sarsk (Krutitski). The missionaries opened dozens of schools, in which several hundreds of people received education.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Orthodox missionaries had travelled through most of Siberia, and baptized tens of thousands of pagans and

a considerable number of Buddhists and Muslims. However, enormous efforts were still needed to make the newly sown seeds of the doctrine of Christ grow, and to make those upon whom the light of Christ had shone so recently into faithful children of the Orthodox Church.

This was the challenge faced by nineteenth-century missionaries. Indeed, the nineteenth century provided the Church with such well-known preachers and ascetics as Archimandrite Makari Glukharev, Metropolitans Innokenti (Veniaminov) and Makari (Nevski) of Moscow, and many others who carried on the work of Christ. What characterized this new era of Orthodox missionary work were missions stationed permanently in Siberia. Missionaries focused even more deliberately than earlier on organizing mission schools, and they also began to translate the Bible and the books of worship into Siberian languages. As a result, educational and economic bonds between indigenous peoples and the Russians were strengthened.

At the beginning of 1829, Archimandrite Makari (Glukharev; d. 1847) was called by the Lord to his apostolic service. Expert in both ancient and modern languages, Archimandrite Makari first taught at the St Petersburg Theological Academy, and translated several books of the Bible into Russian. Later, however, he asked the Holy Synod for permission to go to Siberia and proclaim the word of God there. In 1830, he arrived at Biisk in the province of Tomsk, and began to promote Christianity among the Kalmyks. First, he established a mission station at Maime, but later he moved to a village at Ulala (nowadays Gorno-Altaisk), which became the centre of the Altai Mission.

Within a very short time, Father Makari learned the Altai language, and began to translate the most important prayers into it. He was convinced that the best way of strengthening his spiritual "children" in their faith in Christ was to translate the Holy Scriptures and manuals on the liturgy into this people's vernacular. He stayed in Altai for fourteen years, and during that time he translated the gospel, some texts of the Old Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles and some liturgical texts into the Altai language. He wrote a book called *On the Altai People (Oglashenie altaitsev)*, and also an excellent volume on *How to Spread the Christian Faith Successfully among the Muslims, Jews and Pagans in the Russian Empire (Mysli o sposobakh k uspeshnomu rasprastraneniiu khirstianskoi very mezhdu magometanami, evreiami i iazychnikami v Rossiskoi derzhave)*.

From 1865 onwards, the Altai people could attend the liturgy celebrated in their own mother tongue. In 1874, the Holy Synod granted the Altai Mission the right to have a printing house of its own, and to publish both translations and original works in the Altai vernacular. However, because of certain practical difficulties, there was a delay of several years before the missionaries could actually begin to print books. Therefore, the volumes translated into or written in the Altai language were first printed in St Petersburg, and then in Kazan; only from the 1890s onwards did they begin to appear in Tomsk and Biisk.

The Altai Mission was in its fullest bloom in the era of the hierarch Makari (Nevski; from 1891 onwards, Archbishop of Tomsk; in 1912-1917, Metropolitan of Moscow). After finishing his studies at the Seminary of Tobolsk in 1855, he began to work for the Altai Mission, and served the cause of promoting Christianity for 28 years. During that time, his duties ranged from those of a mission school teacher to those of the head of the Altai Mission.

The Altai Mission served as an example when similar missions were established in eastern and western Siberia.

In 1882, the Kirgiz Mission, which was based in Semipalatinsk, became independent from the Altai Mission. In Obdorsk and Konda, missions had been established in 1844, almost simultaneously with their Altai equivalent, and the Mission of Turuhan had started its activities in 1850. In Surgut and Minusinsk, missions had begun to operate in 1867, and in Semipalatinsk in 1868.

In the Jenisei region, missionary work among pagans was carried out by the priests of so-called missionary parishes. The northern part of the Jenisei province embraced fourteen Nenets, Evenk and Yakut parishes with an enormous geographical range. The priests of these regions had to travel thousands of kilometres in order to reach the people of their parishes. In the southern parts of the Jenisei province, missionaries stationed at the Minusinsk Mission worked under similar conditions.

In 1814, Bishop Mikhail (Burundukov) of Irkutsk established a mission among the Buryats in the region beyond Lake Baikal. Among those who worked at this mission station were Father Aleksandr Bobrovnikov, an expert in the Buryat language, and Mikhail Speranski, a baptized Buryat. Archbishop Nil (Isakovich) of Irkutsk (1838-1853) also became known as a devoted preacher and an enlightener of the pagans. He travelled much in the Far East, and is regarded as the first Russian scholar of Buddhism. In translating Scripture to the Buryat language, he worked together with the Mongol Nikolai Nilov-Dorzheev, who had been a devoted Lamaist until his baptism. Nikolai Nilov-Dorzheev's conversion to Christianity was partly due to a miraculous revelation of the holy cross in the sky of Dauriia. He became a devoted Christian missionary, was ordained into the priesthood, and spent the rest of his life translating Scripture and books of worship into the Buryat language.

The missionary work carried out in eastern Siberia developed even more in the era of Archbishop Parfeni (Popov; 1860-1873). As a hierarch and missionary, he made significant improvements to the organization of the mission of Irkutsk and the regions beyond Lake Baikal. He also called monks from Russia to serve at his mission station, organized several new schools, and had many new residential buildings constructed.

In 1866, Archbishop Parfeni opened the Irkutsk branch (from 1870 onwards, 'Committee') of the Orthodox Missionary Society. The task of this committee was to be in charge of publishing, which had become a large-scale activity.

From 1867 onwards, Archbishop Parfeni gradually implemented a liturgical reform in terms of the use of the vernacular, and, as a result, the liturgy was eventually celebrated in the Buryat language in all Buryat churches. Missionary work also had a positive effect on the way of life of the newly converted Buryats; namely, by giving these nomads pieces of land and by establishing schools and charitable organizations, the mission gave them the opportunity to settle down.

In the regions beyond Lake Baikal, missionaries were having a much more difficult time, because in those areas the spread of Christianity was actively resisted by the Lamas. The missionaries tried to use their influence in favour of the baptized Buryats, so that these would be given responsibilities in the region's administration in the Council of the Steppes. However, the authorities did not support this idea which would have lessened the power of the Lamas. Thus, there were considerably more Evenks, Yakuts and Tofalars (Karagass) than Buryats among the Christian converts of this region.

In 1793, monks from the Valamo Monastery of the Transfiguration of Christ and from the Konevitsa Monastery of the Nativity were sent to Alaska, with Archimandrite Ioasaf (Bolotov) as their leader. As early as the first year of their stay, i.e., in 1794, these Orthodox missionaries baptized more than 7,000 local inhabitants on Kodiak Island. However, this first mission was interrupted. In 1794, Archimandrite Ioasaf was called to travel to Irkutsk, and was consecrated there as the Bishop of Kodiak Island, but when he was returning to his base on a ship called "Fenix" in 1799, he was drowned in a storm with all his travelling companions.

Prior to this incident, a hieromonk and missionary called Iuvenali had already died in Alaska in 1796, martyred by pagans.

After these sad incidents, the remaining missionaries continued their work of service on Kodiak Island as follows: Hierodeacon Nektari up to 1806, Monk Ioasaf till 1823, and Hieromonk Afanasi until 1825. In 1804-1807, missionary work was also conducted on this island by Hieromonk Gedeon from the Monastery of Aleksandr Nevski.

Father Herman, a monk from Valamo, promoted Christianity in Alaska for forty-four years. He first lived near the mission church on Kodiak Island, but moved later to a nearby island called Elovyi, which he called the "new Valamo". Even after the departure of Hieromonk Gedeon, Father Herman remained on this island, serving until his death (December 13th, 1837) as the spiritual father, shepherd and guardian of those human souls whom the Kodiak mission had assigned to his care. On August 9th, 1970, on the day of the Holy Great Martyr Panteleimon, blessed Herman was solemnly declared a saint.

In 1840, the Diocese of Kamchatka was established on the order of the Holy Synod. The territory of this new diocese covered the parishes of Okhotsk, and those of America. On the insistence of Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow, the leading missionary sent there was Bishop Innokenti (Veniaminov), who became famous for his work as the Bishop of Kamchatka and the Kuril and Aleutian

Islands. His period of service was a time of missionary recovery in Kamchatka, and especially on the Aleutian Islands.

To describe Bishop Innokenti's life briefly, he was born in 1796 and was given the name Ioann Veniaminov. He was a son of a poor parish clerk of the Church of Elijah, in the village of Ange, in Irkutsk province. Having been educated at the Irkutsk Theological Seminary, he expressed his wish to go to the the Aleutian Islands in 1823. For ten years, he worked hard on Unalaska Island, baptized all the islanders, and built a church and a few smaller chapels there. After this, he promoted Christianity for five years among warlike Indians of northern America.

While living on the islands of Unalaska (1824-1834) and Sitka (1834-1838), Father Ioann learned the Aleut and Kolosh languages. He became familiar with the circumstances in which the islanders lived, with their customs and habits, and with their natural environment. His geographical and ethnographic observations are written down in his work *Notes on the Islands of the Unalaska Region* (*Zapiski ob ostrovakh Unalashskinskogo otdela;* St Petersburg, 1840, volumes 1-3), which is scientifically relevant still today.

Once Innokenti was consecrated as the Bishop of Kamchatka, he extended the reach of missionary work from what it had been previously, especially towards the Far East. His diocese was home to a large number of nationalities living in Kamchatka, on the Aleutian and Kuril Islands, and in the coastal areas of the Okhotsk Sea. Bishop Innokenti spent much of his time travelling and overseeing the work carried out by the missionaries of his diocese. Hence, in 1856, for example, he travelled approximately 8,000 kilometres around his diocese.

Supported by Bishop Innokenti's enthusiastic contribution, his closest assistants translated all the books of the New Testament (except for the Revelation), and some books of the Old Testament, into the Yakut language. They also wrote brief catechetical texts for the spiritual education of the locals. Furthermore, Bishop Innokenti also encouraged the missionaries to instruct local children both in their mother tongue and in the Russian language. This great missionary did not forget Chukotka, either, but sent Kamchatkan and Yakut priests there; in 1850, these priests founded a mission in order to enlighten the Chukchi, the Yukagir and the region's other peoples with the light of Christ. On the initiative and with the help of Bishop Innokenti, the untiring preacher, many other missions were also established on the Russian-American and Russian-Manchurian frontiers, including the Amur Mission.

The Yakutsk Vicariat (which became independent in 1869) was established in 1859, and it became part of the Diocese of Kamchatka. Thus, from 1859 onwards, great missionary challenges and opportunities opened up for Bishop Innokenti among the eastern Yakut and the Evenk. During this period, he had new churches and chapels built, and translated books of the Bible and manuals on the liturgy into the Yakut and Evenk (Tungus) languages. On July 19th,

1859, the liturgy was conducted for the first time in the Yakut language in the Yakut Church of the Holy Trinity.

In carrying out his mission, Bishop Innokenti wished to reach even the most remote nationalities of his territory. He even reached out to the Manchurian tribes which lived on the other side of the Russian-Manchurian border by sending his own son, Gavriil Veniaminov, to be their missionary priest. When the Ussuriisk region became part of Russia in 1858, Bishop Innokenti immediately sent missionaries there to proclaim the gospel to the Nivkh (Gilyak), the Evenk (Orochi), the Nanai (Gold) and other tribes living by the Amur River. He established mission stations among these tribes, built churches and schools, and, with the help of the Mission of China, provided the newly converted with books in the Manchurian language.

When Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow died (1867), Bishop Innokenti was appointed as his successor. In his new office, Metropolitan Innokenti still remained faithful to his missionary calling. On his order, the Orthodox Missionary Society, which had been founded in St Petersburg in 1865, was transferred to Moscow, and he began to lead it himself. At the same time, mission societies were established in many dioceses, with local hierarchs as their chairmen, and these branches offered continuous financial support to the missions operating in the field.

In 1870, on the initiative of Bishop Innokenti, the Russian Orthodox Church's Diocese of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska, with its episcopal see in San Francisco, was founded on the Russian-American frontier. In 1898-1917, the head of this diocese was His Grace Tihon (Belavin; later, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia). Later on, he transferred the episcopal see of the Aleutian Islands and All America to New York, and had the Cathderal of St Nikolai built there. Through his work as a bishop, His Grace Tihon contributed in many ways to the spiritual and educational rapprochement between the peoples of Russia and the United States.

One of the most prominent twentieth-century missionaries of the Russian Orthodox Church has been Metropolitan Nestor (Anisimov; d. 1962). When he became a hieromonk in 1907, he was chosen as head of the Koryak field mission. Having received Archpriest Ioann Sergiev's blessing for his plan to promote Christianity as a missionary, he travelled all the way to distant Kamchatka. The inhabitants of the territory assigned to Hieromonk Nestor were members of the Evenk and Tungus tribes (most of whom were already baptized), Koryaks (with practically no Christian converts at all) and Chukchi (who had not previously heard the word of Christ). From the very beginning, Hieromonk Nestor had to work hard to save those committed to his apostolic care from starving to death, because the years concerned were times of utmost distress and poverty for the people of Kamchatka. Besides finding ways to respond to the material needs of the Kamchadal, Hieromonk Nestor also translated prayers and certain selected passages from the gospels into their vernacular, instructed them in the Russian language, and organized schools.

In order to improve the conditions in which the Kamchadal lived, Hieromonk Nestor decided to establish a Kamchatkan brotherhood, which was founded in 1910. On his journey to Moscow, St Petersburg, Kazan and other towns, Nestor persuaded people of means to join the missionaries in their effort to save the suffering and needy of Kamchatka and Chukotka - and, indeed, many responded to his plea and travelled to these distant regions in order to help the missionaries. Thus, as a result of the unselfish sacrifices of the Kamchatkan brotherhood, the Kamchadal were provided with the basic necessities of life, and their living conditions were improved. Hieromonk Nestor organized care for the sick and set up different kinds of shelters. He travelled about his territory by dog sleigh, distributing food. Moreover, he also founded hospitals for lepers; his marvellous poem called *An Easter with the Lepers (Paskha u prokazhennyh)* has survived to our days.

In 1914, a Kamchatkan missionary conference was held in the village of Iosafat; this was an important occasion in the mission station's life. The conference approved several improvements which were useful for the development of missionary work in the region.

In 1910, an excellent book of Hieromonk Nestor called *Orthodoxy in Siberia (Pravoslavie v Sibiri)* was published in St Petersburg. It describes the methods employed by the distinguished hierarchs of Siberia in their work. In 1916, having spent two years of his life on the warfronts of World War I, Archimandrite Nestor was consecrated as Bishop of Kamchatka by the laying on of hands in Vladivostok. Even during his service as a bishop, this untiring missionary travelled around Kamchatka and Chukotka as actively as earlier, helping the local peoples whose lives were seriously troubled by earthquakes and black measles. In 1917, Bishop Nestor took part in the Russian Orthodox Church's local synod, which gathered participants from all over Russia.

The end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century formed a special period in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church's missionary work. During that period, the Church's missions gradually reached all the corners of the vast Russian empire, and began to spread to the neighbouring countries. To the highest level of the church administration was added a new body, the Missionary Council of the Holy Synod, which was to coordinate missionary activities.

The missions of the Russian Orthodox Church were particularly active in China, Korea, and the Middle East. In fact, there had been a Russian church mission in Peking from 1715 onwards, but it had mainly focused on celebrating the liturgy within a small Russian colony. From the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, however, the missionaries were also actively interested in studying the Chinese language, traditions, customs, history and geography.

The studies of Iakinf (Bichurin; d. 1853), an archimandrite and missionary in 1807-1820, were an important step forward in Russian sinology (the study of the Chinese language and culture).

In 1858, the Chinese authorities finally gave the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church permission to carry out missionary work among the Chinese all over the country.

Hieromonk Isaiia (Peshkin; d. 1871) was one of the prominent Russian missionaries in China. Thanks to his efforts, the liturgy was celebrated in Chinese for the first time ever in 1886.

In 1900, however, the missionary work of the Orthodox ran into difficulties in China: during the Boxer Rebellion, a mission station's printing house and almost all the mission churches were destroyed, and three hundred of the thousand Chinese Orthodox were killed. However, the period between the Boxer Rebellion and World War I gave the opportunity not only to regain some of what had been lost, but also to take some steps forwards. From 1902 onwards, the head of the Russian Orthodox Mission in China was Bishop Innokenti (Figurovski). During this period, a monastery and twenty churches complete with schools were rebuilt, and a women's association in Peking opened its doors again. At the same time, branches of the Russian Orthodox Mission in China were established in Hailar, Tiantsvin, Junshinfu and Shanghai.

In 1900, Archimandrite Khrisanf (Shchetkovski) began his missionary work in Korea. He founded an Orthodox community in Seoul. The work of Archimandrite Pavel (Ivankovski, d. 1919), who later became Bishop of Nikolsk-Ussuriisk, also proved very successful. He translated the books of worship into the Korean language and converted thousands of Koreans to Christianity.

In 1898, when the integration of a group of Syrian-Persian Nestorians into the Russian Orthodox Church was started, the Holy Synod founded the Mission of the River Urmi in Iran.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the time had come for true apostolic preaching in Japan. A field of corn was ripening, and waited to be harvested. God's providence had decreed that the Russian Orthodox Church should become the mother of Japanese Orthodoxy. The task of this apostolic mission was assigned to Archbishop Nikolai (Kasatkin).

St Nikolai (Kasatkin), equal to the apostles, Archbishop of Japan in 1886-1912, began to conduct his apostolic mission in 1861. He founded the Orthodox Church of Japan, which comprised 266 parishes and 33,017 Japanese Orthodox in 1912. (In 1911 alone, 1,802 people were baptized. In 1912, the corresponding number was 1,009.) At that point, 34 priests, six deacons (all of whom were Japanese), and 116 teachers of religion served this church. It owned a theological seminary (with 89 students), two schools for women, and a printing house, which published three different journals and theological books, both in translation and as originals.

Bishop Nikolai worked in Japan for fifty years, and he really sowed new seeds in Japanese ecclesiastical life. Having studied successfully both Japanese and Chinese, he translated both the Bible and the books of worship into the

Japanese language. Even though his apostolic mission lasted for as long as half a century, he preached the word of God to the Japanese tirelessly throughout his period of service. Moreover, he founded a theological seminary in Tokio for the training of local priests, and also established schools for Christian catechesis.

Through his works, which were carried out in the spirit of Orthodoxy, this great missionary naturally sought to establish a living Christian church, which would serve as fertile ground for the seeds of faith in Christ. However, he also had another aim: he wanted to bring about a rapprochement between the Russian and the Japanese culture.

Metropolitan Sergi (Tihomirov; d. 1945) of Japan became the successor of St Nikolai, Archbishop of Japan, in the episcopal office of the Bishop of Tokio. This is how he characterized the personality and work of his predecessor: "Everything that is good in this Japanese church, down to the very last Christian in our churches, down to the very last letter in the translations of the manuals on the liturgy, is a result of our late bishop's enlightened reason, large heart, and steadfast determination, which all united fruitfully with his unwavering belief in the holiness of the cause he promoted, and with his life's work of piety and devotion."

The fruitful work of Archimandrite Antoni Kapustin as the successor of Bishop Profiri constitutes an era in itself (1865-1894) in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church's missionary work in Jerusalem. A zealous servant of the Church, he built churches, schools, and shelters for pilgrims; he founded a convent dedicated to the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God; he organized a women's community in the premises of the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives; and he opened several schools and hospitals.

In 1910, a missionary conference led by His Eminence Makari, Archbishop of Tomsk and Altai, was held in Irkutsk. This conference ordered that preaching, instruction and the liturgy - i.e., all the essential forms of mission - were to be conducted in the language understood by the local people. Moreover, it was also agreed that missionary work must not, in itself, yield to secondary aims, but must devote itself to its one and only goal, its proper and noble aim, which is to win pagans to the Church of Christ.

This Irkutsk missionary conference also surveyed the achievements of the Orthodox Church's missionary activities in the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, giving special recognition to some branches of mission. And if the Church Mission of Japan was recognized as the most successful branch of the Russian Church's outer mission, the Altai Mission received similar recognition for its work within the Russian borders. The Altai Mission, founded in 1830, had actually become a model and example for other missions in the nineteenth century within no more than fifty years.

More than ten hierarchs of great skills and merit, several missionaries and enlighteners, and many scholars, writers, and translators were raised by the Altai Mission to serve the Russian Orthodox Church. It is impossible to

overestimate the significance of this particular mission to the Russian Orthodox Church and to the Russian nation.

In his book *Ways of Russian Theology (Puti russkogo bogosloviia)* Archpriest Georges Florovsky emphasizes that the history of the Altai Mission under Makari (i.e., the Archimandrite Makari Glukharev) is one of the most heroic and most holy episodes in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church.[3] On the other hand, when we become familiar with the legacy of the Altai Mission, we are bound to notice that the history of missionary activities in the era of the followers of Father Makari is no less holy or heroic.

In his *Studies on the History of the Altai people (Ocherki po istorii altaitsev)*, L.P. Potapov, an eminent specialist in Altai history and ethnology, says that one strength of this missionary work was its achievements in the fields of writing, academic study, and translating.[4] Indeed, what has been written and published so far has not yet exhausted the written heritage left behind by the Altai Mission. This heritage provides source material not only for the history of the Altai people and the Altai Mission, but also for the history of the Russian Orthodox Church and the entire Russian nation.

This is a very important point to note, if the history of the missionary activities of the Orthodox Church, which was called a church of high apostolic authenticity at the beginning of this presentation, is not to be studied separately from general ecclesiastical history. *And if we understand missionary work as it was understood by the most significant and successful Russian Orthodox missionaries, then we actually end up regarding the Church's entire history as a history of Orthodox mission.* In this perspective, all the other events - which, at first sight, do not seem to be related to mission at all - take on their appropriate meaning.

In his *Studies on the History of the Church (Ocherki iz istorii Tserkvi)*, Father Sergi Mansurov wrote that if the history of the Church is turned, even to a large extent, into a history of ascetism, and if many things seem to find a point of contact with a monastic way of life, this should not be regarded as a cause for alarm.[5] In the same way, we might say that there is no need to be afraid if the history of the Church of Christ in general, and the history of the

[3] Florovsky, Georges. *Ways of Russian Theology*. Part One. (Volume Five in the Collected Works of Georges Florovsky, ed. by Richard S. Haugh and Paul Kachur, transl. by Robert L. Nichols.) Belmont, Mass.: Nordland Publishing Company, 1979, p. 225.

[4] Potapov, L.P. *Ocherki po istorii altaitsev*. [Studies on the History of the Altai people.] (Novosibirsk, 1948, p. 369.)

[5] Mansurov, S. *Ocherki iz istorii Tserkvi*. [Studies on the History of the Church.] (Theological Studies, Vol. 6. Moscow, 1971, p. 80.)

Russian Orthodox Church in particular, should be turned, even to a large extent, into a history of mission.

The wide and varied work of the Altai Mission produced a wealth of data written down in the style of chronicles. As an example, I would like to present here some extracts of texts which are in archives. They give an idea of the various parties involved in missionary activities, and also contain new facts. The surviving material from the Altai Mission shows that when the missionaries spread Christianity in the mountain regions of Altai and Shor among people who led primitive lives, they also taught these people to read and write, cured their diseases, and protected them from the arbitrary despotism of rulers, from the insults of traders, and from other pagans in a superior position to them. A field mission was never an official administrative body. It did not seek to colonize the Altai region; nor did it exploit or Russianize the local people, as some writers have claimed, and even still do. The extant documents of the Altai Mission speak clearly about the great significance of this mission for the history of the Altai people, about the unselfish patriotic work of the missionaries of the Altai region, and about the brotherly love of the Altai people for the Russian people. Because of all this, the work carried out by these missionaries still retains its relevance.

An extract from the notes of Hieromonk Valentin Galitovski dating from 1905: "We, who are on the holy mission to help these people [...] also rejoice when they are happy and are sad when they grieve - but we still have to work hard and take care of many things to be able to help them spiritually and materially. To achieve such a goal, it is necessary to come to terms with certain personal minor problems, such as the discomforts of this kind of life. But what do such things matter? The needs of those who are to be cared for are more important than the needs of those whose task it is to care." (GAAK, f. 164, op. 2, d. 90, l. 11)[6]

The missionary priest Filaret Sinkovski (who later became Bishop Vladimir of Biisk and the head of a mission) wrote: "We have not admitted to baptism all who have tried to come, because some of them have not promised to be exemplary Christians. We send those people away - even though it is not always easy to distinguish between honesty and dishonesty, especially because the soul of a stranger always remains obscure." (GAAK, f. 164, op. 1, d. 13, l. 7)

The following quotation, in turn, comes from the notes of the missionary priest Konstantin Sokolov, who ponders here upon the influence of Christianity on the newly baptized Altai people: "Undoubtedly, Christianity has a favourable effect on these people who were strangers to us. The newly baptized are usually more mature than the unbaptized. Many of them can now read and write, and

[6] GAAK = *Gosudarstvennyi arhiv Altaiskogo kraia* = *The State Archive of Altai Territory*. F.= fond = collection; op. = opis = catalogue; d. = delo = dossier; l. = list = page, sheet; ob. = oborot = the other side of the sheet.

almost everybody understands spoken Russian. There are many Christians among them, many for whom their religious and moral duties have become a true inner reality." (GAAK, f. 164, op. 1, d. 122, l. 4 ob.)

The following extract also comes from Fr Konstantin Sokolov's notes: "We had only one weapon against Burhanism, Buddhism and paganism - namely, the word of God, and we certainly used it." (GAAK, f. 164, op. 1, d. 122, l. 2)

Fr Pavel Sorokin, also a missionary priest, wrote: "[The Altai people] are more receptive to the concepts and truths of Christianity when these are presented to them with the help of natural sciences. The nature of the Altai region calls forth aesthetic emotions in these people, but such emotions must be developed and nourished, or otherwise they will be slowly smothered. If they are fostered, on the other hand, the Altai people will also gradually want to know more about nature, and this desire for knowledge will also awaken in them an awareness of the Creator of all that exists." (GAAK, f. 164. op. 2, d. 27, l. 5)

To mention a fascinating historical detail, the book *Studies on the History of the Altai Region (Ocherki istorii altaiskogo kraia)* describes how motion pictures first entered the mountain region of Altai in 1929, and how the Altai people became familiar with this modern phenomenon.[7] In fact, the notes written by a missionary of the Altai Mission's Edigan branch tell that the people of Edigan actually saw their first films as early as 1917. The films were shown to them by the above-mentioned missionary priest Konstantin Sokolov, and by Deacon Ialbachev, another missionary. These films depicted European towns and cities, war scenes, cars and aeroplanes; other short films were shown as well. (GAAK, f. 164, op. 2, d. 115, l. 78-78 ob.)

To mention yet another detail, a list of essay topics given for pupils of a mission school can also be found among the extant documents of the Altai Mission. For its own part, this list also supports the view that in the best mission schools the standard of teaching was high: "During the first half of the year, the pupils of the third grade will be expected to write two essays on the topics 'The Significance of the Nile for the Egyptians' and 'The Delphic Oracle and Her Significance to the Hellenes'. The essay topic for the fourth grade (the essay is to be written in class): 'Why did the Hellenes Defeat the Persians in the Hellenic-Persian wars?' Home assignment: 'The Merits of Alexander of Macedon as Conqueror of the Ancient East'." (GAAK, f. 164, op. 2, d. 113, l. 31).

From the rules of the Altai Mission school teachers: "When the Altai children are taught to read and write, this must be done first in the Altai language, and only later in Russian. Once they learn to master the Russian language, they must be encouraged to read and study actively by themselves, so

[7] Barnaul. *Ocherki istorii altaiskogo kraia*. [Studies on the History of the Altai Region] (1987, p. 326.)

that they could continue their studies on their own after leaving the mission school." (GAAK, f. 164, op. 2, d. 4, l. 9)

In the light of all this, is it possible to regard missionary work as "narrow elementary instruction of individuals and entire peoples in Christian doctrine and life in Christ"? This view was accepted until very recently.[8]

After the revolution of 1917, the organized forms of the Russian Orthodox Church's mission were dealt a severe blow. Some mission parishes continued celebrating the liturgy for a while, but later most of these parishes were closed down. Many hierachs, priests, teachers of religion and missionaries were punished.

At the end of 1994, however, the question of the Russian Orthodox Church's missionary activities surfaced in the Synod of Hierarchs, where it was regarded as one of the most burning issues of the day. In response to the present challenges, the study of our church's mission history seeks, for its own part, to promote the recovery of the best mission traditions of our nation. And future missionaries can certainly learn and benefit from the written memoirs of their predecessors, and from the works of the most prominent missionaries of the past, when they prepare themselves for the work of harvesting in the field of the Lord.

[8] See e.g. *Tysiacheletie Kreshcheniia Rusi*. [The Thousandth Anniversary of the Baptism of Rus.] (Material from the International Conference on Church History in Kiev, July 21st-28th, 1986. Moscow, 1988, p. 243.)

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH TODAY

The Rev. Dr. Juhani Forsberg, Executive Secretary for Theology, the ELCF Department for International Relations

1. What have we discussed and agreed upon earlier?

In the theological discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF) and the Russian Orthodox Church, the mission of the Church is no new item on the agenda. This subject first surfaced in our third theological discussions at Järvenpää in 1974, where the actual theme under discussion was the Christian doctrine of salvation. At that point, the missionary dimension of the doctrine of salvation had just become a topical issue, because the WCC's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism had arranged an assembly on "Salvation Today" in Bangkok at the turn of 1972/1973. Both the ELCF and the Russian Orthodox Church were very critical of the view of salvation presented in the Bangkok assembly, and in our own discussions we attempted to create together a corrective to it.

However, we did not choose to make missionary topics into actual themes for our later theological discussions. Rather, we focused our study of the concept of salvation on 'salvation as justification and deification' - a choice which has led to a significant convergence between our two churches' views of salvation. However, when we convened to continue our theological discussions in Mikkeli in 1986, for example, we nevertheless made important statements on the mission of the Church as well, in connection with "Holiness, Sanctification and the Saints", which was one of the themes of the Mikkeli discussions.[1]

In our previous theological discussions at Järvenpää in 1992, the pivotal subject matter was the apostolic faith, which was studied from different angles. Contentwise, this subject matter is very closely linked to the mission of the Church. Namely, we understand the apostolic faith as faith in the Triune God who has bestowed salvation on humankind, and the gospel of this salvation is intended for the entire world. Even if the apostolic faith was not thematically

[1] See "Mikkeli 1986". In: Kamppuri, Hannu T. (ed.). *Dialogue between Neighbours. The Theological Conversations between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church 1970-1986. Communiques and Theses*. (Publications of Luther-Agricola Society B 17.) Helsinki: Luther-Agricola Society, 1986. See e.g. pp. 15-17, 32-35, 49-50, 78-96.

approached from the missionary viewpoint in the papers read at Järvenpää, or in our discussions concerning those presentations, the missionary aspect was, nonetheless, powerfully present in several theses of Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the Communiqué of the Järvenpää dialogue. I quote these theses in the following; in so doing, I also want to emphasize the aspect of continuity in our discussions:

> From *Appendix 1 to the Communiqué of the Ninth Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church:*
>
> "5. Christ, risen and ascended to heaven, sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles to guide them 'into all the truth' (John 16:7,13). They taught people by word of mouth and in writing, as well as by their own example. The New Testament canon was compiled out of the writings of the apostles and their followers."
>
> "7. The aim of Christ's coming to the world and the apostolic gospel of him is the salvation of fallen mankind. For this to happen, the Church must continue to proclaim the gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-7) and to teach Christians to obey everything He has commanded them (Matt. 28:20)."
>
> "9. In today's world there are many religious organizations and Christian movements which do not recognize the value of the apostolic doctrine, nor what it obliges. This is our common concern. We want to hold to the precious apostolic legacy given to the Church."
>
> From *Appendix 2 to the Communiqué of the Ninth Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church:*
>
> [In fact, all the theses of Appendix 2 are connected with the mission of the Church, but I quote here only those which express this aspect explicitly:]
>
> "4. Because of significant social and political changes as well as the diversity of the contemporary world, the apostolic witness of the churches faces new tasks. The churches are thus required to examine more and more attentively and critically their own relation with the society they are involved in."
>
> "5. In this world, which is both uniting and polarizing at the same time, Christians search for communion so as to be able to give the apostolic

witness and to confess Christ together so that the world may believe (John 17:21)."

"7. When Christians confess the apostolic faith in their lives today, they must both preserve the foundation of this faith (Eph. 2:20-21) and take the requirements of the present into consideration. Only then will the world experience the gospel as the guiding and liberating word of truth and grace."

"8. Witnessing the apostolic faith to the world is rooted in the gospel, the spiritual life of the Church and its members' true fight of the faith. The Church is constantly being called to 'go' out into the world, to [be] open to the life of the world and to be effective in all areas of life."

"9. In the present world situation the differences between rich and poor countries have accumulated. The apostolic teaching calls Christians to a simple life-style. The apostolic message requires them to be merciful and just to those suffering from poverty and unjust social structures."

"10. In this world of change, God's word and the apostolic faith set the Church a prophetic task. They call Christians to criticize the injustices of society and, furthermore, to point in a constructive spirit to those values which are in accordance with God's will."

"11. The apostolic service of the Church necessarily presupposes that Christ is proclaimed, in accordance with his command: 'Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matt. 28:19). In fulfilling this command, Christians must avoid proselytism, i.e. efforts to convert Christians from one denomination to another. Action of this kind hinders them from achieving the unity of faith, confuses the spiritual life of the faithful and makes the truth revealed by God an object of ridicule to non-believers."

These theses are very brief, and do not give a systematic presentation of the mission of the Church. However, a coherent view can be assumed to underlie them - a view which can be helpful and serve us today when we begin to discuss the nature of the Church's mission. At least the following missionary themes are present in the above theses:

1. Mission means preaching and teaching the apostolic gospel (Appendix 1, Thesis 7). Witness to the apostolic faith has its origins in the gospel, the spiritual life of the Church, and its members' true fight of faith (App. 2, Thesis 8).

2. When churches carry out their missionary work, they encounter organizations and movements which do not hold to the apostolic doctrine and legacy (App. 1, Thesis 9).

3. The mission of the Church also has a social and political dimension (App. 2, Thesis 4). The Church is called to be effective in all areas of life (App. 2, Thesis 8). It has a prophetic task: it must criticize the injustices of society and point to the values which accord with God's will (App. 2, Thesis 10). In its missionary work, the Church must pay especial attention to poverty and injustice (App. 2, Thesis 9).

4. Mission is an ecumenical task (App. 2, Thesis 5). Missionary work must not be proselytism; in other words, it must not aim at converting Christians from one denomination to another (App. 2, Thesis 11).

5. In addition to the foundation constituted by the apostolic faith, the Church must also consider the context, or the requirements of the present, in its missionary work. (App. 2 , Thesis 7).

2. Foundations for the Church's mission

2.1. What is meant by the 'mission of the Church'?

Because the concepts used in connection with mission have become somewhat ambiguous, the question of the mission of the Church easily shows its complexity even on the terminological level. Traditionally, the most usual term has been 'missionary work' (G. *Missionsarbeit*); particurlarly in the earlier days, this term referred to the sending of missionary workers far away to "pagan" or non-Christian countries. Later, the expression 'mission of the Church' (L. *missio ecclesiae*) became important in the ecumenical movement; this term emphasizes mission as part of the Church's essence and fundamental calling. However, it cannot be ignored that the phenomenon ultimately involved here is the mission of the Triune God himself (L. *missio Dei*), which is a broader concept than the mission of the Church.[2] To mention another terminological complexity, it has become quite common to speak about 'mission' without any further specification. This usage has usually caused much

[2] See e.g. the following works: 1) *Church and Justification. Understanding the Church in the Light of the Doctrine of Justification.* Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission. Geneva: LWF, 1994, p. 116, para 244. 2) Scherer, James A. *Church, Kingdom and Missio Dei.* In: Van Engen, Charles & Gilliland, Dean S. & Pierson, Paul (eds.). *The Good News of the Kingdom. Essays in Honor of Arthur F. Glasser.* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993, p. 85.

confusion. Namely, those employing this unspecified concept do not only call everything that the Church is and does 'mission', but also look for certain kinds of events in world history (reform, liberation, revolution) and interpret them as 'missions' which accord with God's will (the Fourth WCC Assembly, Uppsala, 1968).

In missiology, the choice of focusing major attention on the mission of the *Triune God* and on the mission of the *Church* has certain advantages but also some disadvantages. The main advantage of this framework is that it holds together the essence, doctrine and mission of the Church; this makes it easier to avoid problems which arise when one first constructs a separate concept of mission and only later connects it to the essence and work of the Church. But problems also arise if the Church's mission is understood as *all* that which the Church is and does, and the same thing happens if 'mission' is confined merely to that which the *Church* is and does. In analyzing the mission of the Church, one must bear two things in mind: first, the *missio ecclesiae* is participation in the Triune God's mission, which is more comprehensive than the mission of the Church. Second, in connection with the Church's mission, the essence and calling of the Church are viewed from the perspective of crossing boundaries between faith and unbelief, and between love and lovelessness.

2.2. Biblical foundations for the mission of the Church

The essential doctrinal basis of our churches consists of the canonical writings of the Old and New Testament, and of the ecumenical creeds, which are summaries of the apostolic faith that is found in the canonical writings. The doctrine, life and work of the Church, including the Church's mission and its missionary work on the practical level, must also rely on this basis.

Several aspects of the foundations for the Church's mission are already present in the Old Testament.[3] Admittedly, the Old Testament cannot be regarded as a missionary text if we think that mission means crossing geographical, religious and social boundaries in order to win others to faith in Yahweh.[4] Nor was the religion of Israel missionary in the sense that its adherents would have understood clearly from the very beginning that the one God of Israel was also the God and Lord of all nations. In the early days, the God of Israel was primarily thought of as the "Lord of hosts", who was above all other gods and stronger than them. Gradually, however, particularly in the preaching of the prophets, it became obvious that the God of Israel was the

[3] Senior, Donald & Stuhlmueller, Carroll. *The Biblical Foundations of Mission*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1983.

[4] Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1992, p. 17.

only God and the Lord of all nations. The most powerful witness to this is found in the Book of Isaiah; according to its eschatological vision, all nations come to Mount Zion to serve the Lord at the end of time (Isa. 2:2-5; Isa. 51:5; Isa. 56:7; see also Micah 4:1-9).

For the Christian Church, it is not possible to understand God's New Covenant or his Kingdom revealed in Jesus Christ without the revelation which Israel received or without the salvation history which this people lived through. The message of the Old Testament embraces at least the following aspects, which are important for the mission arising from the gospel of the New Covenant:

1. God is the Creator of the world and of the human being. All nations are a result of God's creative activity (Gen. 10). Everything that God has created belongs to him. The origin and foundation of God's mission lies in the fact that he wants that which has always belonged to him to be in communion with him again.

2. Out of all nations, God chooses one people, makes a covenant with it, and gives his law and his promise to it. This means both a great privilege and a great responsibility at the same time.

3. God liberates his people from being a slave to other nations. His people breaks his law, and he declares his judgement on them. However, he also has mercy on those who turn to him for forgiveness. Ultimately, all nations can share in God's salvation when they turn to the God of Israel and return to Mount Zion.

In the Old Testament, these themes recur as new variations in connection with several events, their interpretations, and the people living at the centre of them. There is Abraham, who was promised that in him all nations were to be blessed. There is Moses, to whom God gave his law on Mount Sinai. There is Amos, who fulfilled his social mission through his proclamation of the law. There is Jonah, to whom God gave the mission of proclaiming judgement on the people of Niniveh, on whom, however, God himself eventually had mercy.

No one single coherent missionary 'policy' can be derived from these themes and their variations. However, only on the basis of them is it possible to understand what kind of mission "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Matt. 22:32; Acts 3:13), who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ, has given to the people of the New Covenant.

In those churches and mission societies which represent the legacy of the Reformation, missionary work has been justified especially by pointing to the missionary commission given by Jesus. It is found in all four gospels, even though the wordings are not quite the same (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21). Particularly the formulation of Matthew has

gained a central role in Protestant missionary work. In the English language, this particular commission has even been given a name of its own, the "Great Commission".

It is obvious that for the Church the missionary commission given by the risen Lord to his apostles is still a very important biblical passage which must not be ignored. However, there is a risk that any theology of mission based on these missionary commissions *alone* remains one-sided and unable to express the entire range of the diversity contained in the New Testament message. For example, missiology based solely on Matthew may tend to emphasize one-sidedly the aspects of "disciple-*making*" (Gr. *matheteuein*) and the *obeying* of the commandments of Christ, in which case the entire view of mission may become rather *legalistic*.

Exegetical research has shown that the New Testament is throughout a missionary text. This dimension makes itself evident, first, in the content of the New Testament, which repeats in many ways the idea that the gospel of the salvation bestowed upon humankind in Jesus Christ is intended for all people, and that everyone participating in this salvation is called to spread the good news. According to the New Testament, it is part of the *essence* of the Church and Christians to fulfil this missionary task. Therefore, mission is not something optional for Christians and the Church. In other words, in Christianity, mission is not some kind of additive element or a commission following the actual "matter", but part of the "matter" itself.

Second, the New Testament's missionary nature also makes its presence felt in the way in which the apostolic faith was given form and literary expression in the New Testament in the early Church. The letters of the Apostle Paul are not the New Testament's only missionary epistles; its other books, including the gospels, are also missionary in nature. They have been given form in various missionary situations encountered by the early Church.

The double work of Luke, his gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, can be mentioned as one example of the missionary nature of the New Testament.[5] The latter part of this double work, i.e., the Book of Acts, which tells about the missionary work carried out by the apostles, the Apostle Paul in particular, is missionary in a fashion that is immediately obvious to anyone. In its own way, however, Luke's gospel is also missionary, even though it only rarely speaks about Jesus reaching out beyond his own people through his message and works. For example, Luke's description of Jesus' first sermon in the synagogue of Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30) reveals that the message of Jesus was intended for Gentiles, as is also shown by the Old Testament examples in this passage. Above all, however, Luke's gospel crosses social frontiers: the gospel is good news to the poor.

[5] See e.g. Nissilä, Keijo. *Raamattu lähetysasiakirjana*. [The Bible as a Missionary Document.]. In: Saarelma-Maunumaa, Minna (ed.). *Raamattu maailmalla* [The Bible around the World]. Jyväskylä: Kirjapaja, 1993, pp. 18-28.

In Luke's gospel, the parable of the great dinner (Luke 14:16-24), and the following three parables of a lost sheep, a lost silver coin and the prodigal son (Luke 15) occupy a central position. The main message of the parable of the great dinner is that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from those who were first invited but turned down the invitation, and given to "outsiders". The three parables in Luke 15 emphasize the "missionary" nature of the gospel in a way which places a particular stress on God's care of that which has been "lost". He himself searches for and welcomes those who have abandoned him, and rejoices with the angels over those who have been found and have returned - and who have actually belonged to him from the very beginning. These parables are not missionary in the narrow sense, because they do not specifically point to other nations. However, with the entire message of Luke's double work as their basis, they do serve the universality of the gospel.

In the same way, we can find missionary riches, which are part of the apostolic faith, in the other books of the New Testament as well. The Church interprets these riches through the whole of the New Testament message, and through its own creed based on this very message. The following aspects are present in this interpretation:

1. Ultimately, the agent of mission is the Triune God - Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier *(missio Dei)*. His love is the source and motivation of missionary work.

2. Christ's apostles and his Church, which has committed itself to the apostolic faith, have received from their risen Lord the mandate to preach the gospel to all creation. He himself is present in this proclamation and in his Church "to the end of the age".

3. The gospel, and therefore also missionary work, are universal and inclusive in nature: without restrictions, the gospel is intended for all nations and all human beings. The actual "matter" of missionary work is the gospel, the message of the salvation which God has bestowed on humankind. The gospel is a message of God's love, which was revealed in Christ, who died for the "ungodly" and brought about reconciliation between God and the world. God makes a human being righteous through faith in this gospel (Rom. 5).

4. On the other hand, the gospel, and therefore also missionary work, are exclusive in nature. The apostolic faith is faith in the God who does not allow any other gods to be raised to his side. "There is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12; Phil. 2:10). As the "other" side of the gospel, the proclamation of the law, exhortation to repentance (Luke 24:47), the demand to turn away from idols, and the commandment to be obedient and to love God and one's neighbour are also part of the mission of the Church.

5. Conversion and the reception of the gospel are closely linked to baptism, which incorporates the baptized person into the Church of Christ.

6. The missionary task given by Christ to his Church consists of the proclamation of the gospel and the service of love, which cannot be separated. In addition to crossing boundaries between faith and unbelief, missionary work also crosses frontiers between love and lovelessness.

3. How to carry out the mission of the Church

The above-mentioned six paragraphs do not sufficiently cover everything that the mission of the Church is and involves. In different contexts - i.e., as individual churches, as churches which live in the same region, as confessional federations, and as churches' ecumenical organizations (CEC, WCC) - churches have tried to give systematic presentations of their views of the Church's mission. The ecclesiastical law and church order of the ELCF, for example, include statements which make it possible to construct an idea of how the ELCF understands its mission. In the 1980s, the Lutheran World Federation, the confessional federation to which the ELCF belongs, produced and adopted a joint Lutheran document on missiology called *Together in God's Mission* (approved by the LWF's Executive Committee in 1988). Also in the 1980s, the World Council of Churches produced a missiological document *Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation* (approved by the WCC's Central Committee in 1982), which the WCC now wishes to revise. In the following lines, it is not possible for me to formulate another outline of a similar kind. Rather, I intend to present some examples in order to call attention to certain fundamental aspects which are important for the Church's mission as a whole, and which can be considered relevant to our dialogue.

1. *Missionary work* and *the mission of the Church* belong together. In the history of Christianity, the contribution of individual Christians has often been crucial in missionary work. Theologically, however, missionary work is not an individual enterprise but has both its origin and its goal in the Church. Its aim is to incorporate human beings into participation in salvation. People who live separate from God are incorporated into this participation through baptism, and they can remain in it only by living in communion with the Church. In Western churches, missionary work has often been carried out by various organizations - by orders (e.g. monastic fraternities) in the Roman Catholic Church, and by mission societies in Protestant churches. However, even if these organizations have not been part of the hierarchical structure of the Church, their work has nevertheless been the Church's work, provided that they have been within the Church, and have wanted to have the Church's confirmation and support for their activities. (This has been the case in the ELCF, for example.) This kind

of missionary work has also been the Church's work in the sense that it has resulted in the emergence of congregations and churches, not of organizations or societies. In connection with these questions, two different trends are effective within today's Protestant Christianity. On the one hand, there is a need for development leading to an ever closer integration of those mission societies that have been founded for historical reasons into the organization of the Church (e.g. the Church of Sweden Mission). On the other hand, individual Christians' "spontaneous" missionary work, which has less and less - or even nothing - to do with any organization or church, is gaining more and more ground especially in the Protestant or Evangelical churches of the Third World. The ELCF supports the former trend. At the same time, however, we must try to learn from the vitality and dedication to the gospel which is present in many movements operating outside church structures.

2. The mission of the Church is not only an extension of an individual church's organization or hierarchy; above all, it is a task which is part of *the priesthood of all believers*. Every Christian is ordained to this universal priesthood in baptism. Each baptized member of the Church shares in the "holy" or "royal" priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5,9). Communion with Christ, which is bestowed on the Christian in baptism, means participation in Christ's threefold ministry as a prophet, high priest and king. By participating in this prophetic, priestly and royal ministry of Christ, believers take part in his mission in the world.[6] The gospel can best cross the boundaries between faith and unbelief, and love and lovelessness, when the everyday work and living environment of each believer provides natural points of contact for such crossings.

3. From the point of view of *intention*, everything that the Church is or does is not mission. However, everything in the Church's life has a missionary *dimension*. Missionary work does not only mean that Christians go from where they live to some other place to preach and teach. Namely, the missionary dimension is also present in the Church's life of prayer and worship. It is naturally there in baptism, and the same also applies to the eucharist. This dimension could be called "centralizing" in the sense that the Church calls people to the "centre", to the communion of the Word and the sacraments.

4. The mission of the Church also has its *social* dimension. As far as social structures and the people working within them are concerned, the Church's mission means, above all, preaching the law, disclosing social injustices, demanding justice, working for peace, struggling for the abolition of poverty, helping refugees and the marginalized, and working for the integrity of

---

[6] *Church and Justification. Understanding the Church in the Light of the Doctrine of Justification.* Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission. Geneva: LWF, 1994, pp. 123-124.

creation. When necessary, the social dimension of the Church's mission is also realized in a critical attitude towards governing authorities. (In actual fact, however, the Church has often supported secular authorities too uncritically, either actively or by remaining silent, rather than presented too heavy criticism.) Moreover, the Church also expresses the social dimension of its mission by respecting and realizing religious freedom and human rights.

5. In fulfilling its missionary task, the Church must consider more and and more seriously each *context*. The gospel must be proclaimed and interpreted in all situations in such a way that the listeners can understand its content and its significance for their own lives. With slightly different emphases, such terms as 'acculturation' or 'inculturation', 'accommodation' and 'adaptation' have been used earlier instead of *contextualization*. To learn to consider the context is a difficult task requiring much study and patience, and unprejudiced attitudes. However, this task cannot be fulfilled by intellectual efforts alone; sharing and living together are also important. One difficulty in relation to the question of context is that contextualization may be distorted and become syncretism, in which case the apostolic faith is no longer kept pure. Another thing which makes contextualization as a "planting" of the gospel in new cultures and ways of life into a difficult task is the fact that the gospel cannot always adapt itself to cultures but can also be in paradox or conflict with them, or transform them.[7]

6. Another part of the contextual nature of the Church's mission consists of encounters with other living faiths and ideologies, and of *dialogue* with them. Other religions make their presence felt in our countries increasingly strongly and with a growing self-awareness; therefore, the risk of a violent conflict between different religions is becoming an evermore realistic threat. In this connection, it must be borne in mind that although the message of Christianity is, as I said above, exclusive in a certain and even very pivotal sense, Christians are in no position to condemn the people of other faiths. True dialogue always involves the witness of both partners to their own faith. Missionary work and *tolerance* do not exclude each other.

7. The Church cannot carry out its missionary work through any kind of *coercion*. The history of Christian mission abounds in examples of the use of coercive measures, but there is no excuse for using them. I do not think that missionary work is nowadays conducted anywhere through actual violence, but recourse to coercion can also take the shape of exploiting people's material or other distress. The Church cannot accept any missionary strategy which uses economic or other advantages as a lure in persuading people into faith.

[7] Stauffer, Anita S. (ed.). *Worship and Culture in Dialogue*. Geneva: LWF, 1994, pp. 9-10.

8. The mission and unity of the Church belong together, and so do missionary work and *ecumenism*. Missionary work must not aim at *proselytism*, which means attempts to convert baptized Christians from one church or denomination to another. Churches aiming at mutual communion and agreement should rather try to support each other in their missionary work and evangelism. This means, for example, that they should together encourage baptized but alienated Christians to find their way back to communion with their own church. However, if someone voluntarily wants to move from one church to another, the principle of religious freedom must be followed in such a case as well.

9. In order to carry out its mission responsibly, the Church must give catechumens sufficient *instruction* in the content of Christian faith before admission to baptism. Views as to what is sufficient may differ, but it nevertheless applies that instruction preceding baptism must not be "replaced" with instruction which may possibly be given afterwards.

Bibliography:

1. Documents of the theological discussions between the ELCF and the Russian Orthodox Church

Kamppuri, Hannu T. (ed.). *Dialogue Between Neighbours. The Theological Conversations between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church 1970-1986. Communiques and Theses*. (Publications of Luther-Agricola Society B 17.) Helsinki: Luther-Agricola Society, 1986.

Järvenpää 1992. The Ninth Theological Discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church. (Documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland 5.) Helsinki: Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, 1993.

2. Other references

Best, Thomas & Gassmann, Günther (eds.) *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia*. (Faith and Order Paper no. 166.) Geneva: WCC, 1994.

Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission. Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1992.

Bria, Ion (ed.). *Go Forth in Peace. Orthodox Perspectives on Mission*. (WCC Mission Series 7.) Geneva: WCC, 1986.

Church and Justification. Understanding the Church in the Light of the Doctrine of Justification. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission. Geneva: LWF, 1994.

Mission and Evangelism. An Ecumenical Affirmation. Geneva: WCC, 1983.

Saarelma-Maunumaa, Minna (ed.). *Raamattu maailmalla.* [The Bible around the World.] Jyväskylä: Kirjapaja, 1993.

Scherer, James A. *Gospel, Church, and Kingdom. Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology.* Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987.

Stauffer, Anita S. (ed.). *Worship and Culture in Dialogue.* Geneva: LWF, 1994.

Together in God's Mission. An LWF Contribution to the Understanding of Mission. Geneva: LWF, 1988.

Van Engen, Charles & Gilliland, Dean S. & Pierson, Paul (eds.) *The Good News of the Kingdom. Essays in Honor of Arthur F. Glasser.* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993.

Verkuyl, J. *Contemporary Missiology. An Introduction.* Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987 (1978).

THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION: ECCLESIOLOGICAL AND CANONICAL ARGUMENTS

Bishop Ioann of Belgorod and Staro-Oskol, Dean of the Kursk Theological Seminary

When we begin to discuss the mission of the Church, we should first define the content of the term "mission".

In the 19th century, the Orthodox Church, in the person of St Innokenti of Moscow, regarded mission as the courageous deed of bearing witness to Christ among people who lived far from the so-called civilized world. According to St Innokenti, mission meant leaving one's fatherland when necessary, and going far away to places which were "at the back of beyond" and lacked all comforts, in order to guide those wandering about in the darkness of ignorance to the way of truth.[1] These reflections were one starting point for our church's organized missionary work, which is characterized by a well-ordered church structure and the charismatic work of such prominent Orthodox missionaries as St Innokenti of Moscow, Archimandrite Makari (Glukharev), St Nikolai of Japan, St Herman of Alaska, and many others.

In defining the essence of Orthodox mission, it is nowadays possible to distinguish among the following aspects:

1) The Church's mission is an integral qualitative characteristic of the Church itself, which is the living body of Christ. The Church's mission is holy. It is the Church's entire life, but this internal life of the Church is based on "frontier relationships" between Church and world. Each member of the Church is called to bear witness to Christ; in this sense, "a Christian" means the same as "a missionary".

There is a point of contact between the approach outlined above and the American Episcopal Church's theological understanding of mission. According to a definition of mission found in this church's Common Prayer Book, mission means bringing all people back into communion with God and with each other

[1] "Nastavleniia Vysokopreosveshchennogo Innokentiia, byvshego arkhiepiskopa Kamchatskogo, Kurilskogo i Aleutskogo nushaganskomu missioneru, ieromonahu Feofilu". *Tserkovnye vedomosti.* ["The Advice of His Eminence, Former Archbishop of Kamchatka, the Kuril Islands and the Aleutian Islands to the Apostle of Nushagan, Hieromonk Feofil". Ecclesiastical Newsletter.] (1903, No. 3, p. 97.)

in Christ. According to the same definition, the Church carries out this mission when it prays, proclaims the gospel and encourages justice, peace and love (p. 855). A similar approach can also be found in WCC documents, insofar as the mission of the Church is understood as all people's reconciliation with God and with each other, and as preaching, teaching and healing.

2) Mission, or witness, is part of the nature of the Church, and means proclaiming the good news to the whole creation (Mark 16:15). The Orthodox Church is called apostolic, not only because its members are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph. 2:20), but also, and especially, because it has continued the proclamation of the apostles of Jesus Christ until this very day, and because the number of its members keeps growing all the time. While the Church grows continuously, its essence remains the same as that of the Church which emerged on the day of Pentecost, when "about three thousand persons" were baptized (Acts 2:41).

For the people of the Church, mission, as apostolicity, has always been their main task when they have set out to obey the Lord's commandment to his disciples: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20).

3) The Orthodox view of mission is also based on mission's trinitarian foundation. The source of mission lies in the Holy Trinity, who revealed himself when the Father sent Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit (John 20:21-22). This sending was part of God's plan to save us, "for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Hence, the aim of Orthodox mission is not only to pass on intellectual convictions or ethical beliefs, but to share communion with God, or to share the experience of the life of a community which is in God. A premise for this trinitarian approach to mission is the understanding that the task of mission is to project the Holy Trinity's inner relationships onto human relationships.

4) In a hidden way, the Church's mission is connected with the resurrection of Christ, because it was in connection with this event that the apostles were given the commandment to teach all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). Therefore, the Church's proclamation must bear witness to Christ as the Risen Lord, and bring into the world his kingdom, the "new heaven" and "new earth" (Rev. 21:1), which is opened to us in the celebration of the eucharist. Through the liturgy and obedience to the commandments, the life-giving Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, is revealed in power, and the true kingdom of God is brought into the world.

5) The Orthodox understanding of mission regards ecumenical mission as an eschatological event, because the gospel is to be proclaimed "to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). It is this eschatological approach that discloses the right perspective on the relationship between mission and national culture. Namely, mission always aims at renewal of the entire cosmos, i.e., of both humankind

and nature, "so that God may be all in all", as the Apostle Paul says (1 Cor. 15:28).

Therefore, mission means approaching the world, sanctifying and renewing it, and giving an old way of life a new content. It also means accepting local cultures and their manifestations, as long as these are not in contradiction with Christian faith, and renewing them as intruments of salvation.

On the "horizontal level" of Orthodox mission, we can distinguish between inner and outer mission. The latter means missionary work overseas. In other words, it is mission with a wide geographical range and with a variety of forms. It can be carried out either beyond the borders of an Orthodox country, or among such a country's non-Orthodox ethnic groups.

Inner mission, in turn, means that those who belong to minorities from the Orthodox point of view (i.e., non-Christians, pagans and Raskolniks), are brought into communion with the Orthodox Church. However, this classification starts from the presumption that the Orthodox Church is the dominant church in the country concerned.

There are also other ways of defining the Orthodox Church's mission. For example, the term 'inner mission' can be used to refer to missionary work within the official boundaries of the Orthodox Church. This means approaching those who have been baptized and are therefore regarded as church members, but who have never been given any instruction in Christian faith. Traditionally, this kind of mission is called baptismal instruction. In this case, "outer mission" is understood as the Church's calling to spread and establish the spirit of Christianity outside the Church's official boundaries, which means bringing people to Christ by baptism and through baptismal instruction.

Ecclesiological foundations for Orthodox mission

According to St Kirill of Jerusalem, the Church is called an *ekklesia* because it reaches out to all people and gathers them together. It should be noted in this connection that Orthodox theology gives no exhaustive definition of the Church, even though descriptive answers to the question of what the Church is can be found. As emphasized by Archpriest Georges Florovsky, it is impossible to start this kind of discussion with an official definition of the Church, because, strictly speaking, there is nothing that could be affirmed as a doctrinal basis for such a definition. No such definition can be found in the fathers of the Church, its great teachers, or St Thomas Aquinas. Nor was any such definition given by the Ecumenical Councils or the later great councils of the West either, says Archpriest Florovsky.[2]

[2] Florovsky, Georges. "The Church: Her Nature and Task." In: *The Universal Church in God's Design*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948, p. 43.

The Nicene Creed lists four different marks of the Church: "μιαν" (one), "αγιαν" (holy), "καθολικην" (catholic) and "αποστολικην" (apostolic). These marks define the fullness of its existence, and if even only one of them is missing, the Church is no longer the Church.

1) "Μιαν" (one).

According to the Apostle Paul, the Church is "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27), a living organism comprising all the regenerate people of God, "for in the one Spirit we were all baptized into the one body" (1 Cor. 12:13). When people are saved by God, they are saved in a community, because "God has so arranged the body" (1 Cor. 12:24). When any of us falls, (s)he falls alone, but no one is saved alone. Whoever is saved, is saved in the Church, as a member of it, and together with all its other members.[3]

This is the basis for Orthodox mission, which aims not only at giving instruction in Christian faith, or at leading people to an intellectual reception of Christ, but at establishing eucharistic communities. In them, people can have access to the knowing of Christ based on experience and given by grace, when they participate in the hidden life of the Church and obey the commandments which are the basis for a life of piety and devotion.

Hence, oneness (μιαν, "one"), which is justifiably called a mark of the Church, is a declaration of spiritual identification with the other members of Christ's body. This aspect also defines the motivation of Orthodox mission, i.e., the motive of love. The following words of Metropolitan Makari of Moscow to Archbishop Guri of Kazan give this motive very apt expression: "Win the trust of the Tatars' hearts, and do not lead these people to baptism because of any other motive but faith."

But this love is a response to the love of God. "We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us - and we ought to lay down our lives for one another" (1 John 3:16). The Apostle Paul speaks about love for the Triune God, who gives his Son because of his love for the world, and sends the Son into the world in the Holy Spirit, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. This trinitarian foundation plays a crucial part in ecclesiological argumentation for mission. Professor Petros Vassiliadis says that Christian instruction is senseless if it is not connected with baptism in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, the Church's missionary calling is based on the Father's sending of Christ in the Holy Spirit. "As the Father has sent me, so I send you [...] Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:21-22). And, emphasizes Professor Vassiliadis, if we follow this line of thought further, the sending of Christ was a necessary consequence of the inner dynamics of the Holy Trinity. In actual fact, says Vassiliadis, mission can be

[3] Khomiakov, A. *Edinaia tserkov.* [The Church Is One.] (London, 1968, p. 38.)

justified only if we understand our missionary task as a projection of the Holy Trinity's inner communion onto human relationships.[4]

This same idea can be found in Ion Bria's writings. He says: "Trinitarian theology points to the fact that God is in God's own self a life of communion and that God's involvement in history aims at drawing humanity and creation in general into this communion with God's very life."[5] This way of thinking seeks to emphasize the importance of mission: its main task is not to pass on propaganda, or such things as intellectual convictions, articles of doctrine, or ethical rules, but to convey the experience of communion with God.

2) "Αγιαν" ("holy")

John's gospel identifies Christ with the Logos. This means that Christ is not only "the Saviour of our souls", or not only the Founder and Head of the Church, but also the ultimate Truth concerning the beginning, development and ultimate aim of God's creation. The Divine Logos speaks in his Church as the Holy Spirit. "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy [...], so that she may be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27).

The Church is holy, first, because its Head is our Lord Jesus Christ, second, because the Holy Spirit and his gifts of grace are present in it, and, third, because the Church is in communion with the Heavenly Church.

O. Kleman says that, in essence, the Church is nothing but the world on its way towards transfiguration and renewal in Christ for the fullness of Paradise. According to Kleman, the Paradise of Presence is, indeed, Christ himself. He said to the criminal who was crucified with him and who believed in him: "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). The world is in Christ, and, as Kleman says, the new heaven and new earth is brought to us in the sacraments of the Church, and in Scripture, which is also a sacrament.[6]

In the church fathers' theology, the Church is called the "temple of the Holy Spirit", because where the Church is, there is also the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is, there is also the Church, as well as grace and mercy in all their forms, because the Spirit is the truth.[7]

[4] Vassiliadis, Petros. *Mission and Proselytism. An Orthodox Understanding.* 1995.

[5] Bria, Ion (ed.). *Go forth in Peace. Orthodox Perspectives on Mission.* (WCC Mission Series 7.) Geneva: WCC, 1986, p. 3.

[6] Kleman O. *Istoki Bogosloviia ottsov Drevnei Tsrekvi.* [The Sources of the Theology of the Fathers of the Ancient Church.] (Moscow, 1994, p. 93.)

[7] St Irenaeus of Lyon. *Adversus haereses*, 3, 24, 15.

Hence, the aim of the Church's mission is that all people should know Christ, and find in him communion with God, which is called "deification" or "divinization" by the holy fathers of the Church.

The Church, led by the Holy Spirit, is a new life in Christ, a communion of saints; therefore, it carries out missionary work in this world through its mere presence. In the Church, the faithful grow towards their spiritual perfection, and thus conduct their divine mission in the world. If there is no spiritual growth, there is no mission either. The Orthodox view of mission starts from the premise that personal deification at the same time means promoting the Church's mission in the world. However, the deification of an individual takes place in a local church, in which prevails the hierachy decreed by God. St Ignatios the Theophoros[8] regarded the Church as a eucharistic community which lives in an eschatological reality, and which, here on earth, proclaims the kingdom of God. Hence, in accordance with the example set by God's kingdom, the Church is an organized institution, with bishops as the heads of local parishes. Ever since the age of the apostles, and especially since the age following their era, the Church has had its own administration, which, however, has never turned into institutionalism in its own right, or lost its prophetic or charismatic nature.

Thus, in the real incarnation of the Church's mission, the centre point is the local community, and bishops play a significant role in establishing this mission.

James J. Stamoolis says: "The bishop is the representative head of the community. Not only does he represent Christ in the Eucharist, he also represents the people. The prayers the celebrant offers up in the liturgy are all prayers in the first-person plural except when the celebrant prays for the forgiveness of his own personal sin. When one fully understands the role of the bishop as speaking for the church, then the action of the bishop is an action on behalf of the whole local church. [...] It is the whole Church, laity and clergy, which is responsible for correct doctrine, yet normally it is the bishop who is the authoritative teacher of the truth. Therefore the church, in the person of the bishop, can be said to be involved in mission."[9]

In the celebration of the eucharist, the Church is realized in all its fullness and unity. Eucharistic ecclesiology enables us to understand the role of laity in the Church and in Orthodox mission. According to St Basil the Great, the Church's affairs cannot be conducted without the participation of the Church in all its fullness, or in any case not without lay persons' permission and

[8] Translator's note: 'Theophoros' means a 'bearer of God'. 'St Ignatios the Theophoros' is also known as St Ignatios of Antioch.

[9] Stamoolis, James J. *Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today*. (American Society of Missiology Series 10). Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1986, p. 118.

confirmation (Epist. 230). But all that is done in the Church must be in harmony with the Church's hierarchy, because "God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues" (1 Cor. 12:28).

3) "Καθολικην" (catholic)

According to Vladimir Lossky, the Church is the centre point of the world; the Church is where the world's fates are determined. All people are called to come to join the Church, because if a human being is a microcosm, then the Church is a "macroanthropos", says Lossky, quoting St Maximos the Confessor. The Church keeps growing and renewing its form throughout history, bringing the chosen ones into communion with itself and with God. The world becomes old and dilapidated, but the Church is constantly renewed by the Holy Spirit, who is the source of its life. At a certain point, emphasizes Lossky, when the Church has reached the completeness of its growth decreed by God, the external world, having emptied itself of all its vitality, dies, and the Church is revealed in its eternal glory as the kingdom of God.[10]

This is why the Church is 'catholic' (*καθολον*) and thus 'belongs to all'.

According to St Kirill of Jerusalem, the catholicity of the Church refers to the following characteristics:

The Church is called catholic

a) because it is present all over the world,
b) because all dogmas which all people should know are fully and completely included in its teaching,
c) because all people of God from all ethnic groups are subject to the Church, regardless of their social standing or education (i.e., this applies equally to rulers and the ruled, to the educated and the uneducated),
d) because it cures and heals every sin, and
e) because everything that is called 'virtue' is present in it, whether it be virtue in word or deed or in spiritual values.

The catholicity of the Church, which is the body of Christ, is "the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

Hence, a church which preserves the fullness of apostolic truth, and bears witness to it, is catholic. Lossky speaks about catholicity as a characteristic of the truth, or as the Church's ability to know the truth. With the help of this ability, which characterizes the Church, the truth is made manifest to the entire Church, both to its smallest parts and to the Church as a whole.

[10] Lossky, Vladimir N. *Ocherk misticheskogo bogosloviia Vostochnoi Tserkvi. Dogmaticheskoe bogoslovie*. [A General Introduction to the Mystical Theology of the East. A Dogmatic Theology.] (Moscow, 1991, p. 134.)

Orthodox ecclesiology usually distinguishes between the local and global level of catholicity.

According to the former, the local church - which is gathered together in the name of Christ, celebrates the eucharist, and is led by a bishop - is the "catholic Church", the living body of Christ in all its fullness.

"Where Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic Church", is a definition which St Ignatios of Antioch gives in his letter to Smyrnaeans (Smyrn. VIII). The Church owes its catholicity to Christ, not to its members. It is very important that the local level of catholicity points to the local Christian community as *the* body of Christ, not only as a fraction of it. This conception finds very clear expression in the Proskomidia of the Divine Liturgy, in which the priest prepares the Holy Lamb, and cuts small particles from this loaf of bread in memorial of the Mother of God and all saints.

For the mission of the Church, the local level of catholicity means a logical opportunity for cultural, liturgical and theological diversity in the one Church of Christ. Admittedly, the Church's mission will inevitably clash with secular society, and even more marked contrasts tend to surface in the relationship between mission and culture, and between mission and nation. However, as pointed out by V.V. Zenkovski, the kingdom of God does not negate the natural order of the world, but renews it from the inside, illuminating and enlightening it, and attaching itself to this order. Namely, God's kingdom calls and expects the human soul and the whole of humanity (as the cosmic centre, the true microcosm) to turn to God. Thus, says Zenkovski, the existence and presence of different national groups has never been rejected in the East; the eastern ideal of Christian unity has been at least as powerful and deep as its western equivalent, but in the East this ideal has been understood as one of internal rather than external communion.[11]

These ecclesiological premises have always underlied the Orthodox view of mission. As Archpriest John Meyendorff says, the tradition of using national languages in the liturgy (the principle of SS Cyril and Methodios) points, in itself, to the very fact that Christianity does not annihilate indigenous peoples' cultures, but accepts them as part of the diversity which is united in the catholic tradition.[12] This argument is very important when we face the challenge of those nationalist movements which try to accuse Orthodox mission of such things as Russification of small peoples in 19th century Russia, colonialism, and so forth. To bring God's truth into local peoples' lives and their ways of

[11] Zenkovski V.V. *Ideia pravoslavnoi kultury/Pravoslavie i kultura.* [The Idea of Orthodox Culture/Orthodoxy and Culture.] (Berlin: Russkaia kniga [The Russian Book], 1923, p. 41.)

[12] Meyendorff, John. *Pravoslavie v sovremennom mire.* [Orthodoxy in the Modern World.] New York, 1981.

thinking has always been Orthodox missionaries' main concern. When missionaries live among local peoples, they gradually become "locals" themselves, or "flesh from their flesh". They become full members of the local cultures they have entered. Missionaries have traditionally made the effort to understand their own age; to respect the cultures of peoples newly enlightened by the light of Christ; to study local customs and languages; to translate the Holy Scriptures into local languages; and to teach and train local priests. As a result of all this, local peoples have gradually been drawn into the fullness of the catholicity of the Church.

A very well-known example of this kind of attitude is a translation of St Innokenti (Veniaminov): when he translated the Lord's Prayer into a local language, he replaced the word 'bread' with 'fish', because fish happened to be the "daily bread" of the people for whom the translation was intended.

Indeed, missionaries have been very cautious about bringing achievements of civilization into local cultures. Therefore, in respect of lifestyle, they have consciously imitated the Lord; "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). Missionaries have lived in the "poverty of the gospel", in order to avoid imposing radical changes on local cultures. On the other hand, however, this kind of assimilation into indigenous cultures has its limits, because these cultures' pre-Christian way of thinking may become a basis for heresy or syncretism, in which case the catholicity of the local church would be ruined.

4) "Αποστολικην" (apostolic)

Typically, this term is used to mean that the apostles founded the historical Church; preserved the doctrine of faith and passed it on to the Church; and established the Church's service of worship, episcopal succession and canonical structure. The Church was built "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone" (Eph. 2:20). However, the term "αποστολικην" is also given a broader missionary dimension by Fr Pavel Florenski, who draws attention to the fact that the Church must grow and assimilate more and more members [literally, 'organs'] into itself. This growth takes place when the Church teaches and baptizes those who have not yet been incorporated into the body of Christ - and the instrument of this teaching and baptizing is apostolicity in the widest sense of the word (αποστολη), says Fr Florenski. The Church is sent into the world, so that it would teach people through its preaching, and through its way of life which sets an example to the others; through its miracles, signs, and education; and, among other things, through providing a framework for people's entire lives. Fr Florenski emphasizes that the aim of all this is to awaken a religious awareness in the unconverted, and to strengthen it in the members of the Church. Because of this aspect, the Lord himself is called an "apostle", as are his first disciples. As Fr

Florenski points out, this term can even be used of every member of the Church - which, itself, is also called "apostolic" (αποστολική).[13]

Owing to this characteristic of the Church, the preaching of the truth of Christ has been continued to this very day, and the Church keeps on growing. The Church can always find an "end of the earth" in which to practice its apostolicity. An "end of the earth" is a spiritual frontier beyond which life has not been enlightened by the light of the truth of Christ. Such an "end" can be found in the centre of an enormous city, or in a remote village of the Siberian tundra or the Arabian desert. Even a local Christian community can be such an "end", if it has lost its catholicity.

Canonical foundations for Orthodox mission

As we all know, 'canons' are rules regulating church members' lives in accordance with the spirit and central principles of the New Testament's teaching. Archpriest P. Ia. Svetlov says that the nature of the Church as the body of Christ finds expression in canons, in which the "general" doctrine is applied to issues of a more specific nature. According to him, canons form the link between the organism and organization of the Church.[14]

The basis for this connection lies in the fact that the task of canons is to express and mirror dogmatic truths concerning the Church (e.g., 'catholicity'). In the course of history, canons can change their form, but their inner function remains unaltered. Even their number has gradually increased, older canons have not been abolished as a result of this process. Rather, canons have developed and renewed their form in interaction with each other, complementing one another. The Church applies them to historical situations, in order to protect the central principles of ecclesiastical tradition and life from being violated.

The Book of Acts has immortalized the last words of the Risen Christ to his disciples: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The sending of the apostles was neither a chaotic nor a chance act. Tradition tells us that each apostle was assigned a particular territory for his missionary work. These were decided upon by

[13] Florenski, Pavel. *Ekkleziologicheskie materialy/Bogoslovskie trudy, 12.* [Ecclesiological Material/Theological Studies, 12.] (Moscow, 1974, pp. 129-130.)

[14] Svetlov P. Ia. *O znachenii sviashchennyh kanonov.* [On the Significance of the Holy Canons.] (Canada, 1971, p. 20.)

drawing lots. Hence, each apostle preached in the territory allotted to him by God (2 Cor. 10:13).

The Apostle Paul testifies that each of the apostles proclaimed the good news of the truth of Christ in his own territory, on a certain geographical spot, and no one crossed the borders of his own territory. In modern terms, an 'apostolical territory' means the same as the 'canonical territory' of a bishop who has been taken into apostolic succession through the laying on of hands.

"One body and one spirit [...], one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:4-6). Canons, the norms of our Christian existence, also serve the cause of achieving this unity.

Violation of canons breaks the communion between the Church's body and its members. Indeed, it is always through spiritual leaders that the Church calls people to its work of service. In following this order of things, the Church relies on a tradition which is not to be violated: the last shall be first, but "it is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior" (Hebr. 7:7). Canons oblige bishops to preach, and to teach people piety (Apostolical Canon 58; 6.19). However, what sets limits to this activity of a bishop is his territory; he must not teach publicly in a town which does not belong to the area assigned to him (6.20). This rule will apply even more categorically, if a bishop should disparage or belittle the local bishop (Sard. 11). Those missionaries coming to Russia who disparage not only a local bishop but also the Russian Orthodox Church should familiarize themselves with this rule.

For a missionary, canons should not be like a "stick in a blind person's hand", as St Basil the Great says. Rather, they are intended to protect the missionary's inner communion with the body of Christ, so that (s)he can become "to the Jews as a Jew", "to the Greeks as a Greek". And, with the help of canons and in accordance with the example of the Apostle Paul, the missionary can also point out those things in which the spiritual orientation of these "Jews" or "Greeks" deviates from the way of Christ.

Canonicity implies watchfulness and careful consideration. While encouraging openness to all manifestations of God's creative and saving power everywhere, it also contains a warning that one should not fall into any kind of relativism. Owing to canons, missionaries have a responsibility for the purity of the doctrine they teach. On the other hand, there is always the temptation to establish a "canonical ghetto", in which case the pharisee gains the upper hand over the publican. This problem is a great challenge for Orthodox canonists today. An adequate response to this challenge and a correct understanding of the canonical foundation of the Church's mission are closely linked to each other. However, this dilemma becomes even more complex when we begin to speak about "common witness", or missionary cooperation. If ecumenical dialogue is marked by a lack of respect for the norms regulating the life of a church which is participating in this dialogue, this will not only prevent the

churches' common understanding from becoming deeper, but it also totally destroys the opportunity for dialogue of any kind.

The canons of the Orthodox Church help us to understand that the essence of Christian freedom lies in knowing the truth (John 8:32). They protect Christians from the secular concept of freedom which relies on the juridical principle of all religions' equality. In this connection, it is important to point out that proselytism must not be allowed in the mission of the Church; this is indicated clearly by the severity of canonical regulations concerning the question of whether those who have once abandoned the Orthodox faith should be re-admitted to the Church.

Canons are laws, which, in most cases, are given for the sake of correcting flaws or malpractices in the Church's life. Hence, from the point of view of global faithfulness to canons, missionary work loses its catholicity if it does not obey and apply these rules. Thus, mission societies which have been organized outside the hierarchy of the Church, without the approval of the bishop, fall out of ecumenical communion, because it is precisely the bishops of local churches who are in charge of the ecumenical communion of all churches. This is why efforts to carry out missionary work in a canonical territory of any church mostly result in division among Christians, and in the creation of such structures which destroy Christians' communion and have little to do with the true Church.

Finally, canons must be applied to historical situations in accordance with their spirit rather than letter. It is very important to consider the national and intellectual sphere concerned, and to take the cultural and historical context into account. If these aspects are ignored, canons may change from the Church's means of healing infirmities into a "stick in a blind person's hand".

COMMENTS ON THE PRESENTATION *"THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION: ECCLESIOLOGICAL AND CANONICAL ARGUMENTS"*

Dr. Eeva Martikainen, Professor of Ecumenical Studies, Helsinki University, & the Rev. Dr. Antti Laato, Senior Research Fellow, the Academy of Finland

To begin with, we would like to express our warm thanks to His Grace Bishop Ioann of Belgorod and Staro-Oskol, Dean of the Kursk Theological Seminary, for his presentation "The Orthodox View of the Church's Mission: Ecclesiological and Canonical Arguments". This paper was a profound and informative survey of the foundations of the Orthodox's Church mission. In our comments, we wish to pay especial attention to aspects and views shared by both churches participating in these discussions.

A. The definition of mission

(1) The presentation emphasizes that "the Church's mission is holy", and that this mission has to do with the "'frontier relationships' between Church and world". The same idea is expressed through a different wording in the paper of the Rev. Dr. Juhani Forsberg, who says that, in connection with the Church's mission, "the essence and calling of the Church are viewed from the perspective of crossing boundaries between

faith and unbelief, and between love and lovelessness" (p.44).

(2) Further, we also agree that mission is part of the essence of the Church. Forsberg says: "Therefore, mission is not something optional for Christians and the Church. In other words, in Christianity, mission is not some kind of additive element or a commission following the actual 'matter', but part of the 'matter' itself" (p.42)

(3) Both partners also emphasize that mission has a trinitarian foundation. Forsberg speaks about mission as "participation in the Triune God's mission" (p.40). He continues by stressing that the mission of the Triune God is, however, "more comprehensive than the mission of the Church" (p.40). In relation to this aspect, it would be useful if both partners were to discuss more thoroughly the dimensions of mission related to theology of creation. We

acknowledge that all people are created by God; what implications does this have for theology of mission? Here we would like to refer especially to the paper of the Rev. Simo Kiviranta, Lic.Th.

(4) Another important merit of Bishop Ioann's presentation is its emphasis on the eschatological dimension of mission. This same emphasis is also clearly brought to the fore in the paper of Archpriest Boris Pivovarov, who alludes to two passages of Matthew's gospel (24:14; 28:19-20). In this connection, Bishop Ioann also stresses that the renewal at issue is renewal of the entire cosmos, i.e., of both humanity and nature. Indeed, we should pay more attention to the ecological and socio-ethical dimensions of mission (technology, economy, politics, culture, etc.) in our discussions.

In connection with the definition of mission, we would like the following points to be specified:

(1) What exactly does it mean that "the task of mission is to project the Holy Trinity's inner relationships onto human relationships" (p.50)?

(2) How does the definition, "Through the liturgy and obedience to the commandments, the life-giving Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, is revealed in power, and the true kingdom of God is brought into the world" (p.50), agree with the New Testament passages mentioned below (2a & 2b)?

> (2a) John 15:26-27 and 16:7-11, and Acts 1:7-8 emphasize that the Church can conduct its mission only through power bestowed upon it by the Holy Spirit, who makes the word of Christ clear to the faithful and endows them with the power to carry out missionary work.
>
> (2b) According to 1 Cor. 2:1-5 and Gal. 3:1-5, Paul proclaims the gospel of "Christ crucified", and the Holy Spirit makes the gospel that is preached truthfully a living reality to the listeners (see also Rom. 10:17).

These biblical passages make it very clear that the ultimate agent of mission is the Triune God.

(3) A passage in the presentation reads: "Mission means... accepting local cultures and their manifestations, as long as these are not in contradiction with Christian faith, and renewing them as intruments of salvation" (p.51). What does this mean?

B. Ecclesiological foundations for mission

According to the view based on the Nicene creed and accepted by all large Christian churches, the Church's being "one, holy, catholic and apostolic" is a necessary condition for its existence. We are not going to enter into a detailed ecclesiogical discussion in our comments, because ecclesiology is not the actual theme of these talks. However, we would like to point out that, with the help of these four epithets, the mission assigned to the Church can be defined in relation to the Church's essence. In our opinion, these epithets also enable us to define the ecumenically relevant missiological implications, on the basis of which proselytism can be rejected. Mutual recognition of the large Christian churches is another important argument against proselytism. As the Apostle Paul says in 1 Cor. 12:13: "... we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and we were all made to drink of one Spirit". Elsewhere, the same Apostle Paul says: "Thus, I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation..." (Rom. 15:20).

NATIONALISM AS A HISTORICAL PROBLEM OF THE CHURCH

The Rev. Dr. Juha Seppo, Professor of Finnish and Scandinavian Church History, Helsinki University

1. On the concept of nationalism

Because 'nationalism', the central concept of this paper, can be understood in a variety of ways, I would like to begin by focusing attention on the term itself. First, it should be noted that while nationalism naturally is closely related to the concepts of 'nation' and 'nationality', it nevertheless should not be identified with either of these two terms. Among the roots of nationalism, nation and nationality are certainly the most important. However, the concept of nationalism is always ideologically charged; it involves an ideological tension, which is not necessarily present in the definitions of nation and nationality.

Second, it is difficult to give an exact definition of nationalism because none of the existing definitions has gained the status of being common or generally accepted. Historians are inclined to define nationalism as an idea or awareness of nationality, or as a nationalist disposition. At the same time, however, many scholars point out that, depending on the language, the term nationalism may also have an overtone of nationalist fanaticism. Whenever this connotation is present, nationalism also involves a palpable disparagement of, or even an explicit hostility towards, other peoples and nations, which are in such cases very much seen through their 'otherness'.

When defined as a nationalist disposition, nationalism is not a mere idea or ideology, but also a political agenda to be carried out in practice. Its central goal is to establish and maintain a nation state based on the right of national self-determination. Some social scientists have defined nationalism as the political force which ultimately holds together the modern state and society, and thus legitimizes the state's claims of authority over its citizens. Thus, it is nationalism that steers the ultimate loyalty of a nation's citizens (or, at least, of their majority) in a certain direction, and brings about the attachment of this loyalty to the existing or hoped-for nation state. What is meant here by 'nation state' is not only the political organization of the state (i.e., its normal and natural power structures), but also the entire framework necessary for the social, cultural and economic functioning of the community as a whole.

Awareness of the distinctive nature of one's own nation has sometimes been regarded as the very hallmark of nationalism. Such awareness may grow

out of various things, but a nation's ethnic, linguistic and religious homogeneity are factors which typically make the ground fertile for nationalism. Moreover, awareness of the distinctive culture and history peculiar to one's own nation is also an integral part of the picture. It has been important for nationalists that their own nation is separate and clearly distinct from, and independent of, other nations - and at the same time at least of equal status with them.

However, when nationalists have emphasized the distinctive nature of the national spirit and culture of their own nation, these emphases have not always quite accorded with the historical truth. Rather, they have often involved fantasies of a common and collective past of the nation concerned. In creating nationalist ideologies, such loose ideas have sometimes been used tendentiously. In propagandistic processes of this kind, it has not been unheard of that a great part of a nation's history and culture has been brushed aside and forgotten - this part consisting of things which have not been in line with the wish of nationalists to create a harmonic picture of their nation. However, such fantasies of national pasts have actually often become part of history - in the sense that they may have even had a crucial effect on the content and course of nationalism in actual historical situations. On the other hand, it is also obvious that as far as the past of a given community is concerned, nationalism cannot be based on fantasies alone. To arouse a positive response, nationalist ideology must also contain elements which are in harmony with reality.

It is also considered characteristic of extremist nationalists to emphasize the distinctive nature of their own nation and nationality in such a manner as to raise it above others, to superior status. Another characteristic feature associated with nationalism is enthusiasm, or even fanaticism, for the safety and honour of one's own nation state, and even for its aspirations to expand. Moreover, in its most extreme form, nationalism also demands that the citizens yield and adapt themselves almost absolutely to the will of the ruler(s). Furthermore, it is typical of advocates of this kind of nationalism to exaggerate their nation's cultural achievements and to boast about its military power. Thus, there is an obvious link between the extreme form of nationalism and the recourse of nations to violence in resolving their differences (i.e., war).

That nationalism is a phenomenon marked by diversity is also reflected in the fact that there does not exist any *one* particular political system which alone would serve as fertile ground for nationalistic aspirations. Rather, nationalism can flourish under various historical, political and social circumstances, because it is not tied to any particular social or governmental system. In fact, it can manifest itself even in connection with ideologies which are quite opposite to each other - for example, in connection with democracy, fascism, socialism, and communism.

In the most recent scholarly studies, the concept of nationalism has also been approached psychologically, from the point of view of the formation of identity. The British scholar William Bloom, for example, has studied the roots of nationalism by observing the relationship between the personal identification

of an individual and the formation of national identity. Bloom defines the formation of identity as a process of internalization: guided by their innate instincts, individuals try to identify themselves with the behaviour, habits and attitudes of the important and influential persons in their environment. At the early stage, this primarily means one's identification with one's parents and family. Individuals also have an innate drive to strengthen and protect the identity thus formed. The members of a *group* of individuals, in turn, tend to form similar identities when their circumstances are similar.

Bloom says that when individuals grow up and are socialized into their culture and society, their values change because of the influence of school and education systems. At the same time, the communities which serve as their objects of identification change and become larger: individuals move from identification with their parents and families towards more symbolic communities. The formation of national identity, which is essential for the emergence of nationalism, takes place when a large group of people consider the same national values important and identify with these common national symbols. These people, who may equal an entire nation, internalize the same national values so completely that they may behave as one single unified group if these symbols of national identity are threatened, or if an opportunity to strengthen them arises.

Thus, nationalism can be approached from many different angles - from the historical, social, and psychological one. Moreover, it is also possible to carry out a theological reflection upon this theme, as the Rev. Simo Kiviranta, Lic.Th., has done in his paper "God's People and Nations: Theological Aspects". For reasons of division of labour, it was agreed that the topic of the present paper should be "Nationalism as a Historical Problem of the Church". Therefore, I will confine myself to discussing nationalism as a *historical* phenomenon, assuming that the theological reflection presented in the Rev. Kiviranta's paper will be borne in mind at the same time.

2. Nationalism as a historical phenomenon

In some studies of nationalism, scholars have attempted to trace the central content of this concept by going all the way back to the Old Testament ideas of the chosen people and the promised land. These scholars think that this Hebrew legacy can be recognized throughout the times and eras which have elapsed since the Old Testament days, and that this heritage has given divine justification both to national goals and to the political aspirations attached to them. However, whatever one thinks about these 'biblical' roots of nationalism, the essential point is that, as a historical phenomenon and force, nationalism received its basic form in the nineteenth century. At that time, it was such a dominant ideology influencing so many nations so thoroughly that the entire era is often called the century of nationalism in Europe. It was in the nineteenth

century that nationalism was at its most powerful in Europe and also contributed strongly to the emergence of certain European nation states.

Even though the nineteenth century was, most obviously, the age which saw the fullest bloom of nationalism in Europe, it must also be noted that the twentieth century, especially the era after World War II, has made nationalism a global phenomenon. Indeed, some scholars have even been willing to call the twentieth century the age of pan-nationalism. It is a well-known fact that nationalism in its many forms is a living reality also in modern Europe.

As far as the origins of the Christian Church are concerned, it is readily apparent that, on the conceptual level, nationalism can be regarded as a problem that has bothered the Church ever since the early centuries of its existence. Namely, Christianity has ultimately always been an international religion crossing national borders. It is also a historical truth that the spread of Christianity has not been bound to any particular governmental or constitutional order, and even less has the Church needed the nation state as a basis for its successful advance. However, it is equally true that in one way or another the Church has, in fact, always been tied to the contemporary historical context. The Church works among individuals, citizens, various kinds of groups, and nations. Hence, it is obvious that in the age of nationalism it has been necessary for the Church, or, rather, for the historical churches, to define their stance either directly or indirectly on this relevant and influential factor in their own environment.

If nationalism is defined loosely, without considering its historical and ideological content, it is obvious that during its long march through the ages, the Church has encountered nationalism in all degrees. At times, the Church has tried to suppress it, whereas at other times, nationalism may have proved a useful sounding board for the mission of the Church. Let us think, for example, of the national churches of Syria and Egypt, which emerged at a very early stage; they pleased neither the Emperor, who wanted his empire to be politically united, nor the court theologians. Or, to mention another example, which comes from the Byzantine Empire and is of somewhat later origin: as a result of the vernacular missionary work carried out by the Byzantine Church, such areas as Bulgaria, Serbia and Russia, for example, saw the emergence of independent churches, which were powerfully aware of their respective national identities. And as regards the centuries during which the foundations of the Church's Western branch were laid, the Roman-German unification of peoples, which resulted in the emergence of a new nation and the Frankish Empire, also provides an example of a process that was decisively influenced by the Church. The Frankish Empire was to have a crucial significance for the history of Europe, which was going through the process of Christianization.

However, if we are to understand our actual subject matter, we need to move to the nineteenth century scene. Even though nineteenth century nationalism cannot be discussed thoroughly within the framework of this paper, it is nevertheless necessary to present an outline of some of its essential

historical features here; otherwise it is not possible to understand the nature of the problem which nationalism constituted for the Church.

It is rather appropriate to say that from the early years of the nineteenth century onwards there were two nationalist trends existing side by side in Europe. The first of them mainly went back to the French Revolution, the aim and ideal of which had been a society of free and equal citizens. What was regarded in this model as the common uniting factor in respect of a nation, people and state was not a common language, but the rights and freedoms of the individual, and their implementation. Within this trend, French nationalism and cosmopolitan individualism shook hands.

The second nationalist trend emphasized a common language and a common history as the forces which create a nation and hold it together. Language, culture, and religion were considered important, and the same applies to history as a nation's common experience of its past. A central concept was the nation's soul or spirit *(Geist)*, which was thought to manifest itself especially in the traditional poetry of peoples and nations. This way of thinking mostly drew on German idealistic philosophy, particularly on Herder and Hegel.

Especially Hegel's philosophy of the state - according to which the state was of primary and the individual of secondary importance - involved aspects which were interesting from the point of view of practical implementation of nationalism. Namely, among other things, it also involved the idea of the necessity of war. In Hegel's opinion, morality was not individual but social in nature, because only as a member of the state was an individual able to fulfil the demands of morality. Religion, even though it was considered necessary, was regarded as subordinate to the state in the realization of morality. According to this view, the ideal of morality was realized in the state, not in the Church. The highest responsibility of the state, in turn, was to sustain itself and to make itself eternal. War was regarded as one of the means necessary for the success of the state. It was considered necessary not only for the realization of the morally just endeavours of individual states, but also for international order. In brief, it was thought that war kept nations morally healthy.

German idealistic philosophy, the historical context of which was partly shadowed by the warlike Napoleon, certainly made the general atmosphere receptive to the rise of nationalism in many European countries. In connection with the two nationalist main trends, cultural and political nationalism, it is important to point out that they did not necessarily exist as separate ideological forces, although their respective views of the nation were somewhat different. In research, these two forms of nationalism have rather been regarded as overlapping, or as following one another, in which case nationalism based on language and culture is usually thought to have preceded political nationalism. This is what happened in Finland, for example, where the battle for the status and position of the Finnish language - and of Finnish culture, which was based on the language - indisputably preceded the political right of self-determination

and took part in laying firm foundations for it. The situation was similar in many other European countries, because in Germany and Italy, for example, and among Slavonic peoples, the revival of culture preceded political and social change, and partly remained separate from it.

But even though the above-mentioned nationalist trends overlapped and followed one another to a certain extent, it is important to note that European nationalism was obviously divided into two mainstreams. Liberalism was an essential element in political nationalism, which emphasized individuals' rights and their enterprising and initiative disposition in connection with modern Europe, which was going through the process of industrialization. Even though this mainstream was popular especially in France and England, it also had its advocates in, for example, Germany and Russia. However, especially after 1848, which is often called the "mad" year of Europe, the nationalist mainstream in Germany and Russia became quite strongly characterized by anti-liberalism and the rejection of West European nationalism.

The mainstream of German nationalism placed a strong emphasis on German originality and uniqueness, which wanted to have nothing to do with other cultures. These were seen as superficial, whereas German culture was thought to be profound. Accordingly, the most important historical memories were those which separated Germany from the rest of West European development, rather than those which connected Germany with it. More important than to supervise the appropriate implementation of individual rights was to acknowledge the national, collective forces. What was raised to the position of the ideal were the pre-capitalist political and social order, the simple, ordinary people, the patriarchal relationships of agrarian society, and the stable class society. Middle-class liberalism, town and city culture, individual rights, and democracy were seen as products of the bourgeois West. For this reason, they were considered inadequate for Germany and regarded as leading only to conflict and chaos.

This German national feeling, influenced by Romanticism, also had a close connection with the world of religion. The French culture of the Age of Enlightenment was regarded as atheistic and rationalist, and the French state produced by the Revolution as anti-religious. Because of these characteristics, the French pattern was to be avoided, because in Germany religion was considered significant both for individuals and for the entire nation. Indeed, German nationalism and the national feeling connected with it were very much based on religion. Luther was regarded as a person of national importance. He was thought to have revived the German nation's awareness of its religious calling. Unreservedly, Luther was interpreted within the framework of Kant's categories of moral duty, and he was regarded as a hero figure in German National Romanticism, the religious foundations of which were obscure. The main idea was that the renewed sense of duty made individuals yield and devote themselves to the larger unit of the nation.

Thus, German nationalism had a powerful religious overtone, and an obvious political goal, which could be clearly recognized in the history of Germany from the nineteenth century to the beginning of World War I. The German nation, which was considered unique, was thought to have a special mission in the history of the world. According to the extreme nationalism which emerged after the unification of the German Empire (1871), it was power that dictated the fates of peoples. Within this framework of thinking, it was not considered appropriate for the state to bind itself to any moral norms, because the essence of the state was "first, power; second, power; and, third, power", as crystallized by the Prussian historian Heinrich von Treitschke.

Some German nationalists turned to popularized Darwinism in their search for evidence of the German nation's fitness and ability to survive. In their view, the struggle for survival proved that only those nations and states which were fit and strong could be victors in the battle for power. Hans Kohn, a well-known expert in the study of nationalism, has interpreted imperialistically-coloured German nationalism by saying that it was a certain bitterness and feeling of inferiority that made German nationalists emphasize Germany's superiority and behave defiantly and triumphantly towards the West, even though they had originally followed Western models.

The extreme nationalism of Germany had a Russian equivalent in Slavophilia. It was from Germany that Slavophilia received its basic inspirations, although this Russian form of nationalism also denied all its Western origins. According to the Slavophiles, Peter the Great had made the true sources of Russian culture dry up by carrying out what for the Slavophiles was the disastrous act of opening Russia to Western influences. Just like the Romantic nationalists of Germany, the Slavophiles also rejected liberalism, individualism, and the capitalist economy. In their opinion, the salvation of Russia depended on its close attachment to its own foundations, the Orthodox-Slavonic faith, autocratic government, and the traditional agrarian economy. The Slavophiles considered the Russians a profoundly original 'proto-nation', which had a unique mission in regard to the whole of humankind and especially the degenerate West. It was Russia that had freed Europe from the yoke of Napoleon at the beginning of the nineteenth century; hence, if someone needed someone else, it was Europe that needed Russia, not the other way round.

However, in order to give a correct overall picture of the nineteenth century nationalism of Russia, it must also be added that the Slavophiles had a Russian opposition to deal with, which wanted to westernize and reform Russian society. The influence of this group can be regarded as having ranged from the Decembrists of 1825 to the Westernizers of the mid-nineteenth century, and even further to the liberals of the provisional government of 1917. While the Slavophiles believed that Russia had its own path, which was essentially different from that of the other European countries, the liberal admirers of the West wanted to change Russia into the likeness of the rest of Europe.

Germany and Russia's exclusive nationalism (which has had counterparts in other countries that have also rejected their Western points of contact, e.g., India) increased political and economic competition among nations, and made the danger of conflicts more imminent. However, neither in Germany nor in Russia did the extremist advocates of Romantic nationalism present anything particularly original. The models of German extremists were, to a large extent, borrowed from French thinkers, and partly also from British ones; to mention some examples, the Germans adopted ideas from Burke, de Maistre, Bonald, Rousseau, Cobineau, Maurras and Barrès. Russian extremists, in turn, mainly inherited their ways of thinking from German Romanticism. For example, the admiration of the muzhik, the Russian peasant, was a variation of the 'noble savage' myth. Furthermore, the praising of the *mir*, the Russian agrarian community, was something that was borrowed from August von Haxthausen, a conservative German. In actual fact, the *mir* was not only a Russian or Slavonic institution, nor was it very old, either.

3. Political nationalism and churches

To sum up what has been said above, the two nationalist mainstreams were political and cultural nationalism. According to the former, what was essential in creating a nation was to safeguard the rights and freedoms of the individual, whereas the latter emphasized the nation or state's linguistic and cultural origins as the force which holds this unit together and brings about its inner cohesion. (At this point, I would like to emphasize that because it was not possible to discuss these two mainstreams in detail in the previous subsection, only a rough overall picture of historical reality can be given in the following.) Historically speaking, it seems that if we relate these two forms of nationalism to ecclesiastical reality, it is the political nationalism that has caused problems for churches. It has been difficult, if not impossible, for churches to combine the underlying liberal tone of Western nationalism with their own work and goals. However, the Orthodox Church has probably not been too seriously bothered by Western nationalism, after all - and as for Protestantism, it was actually only when modernization brought nationalism into contact with ordinary people (whom the Church had regarded as its own territory) that Protestant churches were truly faced with liberal nationalism.

Of the large Christian churches, it was the Catholic Church that clashed first - and most obviously - with political nationalism. This happened especially in France, in spite of the fact that on French soil the Catholic tradition was more closely linked with the idea of a national church than in other Romance countries; to some extent, French Catholicism was even influenced by liberal ideas in the early 19th century. Soon, however, the tradition emphasizing the national aspect began to weaken - and the connection of French Catholicism with liberalism was broken altogether when Pope Gregory XVI made it clear in

his encyclical *Mirari vos* (1832) that liberal nationalist Catholicism was absolutely out of the question, even in France.

Furthermore, the gap between nationalists and the Catholic Church became even wider during the pontificate of Pius IX. Such a development took place despite the fact that liberal nationalists throughout the world, and particularly in Italy, had hailed Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti, Bishop of Imola, as the incumbent of the Holy See; they had believed he would become the symbol of Italian *risorgimento,* reunification. However, Pius IX, *Pio Nono,* did not agree with the nationalist wishes of Italians, because the reunification of Italy was to result in a war against Catholic Austria. Hence, Italian reunification - in which the Pope finally lost the Papal States, except the Vatican - sharpened the conflict between nationalists and Catholic church leaders. At the same time, it deepened Catholics' overall suspicions of the nation state, and helped the Pope rise to a position of even more indisputable authority in their midst than had previously been the case.

During the latter part of his long pontificate, the political agenda of Pius IX was characterized by intense Ultramontanism. In his *Syllabus errorum* (1864), he classified both liberalism and nationalism as errors of that era. Considering that the ideals of French nationalists were radical and republican, and that anti-clericalism was an integral part of their way of thinking, it is not surprising that nationalism became a sort of permanent problem for the Catholic Church in the French milieu. The republican leader Leon Gambetta, who was famous for his anticlericalism, once summed up the mood by saying that a Catholic rarely was a patriot.

The tension between the liberal, democratic and nationalist politicians, on the one hand, and the Catholic Church (which was labelled as a political ally of reactionary forces), on the other hand, also surfaced and became obvious beyond the borders of France. In Spain, Belgium, and Germany, for example, bitter battles were fought against the Catholic Church from time to time. Particularly severe disagreements arose in connection with schools and the content of education, because in all the above-mentioned countries Catholic orders had traditionally had a pivotal role in the education of the entire nation.

It was not until the twentieth century, and especially World War II, that the relationship between the Catholic Church and the nationalist-democratic forces began to change from conflict and antagonism towards cooperation. Even though one can no longer speak of Catholic or Orthodox or Protestant states, it should nonetheless be noted that Italy officially remained a Catholic country until 1984. (To mention another case for the sake of comparison, the Greek constitution which was still valid at the beginning of the 1990s stated that the predominant religion of Greece was the Eastern Orthodox Church of Christ.) In some other countries, such as Spain and Poland, the bond between national awareness and Catholicism has remained strong; this has been one of the reasons why the civil rights of those belonging to minority religions and

churches have been implemented only very slowly in these countries, the slowness resulting from nationalist reasons.

It is readily apparent that culturally oriented nationalism has been less problematic for churches than political nationalism. Obviously, the conservative political undertone of cultural nationalism has caused fewer problems to churches than the more liberal version of nationalism. Historically speaking, cultural nationalism can hardly be classified as a phenomenon which churches have considered a problem; rather, it seems that in many cases this form of nationalism has stood firmly side by side with churches. In its search for factors consitituting the nation state, cultural nationalism has turned to the past, the language of the fathers, cultural heritage, customs, and religion; therefore, it has usually been on the same course as the Church.

4. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and nationalism

In Finland, the Evangelical Lutheran Church advanced and protected 'Finnishness' in many ways already long before the era of nationalism. It can be said with justification that in the Finnish context the Lutheran Church has traditionally been one of the factors creating and strengthening national identity. Namely, for a long time the Church had sole charge of the teaching and education of the Finnish people. Therefore, it is not surprising that, in the nineteenth century, nationalism based on language and culture (called 'Fennomania' in Finland) established a firm foothold within the Evangelical Lutheran Church and its clergy.

The values represented by the standard form of Finnish Lutheranism agreed with the agrarian world of the Finns. Accordingly, Lutheran clergy and Finnish-speaking peasants cooperated in the Finnish Diet of Estates. It was natural for both these groups to be strong advocates of a nationalist Finnish agenda, to focus on advancing the social rights as well as the vernacular culture and education of Finnish-speaking people, and to work for the preservation of the conservative values of Finnish agrarian society.

Politically, the majority of Finland's Lutheran clergy were conservative (just as the peasants were) and loyal to the state in questions related to Finnish policy in Russian affairs. Liberal ideas were not noticably echoed in the Church, especially as the younger generation of liberal and educated Finnish-speaking people distanced itself from the Church - for reasons of worldview, for instance. It seems that the first occasion when the Church really had to encounter the problem of liberal nationalism on Finnish soil occurred as late as towards the end of the nineteenth century, when a group called "Young Finland" *(Nuori Suomi)* began to attempt to reach ordinary Finnish people through the press.

However, Finnish nationalism did not actually become a historical problem for the Lutheran Church. But what did become a problem for both the Church

and the Finnish nationalist movement was Russian nationalism, which mainly took the shape of Pan-Slavism. Towards the turn of the century, Russian nationalists pushed the goals of Pan-Russian policy and the interests of the Tsar's Empire in Finland with a heavy hand. To some extent, this national crisis also split the clergy, because there was no unanimous consensus in the Church on the best way of defending the national interests and position of Finland. Neither all Finnish clergymen nor all other ecclesiastically influential figures approved of the determined policy of appeasement adopted by Finnish church leaders. Some regarded it as opportunism, the aim of which was to safeguard the external status and position of the Lutheran Church. Ultimately, however, the pressure generated by Russification did not cause any irreparable damage to the Church, although some anti-church views not caused by or originating from Russian nationalism also surfaced when the pressure of Russification was finally removed.

The question of the relationship between the Church and nationalism entered a completely new stage when Finland gained independence in 1917. This national independence was not achieved without pain, because the war of liberation also turned into a civil war, a war between brothers. In this battle between bourgeois and socialist forces, the Church did not hesitate to choose the side of the bourgeois White Front, which represented the legal government. However, only a handful of clergymen actually grabbed a gun and joined the fighting against the socialist Reds. But neither the split between the people nor the political choice of the Church was annihilated or obliterated through the civil war victory of the White Front and the subsequent elevation of the Church's overall status to a new, higher level in bourgeois circles. As a result of the civil war, one part of the people - the entirety of which the Lutheran Church had wanted to serve as the Finnish people's national church - seemed to have slipped permanently outside the Church's reach.

In between the two world wars, Finnish nationalism was characterized by a pursuit of national integration, for reasons of security. However, what was intertwined with this goal was an intense fear of the Bolshevist Soviet Union, and, connected with it, an attempt to push domestic communism out of the country's public image. Therefore, Finnish nationalism actually strengthened the bourgeois joint front, rather than advanced true national integration. Thus, the Lutheran Church was also an integral part of Finland's nationalist defence front. The Church did not directly, as the Church, take on a political character, but the nationalist pressure, which was meant to protect Finnish independence, nevertheless made the Church part of the nationalist defence front. In fact, Finnish church leaders were quite patient with clergymen whose views represented extreme nationalism. Archbishop Ingman (d. 1934) only became willing to settle the problems with radical rightists when the National Coalition Party, in which he was an influential figure, began to resolve matters with a radical right-wing movement called the IKL (*Isänmaallinen kansanliike*, the Patriotic Movement of the People). The fact that outside the Lutheran Church

the speeches and comments of the extremist nationalist clergymen were sometimes interpreted as official statements of the Church did not exactly increase its credibility in its endavour to be the Church of all Finns. Extreme nationalism had become a historical problem for the Lutheran Church, although this state of affairs did not last for long.

Finnish society - and at the same time the Finnish Church - was put to a real test when the Russo-Finnish 'Winter War' broke out in 1939. Research has shown that the Lutheran Church was not mentally unprepared for the new situation. It was natural for the Church to link itself with the nationalist defence front, because the war was said to be waged for 'home, faith and fatherland'. The war brought with it a feeling of belonging together and of national integration, which seemed to heal old wounds and give new credibility to the idea of the Lutheran Church's being the people's church or a 'folk church', which serves the entire nation. The participation of the Church in common struggles both in the actual war area and on the homefront also emphasized its national signifcance. To their disappointment, however, Finnish church leaders had to face the fact that churches in some other states ultimately confined their attention solely to the national and political interests of their own countries, leaving Finland alone in its battle against the Soviet Union.

It seems, however, that the disappointments of the Winter War were soon forgotten in the Finnish Church. Germany began to wage a war against the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, and Finland soon joined the war, fighting on the same side with the Germans. The official war propaganda spoke anxiously about a "crusade against atheistic Bolshevism". Such formulations made it easy for the Church to agree with this propaganda, and to regard the war, in which Finland was on the side of the aggressor, as justified. Even though the 'crusade' ideology soon became bankrupt, and the possibility of German victory began to seem more and more remote, many Finnish clergymen still wanted to keep the Church a loyal member of the warfront and to emphasize the people's unanimity the more, the obscurer the future seemed. Indeed, there were groups within the Church which were, to the very last, against Finland's making a peace with the Soviet Union. It was feared in these circles that the separate peace agreement might lead Finland into a national catastrophe, such as occupation.

Contrary to what happened to the political elite of the Finnish state, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland came through the war with little damage in the sense that the Church was never required to account for the decisions it made during the war. The clergymen who returned to civilian life were not ousted because of their political views but could continue in their former offices and positions. People learnt very quickly, also within the Church, that the post-war situation did not leave Finland much choice as to who the Finns were to learn to live with in the world of the Cold War. Under the leadership of President J.K. Paasikivi and, after him, President Urho

Kekkonen, Finns learnt to consider their stances on all important issues in foreign policy in the light of their relationship to the Soviet Union.

Both in the Lutheran Church and in other circles carrying civil responsibilities, it was relatively easy to realize that in the altered world Finland had to find an agenda in its foreign policy which would take into consideration both the interests of Finland and those of the Soviet Union in Finland. The Church understood very well the fact that the ultimate aim of Finland's new foreign policy, which no longer involved any nationalistic tones or traditional patriotic expressions at all, was to maintain the country's independence and freedom of action.

After the wars, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland has been very careful in not letting nationalist problems, or any other problems related to Finland's national existence, block its way. In a typically Lutheran manner, the Church has kept a low profile in politics, but this does not negate the fact that after the wars, too, the Church has had its own significant role in the process of building independent Finland. However, it is difficult to consider the role of the Church in post-war Finland in terms of any form of actual nationalism. The contribution of the Lutheran Church can rather be described by saying that the Church has strengthened the national identity of the Finns also during the post-war decades, without sounding a fanfare about it.

5. Conclusion

Finally, I go back to two questions. The first deals with the historical alternatives which have been realized in the relationship of the Christian Church to nationalism. The fragmentary material presented above has probably shown that the Church can, for its own part, be a force which creates and maintains nationalism in the course of history. On the other hand, the Church may also choose an absolute rejection of nationalism, if it regards nationalist goals as alien or even opposite to its own aims. Sometimes this kind of attitude has led to conflicts, which, however, have certainly not always resulted in the defeat of the Church.

Furthermore, it may also happen that the Church agrees and identifies with nationalistic goals quite uncritically. Such a reaction seems to occur easily especially in times of national crises, particularly in wartime. However, it may often be the case that the Church does not actually have very much choice as to what side to stand on. National churches in particular have been, and still are, so closely tied to the decisions of political leaders and the majority of the people that they have hardly been in a position to deviate from the general policies of their country's establishment and people.

However, the Church, which works and acts in history, has not only rejected, adopted, supported or given birth to nationalist trends. In some situations, the Church has also been able to make use of nationalism in

channelling its own message. However, such an attitude has demanded very good judgement from the Church, because there is a considerable risk that such actions can slip into an uncritical accompaniment of nationalistic aspirations.

The second question has to do with the nature of the Church as an international body which crosses national boundaries, and with the loyalties of the Church, and with its recognition of who or what has authority over it. In my opinion, both these aspects have made themselves felt in the lives and decisions of churches in the era of nationalism.

It would be a hasty conclusion to think that the emergence of nation states in the nineteenth century and afterwards has somehow changed the Church's loyalties or its recognition of the authority above it. The most supreme authority which the Church has professed, and to which it has confessed to adhering, has never been the legal order or highest governmental body of the nation state, not even in the era of nationalism. However, not only the governing authorities of nation states but also the inter- or supranational community has expectations concerning the Church's loyalty and its conception of the authority above it - and it has not been any easier for the Church to fulfil such expectations of the international community than to meet those of the nation state. Nothing in the lives of churches seems to suggest that the Church would consent to regard the rules of the international community as the ultimate guideline of its actions simply on the basis of the inter- or supranational nature of Christian faith.

The crises which the Church has encountered in the course of its history have shown that neither national nor international systems can be objects of the Church's ultimate loyalty in all situations, nor do they always represent the ultimate authority to which the Church confesses. In fact, it is precisely in the situations of being pressured by the nation state's unvoiced expectations, voiced demands of obedienece, or even actual threats that the Church has been most powerfully forced to show in practice where its ultimate loyalties are, and who its true Lord is.

However, one should not exaggerate the significance of crises and conflicts as factors which clarify for the Church its loyalties and make it see more clearly whom it is to obey. Namely, it is not unheard of that times of trials have rather tied the Church to the values of the nation state, and made it an uncritical if not a silent partner on the nationalist front.

THE CHURCH'S TASK AS RECONCILIATOR AND THE QUESTION OF NATIONALITY

Archbishop Makari of Vinnitsa and Mogilev-Podolsk

> *"Agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you"*
> (2 Cor. 13:11).

We all are living human beings, and the world is home to all of us. Both this world in which we dwell and we ourselves are created by God, and are fruit of his love: "God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). When the Lord created us, the human beings, "in his image, in the image of God" (Gen. 1:27), and when he gave us this beautiful world, he taught us how to keep it as beautiful, wonderful and filled with wisdom as it was (Ps. 104:24). He blessed us and said: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28), and he gave us this world, so that we would "till it and keep it" (Gen. 2:15).

Regardless of how much sin has obscured God's image in humankind, this commandment of God to till and keep the world still echoes in human hearts. If ordinary people living in any corner of the world are asked what they need to lead normal lives, and what the meaning of their lives is, they answer: "I want to work, to have a family, to raise children..." And if any of us is asked to recall the (perhaps few) moments of joy and harmony in our lives, and to describe what human language calls happiness, we start describing our moments of communion with God, moments spent close to our loved ones, moments of joy over the first words or smile of a child, moments of enjoying the fruit of the work of our own hands, and so on.

However, our era is a special one. These days, the ordinary people whom we ask about the meaning of their lives first tell about their desires to work, have a family, and raise children; but then they are silent for a moment, and eventually add: "unless a war breaks out". In other words, nowadays all people, anticipating a catastrophe, continuously taste the bitter flavour of fear when they think about life and the world, about their own fate and that of their loved ones, or about the fate of the whole of humankind. Our sense of hearing, tuned in to the sound of sheer silence, is deafened by the foretaste of the noises of a great wind, earthquake and fire (1 Kings 19:11-12).

St John Chrysostom has said that "to sustain the world means nothing less than to create the world", i.e., it means something "wonderful", so to speak, or even more. Namely, according to him, 'to create' means to bring something from the state of nothingness or non-being to the state of being, and to sustain

that which already exists but which may turn back into a 'nothing'. This great Father of the Church also speaks about the act of creation as an act of combining mutually contradictory things, which is a great and wonderful deed, a sign of great power.[1] Thus, St John Chrysostom held Christians' calling to work for peace in very high esteem. Moreover, even "the Lord of peace himself" (2 Thess. 3:16) has said that peacemakers will be called children of God (Matt. 5:9). This is a high calling requiring an enormous sense of responsibility and much strength.

The special nature of the Christian view on the problem of reconciliation can be best discerned in the following words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives" (John 14:27). The reconciliation of humahkind with God, which took place in Jesus Christ, is realized in the everyday life of the hidden body of Christ - i.e., in the life of his Church and in the harmonious union of the members of this body. The Apostle Paul writes about this union very concretely in many of his epistles.

Thus, the Christian's fundamental conviction concerning this issue is that peace is God's gift of grace, and a lasting peace can only be achieved in Christ. "I do not give to you as the world gives." Indeed, even though reconciliation between freedom and coercion (or between the life of an individual and that of society) cannot be fully accomplished through natural development, this kind of reconciliation is nevertheless characteristic of the Church's life, both internally and externally. On the other hand, we would naturally be in conflict with both theological and natural reality if we claimed that the spiritual gift of peace in the Church has nothing to do with human efforts. It applies to all gifts of the Holy Spirit that they only become reality if the human heart is oriented to the truth of God in repentance. The gift of peace manifests itself if Christians do their best in the "work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 1:3). These personal efforts of each individual member of the body of Christ do not depend on the contemporary age, or the occasional circumstances of social life. Blessed by the Lord (Matt. 5:9), these efforts always bear fruit, regardless of when and where they take place.

The primary manifestations of the Spirit's invisible gifts in the visible life of the Church differ from each other in different traditions. In this paper, it is natural for me to confine myself to the Orthodox tradition. To begin with, we all know that where two or three are gathered in Christ's name, the Church full of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is there. In the Orthodox Church, especially the service of worship has traditionally been regarded as such a gathering. For Orthodox Christians, the liturgy, in which the eucharist is the pivotal element, has always been something essentially more than a mere expression of the

---

[1] Sviatoi Ion Zlatoust, *Tvoreniia,* t. 12, Tolkovanie vtoroe na poslanie k Evreiam, str. 21. [St John Chrysostom, *Creation,* Part 12. The Second Explication of the Letter to the Hebrews, p. 21.]

believers' faith, or of their way of life that is in accordance with the Holy Spirit. Namely, we also regard the liturgy as a visible sign of the Spirit's invisible gifts, such as the gift of reconciliation. The peace of the human heart is an essential condition for one's communion with God, and also an important condition for one's remaining in communion with the Church. The first liturgical exhortation, which opens all the essential Orthodox services of worship, says: "In peace, let us pray to the Lord." Thus, it is implied here that the peace of the heart is a condition for sincere and genuine prayer. Furthermore, reconciliation with all neighbours is an absolutely essential condition for true participation in the eucharistic sacrament.

It is a well-known fact that the liturgy has a very pivotal role in the life of the Orthodox Church. The truth of Christ's gospel has shone upon the Orthodox especially through the liturgy, which is a living reality. This historical fact is not just the result of accidental circumstances, but an outcome of God's providence. Namely, the Orthodox have always been very sensitive to the beautiful liturgical forms of Byzantium, and have therefore become creators of celebrations and rituals that are without comparison in their beauty. The ecclesiastical architecture, music and icon painting of the Orthodox are permeated with a steadfast and restful peace, and with a particularly peaceful spirit of beauty that seems like an embodiment of the joyful message of the angels: " ... and on earth peace among those whom he favors" (Luke 2:14).

The Orthodox Church is connected with this historical experience, and sees it as its duty to preserve this ancient liturgical heritage and pass it on also today. Our experience from recent decades shows that the liturgy still today plays a fundamentally important role in evangelizing our society and in spreading God's grace among our people. Moreover, it is an essential, visible source of the reconciliation which begins with peace within the Christian family and community.

When we talk about the liturgy, we cannot limit its influence only to its effect on emotions. Rather, it also plays quite a significant role in Christian instruction. The main reason for this is God's word, which is read and heard in every service of worship, but important instruction is also given through ecclesiastical poetry, manifold symbolism and preaching. In this connection, it must be noted that it is traditionally characteristic of the Orthodox sermon to interpret the Holy Scriptures, especially in order to draw ethical and educational conclusions from God's word heard in the service. Peace education is a pivotal element of the modern sermon.

Hence, when we speak about genuine reconciliation, the peace of Christ, we are, above all, referring to the Church. Sin is a disease, and the lack or imperfection of the inner spiritual peace is one part of it. Conflicts and wars, with all their tragic consequences, are external symptoms of this infirmity. The Church not only tries to abolish the destructive consequences of this malady, but also seeks to eradicate its actual root, i.e., human sinfulness. Admittedly, because this view of the nature of the peace problem makes use of the

terminology employed by the Holy Scriptures and theology, it cannot be imposed as a universal norm on the whole of humankind. It can be chosen freely only by those who adhere to Christianity.

However, the problem of peace in the world is not merely an internal problem of an individual church.

A. In the face of the division of Christian churches, we must admit that the problem of peace is a universal inter-church problem.

B. On the other hand, as regards the relations between different living faiths and the domain outside religions, the problem of peace is a general human problem, and must be resolved as such, independently of such ideological statements that are not generally accepted.

C. Finally, because all Christian communities live in actual social and political circumstances and all Christians are citizens of actually existing nations, the problem of reconciliation is, inevitably, also a sociopolitical problem for them.

All these aspects must be included and united in the work for peace carried out by Christians. At the same time, the Christians' leading principle must be a positive attitude towards life, and a fight for the forces of life and goodness against the forces of evil, division and death. However, this battle against evil must naturally employ means which are not in contradiction with Christian morality.

The starting point for the general human approach to the problem of reconciliation is the view that it is necessary to develop the principles of humaneness or humanity on an international scale. This view becomes reality when relationships of mutual respect, openness and trust are strengthened, and when stable political, economic and cultural relationships are established.

According to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, the principles of humanity are written on human hearts (Rom. 2:14-15). However, sin, which distorts the human nature, works against this ethical law. Therefore, it is necessary to fight against the destructive influence of the powers of evil. It is obvious how closely this battle is connected with real social and political situations. During relatively peaceful periods, the evil forces, which are active in the world all the time, can hide their aggressive aspirations behind hypocritical demagogy. In crises, however, they take the side of open cynicism and aggression. In the former case, it is appropriate that efforts aiming at more comprehensive principles of humanity are in the foreground in peace work, but in the latter case the problem of reconciliation becomes a problem of maintaining peaceful co-existence, i.e., a problem of how to obey the norms of international law.

The word 'reconciliation', which is essentially important to the brotherly and sisterly relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the ELCF, relies on these principles of humanity. Speaking of these friendly relations, I would like to recall the theological encounters between representatives of these two churches in 1959, which obviously were the starting point for reconciliation

in our relationship. Further, the first official theological discussions were held in 1970, and in 1974 His Holiness Patriarch Pimen visited Finland. During his visit, he gave a presentation in which he placed especial emphasis on what he called the pivotal calling of churches to work for the cause of Christian reconciliation. He also said: "Churches have often turned their main attention to the personal perfection of individuals, belittling the power of social evil and shutting their eyes to it. Some other churches, on the other hand, have shown a strong tendency to channel all the tasks of the Church and the entire work of the reconciliation movement into social issues. At the same time, they seem to have pushed into the background and almost forgotten such questions as each individual's personal perfection, personal sins and personal salvation, as well as the Church's basic task to call people into the Kingdom of God, even though all these age-old questions are fundamental for the Church. Our Church has always taken a stand against both of these two extremes. She has spoken in favour of a just and unbiased participation of Christians in all efforts of the reconciliation movement, and in the endeavour to achieve Christian unity within the Church. At the same time, she has also defended Christians' right to take part in efforts to build a more just society."[2]

On the way towards reconciliation, our friendly relations with the ELCF are reality also today, as this encounter once again shows.

When we believe in one God and in Jesus Christ, the Saviour, the Prince of Peace, we maintain divine hope in the future of creation. We know the love of God, and we confess the Lord of history, in whom we have the promise of the fullness of life. God's grace is endless, and the Holy Spirit is in our midst, kindling in our hearts a love which both dispels fear and renews our vision of the world, i.e., renews the vision which might easily lead us to despair. The Holy Spirit leads us through the desert, sets us free and unites us. To a growing extent, the nations of the world demand peace. These are signs of hope.

We know that churches often approach the questions of justice and peace from different angles, because churches themselves are different. This derives from the diversity related to their history and traditions, and to the circumstances under which they live as God's witnesses. We must work for a common witness in the divided world, and fight with a new strength against everything that threatens peace and life. We must also take part in the fight for reconciliation and human dignity, just as we must be living proofs of the peace and justice that are to be achieved through prayer, service of worship and concrete participation.

It can be said that we have a long and varied experience of peace work. I am certain that this experience will help us to find the right ways of cooperation in the future. Let us pray to God, who guides our hearts and our thoughts. Let

[2] See also the following volume: Pimen, Patriarkh Moskovski i vseia Rusi. *Pravoslavnyi vzgliad na ekumenizm*, s. 327. [Pimen, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. *The Orthodox View of Ecumenism*, p. 327].

the world become a dwelling place of peace, filled with the truth and love of God.

Then, as regards the latter part of my presentation, the question of nationality, it must be said that at present our national self-awareness is a scene of obvious conflict between two opposite forces, namely, the force of national recovery and that of national self-denial and destruction.

As examples of the constructive and creative forces, I would like to mention the forces which defend Ukraine's national interests, its economic power and ability to defend itself, its social, educational and cultural development, the preservation and conservation of its natural resources as well as its material and spiritual riches, the upkeep and strengthening of its people's physical and mental health, the recovery of the traditions and values of its great past, the triumphant victory of the ideal-conscious ethical norms of the Ukrainian individual and society, and the development of this people's intellectual and creative potential. Primitive forces based on individual egoism, ambition, aggression and hedonism, in turn, work against the constructive and creative process.

The powers of creation and those of destruction and devastation have fought against each other all over the world and throughout history, and in each society and every individual soul. The classical biblical view according to which the wise wife gets her house organized but the foolish one destroys it with her own hands can also be applied to the structure of an individual human person, and to that of an individual national and historical community.

Every social structure, if it is at the same time an organization, tries to sustain and organize itself; in other words, it tries to fight against the destructive processes of change which might lead to its destruction and dissolution. This means that every social structure which is able to survive makes a continuous effort to improve itself. It should be noted in this connection, however, that the quality of a social structure is not determined by its economic characteristics alone, but, above all, by the spiritual and moral well-being of the society concerned. Indeed, the society that we would call the happiest would be least familiar with mental and somatic illnesses, drug problems, alcoholism, suicides, abortions, divorces and crime. Hence, the quality of a social structure depends on each individual's development stage and quality.

In approaching the question of the formation of human personality, I must, within the framework of this paper, also consider the formation of national self-awareness, which is at the heart of every nationality. In this context, I must also refer to the significance of the religious factor in the process of personal development.

The ancient world was henoteistic. Each people professed its own religion, which was not professed by any other people. However, along with the advent of Christianity, this situation changed radically. In accordance with Christ's commandment, the apostles proclaimed the gospel among all nations in the

Mediterranean world. The work of the Apostle Paul brought people from different nations to the Church. In the new Christian community, differences no longer mattered, because, in Christ, there was no longer Jew or Greek. A new people distinct from other peoples came into existence, a people which called itself the people of God, and which had no borders, no army and no one single political centre.

However, even though the highest spiritual interests of the people who came to the Church from different nations were similar, the nations did not lose their own national distinctiveness. As a result of what happened on the day of Pentecost, the world's nations began to understand each other, but their national diversity did not disappear. Christ's commandment to proclaim the gospel to all nations presumes that each nation preserves its national distinctiveness, which, however, will be characterized by a qualitatively new, spiritual way of life. In the spiritual and metaphysical sense, the Church is a new people. National borders will not be abolished, but the national, regional and local churches, which represent the level of the universal Church's historical existence, together make up the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Within Christian civilization, individual nations and empires have always led independent lives. The Church has never tried to interfere with their national distinctiveness, but has rather promoted the deepening and strengthening of their characteristic features.

The primary constituent of humanity is neither the race nor the nation, nor any other biological collective, but the human person. All human persons are supranational and spiritual, and have their origin in God, who is the Spirit. The human person is created in the image of God, is the agent of life in its different forms, and lives in God spiritually, mentally and bodily. This corporeality of the spirit constitutes humanity and gives life its characteristic of diversity, which, in turn, shows the family and the nation their own place. Namely, just as the Spirit communicates to each human person a certain character, in the same way every terrestrial, corporeal embodiment also has a special character.

In the Spirit, in Christ, differences between "Greek", "Jew", "barbarian" and "Scythian" (Col. 3:11) disappear, and all become one. The Old Testament's religious nationalism emphasizing the one single chosen people melts away in the rays of the sun of Christ. Although the fact of different "tribes" still remains, all nations are equal, at least potentially, before Christ's incarnation. Even though the question of different nationalities does not lose its significance, it gains a new meaning. From the Christian point of view, 'nationality' is not only a fact, but also a value.

Bolshevism thirsted for sole dominion over society. Mere terrorism was not enough; the bolshevists also wanted to raise a new human being, who would consciously love the yoke of this ideology. For this purpose, both the pain and the pride of previous generations were dispelled from people's minds; the ideal of nationality was discredited; a unified, impersonal way to communicate was invented; peoples were mixed up with each other; and

financial 'support was given to Soviet professors' babbling about the 'international', which, in spite of its primitiveness, was a great ideological success in destroying national identities. On the other hand, at the moment there are many who, having seen the light at the end of the tunnel, now regard the nation state as the power capable of solving all problems; what they do not notice, however, is that the nation state still needs to recover.

The 'national' is the part that can obscure the whole. Once it has barbarized itself, it can generate a passionate feeling which has an intensity inversely proportional to the truth. However, there are other things as important and sacred as the 'national': your hearth and home, your family, your childhood neighbourhood, your friends, the spirit of your generation, and so forth.

When human beings try to find themselves, their search for self contains many aspects, each of which has its own binding force in the world. Together, all these things make a lasting and reasonable cultural "field", which can be likened to a field of corn. Each human person is to cultivate this field, and to make his or her unique way through it from a life marked by a narrow individuality to the world of common human values. Besides national self-acceptance and national identity, the human person always has access to other paths which also lead to the universal values of human culture. Hence, what comes to the foreground in this connection is the problem of the nation's responsiblity in relation to the indvidual.

Nationality, or the nation, is neither an idea nor an ideal, but an original force, a living power of nature and history. Therefore, it may happen that this force brings only destruction, if it has not found its complete form. In order to become a creative force, it has to be conceived by something higher than itself. What, then, could be higher or more absolute than Divinity? His fullness has been given to us in Christian faith. Therefore, as a historical force, nationality must serve the common good of all people, namely, the triumphant victory of religious truth. Seen from this angle, the 'national' loses its egoism, becomes a partaker of the 'universal', and therefore ceases to be essentially different from cosmopolitism.

The historical and ethical basis for the Church's indisputable influence on the formation of a national character is the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his personal example of dealing with one's contemporaries and with people of the same tribe or nationality. The doctrine of the Church reminds us that, in his incarnation and his life in the world, the Son of God shared, to the very end, the lot of the Human Being in the midst of human beings. Archpriest Sergei Bulgakov has said that, as a human being, the Lord loved the holy land, the holy city, and everything that surrounded him, just as he loved the lilies of the valley and the fields of grass. He loved his people, regarded himself as being sent to them, and shed tears of deep sorrow because of their impenitence.

The worldwide Church is not only a community of believers, but also a kind of brotherly and sisterly union of nations, because the Christian ideal is

perfect "godmanhood", a spiritual and corporeal union of humanity with the fullness of Divinity in Christ through the Church. In this organism, there is no room for quarrels, because the Church is the body of Christ, "the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:23).

The Church sanctifies not only individuals, but also the nations which turn to it. It saves not only the souls of individuals, but also the souls of those nations which regard themselves as available instruments for building God's kingdom on earth, and base their national self-awareness on this vision. The Church calls all people and nations to the worldwide work of salvation, which is the highest and most absolute good. In the name of this work, all types of self-sacrifice become possible, even the self-sacrifice of entire nations, which can only achieve completeness in their development in this deed of valour: "Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it" (Matt. 10:39).

The aim of civilization is to dissociate itself from the battle for survival as the principle of human life, and to replace this principle with justice and love. And the highest revelation of love is Christ, who made the fight between "Greek", "barbarian", "Jew" and "Gentile" unnecessary.

The blood of Christ, which was shed in the name of Jewish nationalism ("If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation"; Joh. 11:48), freed humankind from 'nationalism' in the worst sense of this word. Namely, his blood showed all human beings the ideal of humanity, because Christ rose from the dead for the sake of us all, and gave his disciples this commandment: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).

GOD'S PEOPLE AND NATIONS: THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS

The Rev. Simo Kiviranta, Lic.Th.

"Alle Ambivalenzen des menschlichen Daseins kommen ins Spiel, wenn das Volk theologisch interpretiert werden soll."
(H. Thielicke)

The alienness of God's people and the national homes

As we all know, humankind lives as nations. For the following two well-known reasons, this human condition seems to be a theologically ambivalent state of affairs:

a. Both the New Testament and the other relevant sources show that the early Christians understood themselves as "the people of God" (ὁ λαὸσ τοῦ Θεοῦ). This self-understanding seems to ignore - indeed, even relativize - the existence of nations. Even though "the people of God" was a religious concept which did not involve any demands of a national living space in the ordinary sense of the word, it nevertheless was a name that a concretely existing community used of itself. In terms of its outward and observable ways of life, this 'people' not only formed communities and isolated itself from the surrounding culture in many ways both religiously and morally, but it also seemed totally uninterested in supporting national identities. The so-called "*diaspora* awareness" (awareness of being in the state of dispersion in the world) of God's people can be described as something inter- or supranational, because it was typical of this 'people' to cross and ignore national boundaries. Namely, instead of creating a separate miniature community of its own (as religious communities living in the desert did), this 'people' made itself at home everywhere. Moreover, God's people also completely ignored the predominant macro-scale division of that era, i.e., the division into Graeco-Romans and barbarians. "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish" (Rom. 1:14). "... There is no longer Greek and Jew [...] barbarian, Scythian [...]; but Christ is all and in all!" (Col. 3:11). This way of thinking, which was based on the above-mentioned concept of dispersion (Gr. *diaspora*) and on the awareness of being a stranger in this world (Gr. *paroikia*), was reflected very clearly in a Christian apology called *Letter to Diognetus*, which was written at the end of the second century:

Christians are not different from the rest of men in nationality, speech, or customs; they do not live in states of their own, nor do they use a special language, nor adopt a peculiar way of life. Their teaching is not the kind of thing that could be discovered by the wisdom or reflection of mere active-minded men [...] Whether fortune has given them a home in a Greek or foreign city, they follow local custom [...] They live, each in his native land - but as though they were not really at home there [...] *Every foreign land is for them a fatherland and every fatherland is a foreign land* [...] They obey the laws that men make, but their lives are better than the laws [...] What the soul is to the body Christians are to the world. The soul is distributed in every member of the body, and Christians are scattered in every city in the world. (Diogn. 5-6, excerpts; emphasis added)[1]

---

1 V. Χριστιανοὶ γὰρ οὔτε γῇ οὔτε ἤθεσι διακεκριμένοι τῶν λοιπῶν εἰσιν ἀνθρώπων. 2. οὔτε γὰρ που πόλεις ἰδίας κατοικοῦσι οὔτε διαλέκτῳ τινὶ παραλλαγμένῃ χρῶνται οὔτε βίον παράσημον ἀσκοῦσιν. 3. οὐ μὴν ἐπινοίᾳ τινὶ καὶ φροντίδι πολυπραγμόνων ἀνθρώπων μάθημα τοῦτ' αὐτοῖς ἐστιν εὑρημένον, οὐδὲ δόγματος ἀνθρωπίνου προεστῶσιν ὥσπερ ἕτεροι. 4. κατοικοῦντες δὲ πόλεις ἑλληνίδας τε καὶ βαρβάρους, ὡς ἕκαστος ἐκληρώθη, καὶ τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις ἔθεσιν ἀκολουθοῦντες ἔν τε ἐσθῆτι καὶ διαίτῃ καὶ τῷ λοιπῷ βίῳ θαυμαστὴν καὶ ὁμολογουμένως παράδοξον ἐνδείκνυνται τὴν κατάστασιν τῆς ἑαυτῶν πολιτείας. 5. πατρίδας οἰκοῦσιν ἰδίας, ἀλλ' ὡς πάροικοι· μετέχουσι πάντων ὡς πολῖται, καὶ πάντ' ὑφορεύουσιν ὡς ξένοι· **πᾶσα ξένη πατρίς ἐστιν αὐτῶν, καὶ πᾶσα πατρὶς ξένη.** 6. γαμοῦσιν ὡς πάντες, τεκνογονοῦσιν· ἀλλ' οὐ ῥίπτουσι τὰ γεννώμενα. 7. τράπεζαν κοινὴν παρατίθενται, ἀλλ' οὐ κοίτην. 8. *ἐν σαρκὶ* τυγχάνουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐ *κατὰ σάρκα* ζῶσιν. 9. ἐπὶ γῆς διατρίβουσιν, ἀλλ' ἐν οὐρανῷ πολιτεύονται. 10. πείθονται τοῖς νόμοις, καὶ τοῖς ἰδίοις βίοις νικῶσι τοὺς νόμους... VI. Ἁπλῶς δ' εἰπεῖν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχή, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ Χριστιανοί. 2. ἐσπάρται κατὰ πάντων τῶν τοῦ σώματος μελῶν ἡ ψυχή, καὶ Χριστιανοὶ κατὰ τὰς τοῦ κόσμου πόλεις. 3. οἰκεῖ μὲν ἐν τῷ σώματι ψυχή, οὐκ ἔστι δὲ ἐκ τοῦ σώματος· καὶ Χριστιανοὶ ἐν κόσμῳ οἰκοῦσιν, οὐκ εἰσὶ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου. Ep. ad. Diogn 5,1-6,3 (excerpta).

[The English translation is taken from *The Fathers of the Church*. A New Translation. Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers. Eds. Hermigild Dressler, O.F.M. & al. Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1981 (1947), 360-362.]

In connection with this awareness of the early Christians of their diaspora, it is easy to see that God's people was a people different from national communities. Further, it is also clear that Christians regarded themselves as alien to this world; it was this sense of alienness that prevented "the people of God" from becoming an ideological instrument of any nation. However, what may easily be overlooked here is the influence exerted by this notion of alienness upon the surrounding culture: this essential ecclesiological element of early Christianity weakened from the inside the ideology claiming the cultural and other superiority of the Graeco-Roman Empire. By the end of the second century, at the latest, the representatives of this Graeco-Roman politico-cultural ideology gave Christians the name "third *genus*" (L. *genus tertium*; cf. *genus primum*: the Graeco-Romans; *genus alterum*: the Jews) at least in the Western branch of the Church. In actual fact, Christianity never really became this kind of *genus*. However, through its criticism of the predominant ideology, it indirectly gave a positive status - and a new opportunity - to peoples which had been deprived of any such standing. Hence, the concept of the people of God involves two essential dimensions. On the one hand, this 'people' is and remains alien to this world, and cannot realize itself completely within any one single nation. Therefore, it cannot become the national property or instrument of national aspirations of any nation. On the other hand, from the early days onwards the Christian faith has had various national homes. As the people of God, the Church crosses national boundaries and takes root among new peoples; at the same time, it necessarily shapes and unites peoples as nations.

Thus, the early Church understood itself as a new *people*. However, this expanding community never became a *nation*, but gathered its members from many nations, and regarded the *religious* and *moral* belonging together of God's people as primary. In this way, the people of God crossed ethnic and cultural as well as politico-social boundaries. In this process, the feeling of alienness often became dominant also in the everyday life of the Church, because God's people had to face resistance and persecution on the part of the prevailing culture and the politically powerful.

At the same time, however, the diaspora awareness of the early Christians also included the idea that God's people were to be loyal, to a certain extent, to the society and national milieu in which they lived. Such an attitude had also been characteristic of the Jewish diaspora, the predecessor of Christians' dispersion in the world. The "diaspora maxim" of the Old Testament prophets also applied to the dispersion of Christians: "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jer. 29:7). It can be concluded from the gospel tradition (e.g., Matt. 22:21b) and apostolic parænesis (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:11-17) that willingness to serve, love for the enemy, prayers on behalf of others, respect for social order, and obedience to governing authorities serving God were actually part of the early Christian religious practice and ethos.

In fact, before Christianity was given the status of an officially accepted religion, which happened in the fourth century, the Christian community had concretely encountered all the basic problems which can arise in connection with the relationship of the Christian Church, i.e., the people of God, to nations and societies. At the one end of the scale, we can find the Church confronting demonized political powers in scenes anticipating the final eschatological battle. At the other end of the scale, we find constructive cooperation; in this pattern, Christians understand themselves as servants protecting the world against corruption, and, indeed, as instruments in God's action of sustaining the world which is his creation (e.g., Diogn. 6:7-10).[2]

---

[2] Morally, it was a deliberate purpose of early Christians to lead such lives in society as to make even their opponents admit the rightfulness of the Christian way of life. In terms of both religious and politico-social life, the Christians' attitude could be crystallized in the phrase or slogan, "Not like the pagans, nor like the Jews, but like the people of God!" In addition to apologetic texts, which are numeorous, I would also like to refer to an early Christian apocalypse dating from the early second century, namely, *The Shepherd of Hermas*. Because of its strong moral tendency, this writing is interesting from an ethical point of view. In Hermas' vision, stones are taken from various mountains (= nations) and fitted into a tower (= the Church). First, these stones are of different colours, but once they become part of the tower, they all turn white: *λαβόντεσ τὴν σφραγῖδα μίαν φρόνησιν ἔσχον καὶ ἕνα νοῦν, καὶ μία πίστις αυτων ἐγένετο καὶ μία ἀγάπη... διὰ τοῦτο ἡ οἰκοδομή τοῦ πύργου μιᾷ χρόᾳ ἐγένετο λαμπρὰ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος* (Sim IX, 17)

Even though early Christians were a minority, they seem to have been powerfully aware of their influence on the mundane society around them. However, this society's attitude towards them continued the ambivalent situation, which is reflected, for example, in the Commentary of Hippolytus of Rome on the Book of Daniel: "After the Lord was born in the twelfth year of the emperorship of Augustus, the Empire began to grow. In those days, the Lord called and addressed all nations and languages through His apostles, and created a people of believing Christians, the people of the Lord, the people of those who carry a new name in their hearts. However, the Empire of this era, the Empire governing in accordance with 'the power of Satan', carefully imitated the people of God: it gathered the noblest members of all nations and equipped them for a battle, calling them 'the Romans'. Indeed, the first registration took place during the emperorship of Augustus, so that the people of this world, registered in the name of the mundane king, might be called Romans. Those, on the other hand, who believed in the Heavenly King, were called Christians, because they carried a sign of victory over death on their foreheads." (Hippolytus, In Daniel IV, 9). As for the positive significance of Christians for the welfare of the Empire, see the apologia of Melito of Sardis to Marcus Aurelius (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* IV, 26)

In general terms, I find it adequate to sum up the early Church's awareness of its diaspora in the following words: the Church totally rejects nationalism, but promotes patriotism!

b. However, before adopting this kind of supranational diaspora awareness, early Christianity had to break free from the Jewish people and Jewis

diaspora.[3] This aspect is connected, above all, with the theological ambivalence

[3] This detachment of the early Christian faith from Judaism manifests itself in very concrete terms in the threefold self-understanding of the former. Re-interpreting its own background once again, early Christianity saw itself, first, as the fulfilment of the Old Testament's Jewish religion; second, as a completely new religion; and, third, as a kind of 'proto-religion'. Correspondingly, the dimension of "the Church as a people" was also understood in three ways. In missionary preaching, Christian apologetics and early theologians' clarification of Christianity's identity, "the people of God" was approached from both religious and politico-historical perspectives, and seen, first, as the true Israel; second, as a new people; and, third, as the original people. The *Dialogue with Trypho* of St Justin Martyr provides a good example of this way of thinking:

"And after the Just One [= Jesus] was put to death, we blossomed forth as another people, and sprang up like new and thriving corn, as the Prophet exclaimed: 'And many nations shall flee unto the Lord in that day for a people; and they shall dwell in the midst of the whole earth' [Zach. 2:15 LXX]. But we Christians are not only a people, but a holy people, as we have already shown [see 116:1]: 'And they shall call it a holy people, redeemed by the Lord' [Isa. 64:12 LXX]. Wherefore, we are not a contemptible people, nor a tribe of barbarians, nor just any nation as the Carians or the Phrygians, but the chosen people of God who appeared to those who did not seek Him. 'Behold', He said, 'I am God to a nation which has not called upon my name' [Isa. 65:1; cf. LXX]. For, this is really the nation promised to Abraham by God, when He told him that He would make him a father of many nations, not saying in particular that he would be father of the Arabs or the Egyptians or the Idumaeans, since Ismael became the father of a mighty nation [...] Noe was the father of Abraham, and indeed, of all men. And other nations had other ancestors. What greater favor, then, did Christ bestow on Abraham? This: that He likewise called with His voice, and commanded him to leave the land wherein he dwelt. [Gen. 12:1]. And with that same voice He has also called of us, and we have abandoned our former way of life [ἀπὸ τῆς πολιτείας] in which we used to practice evils common to the rest of the world. And we shall inherit the Holy Land together with Abraham, receiving our inheritance for all eternity, because by our similar faith we have become children of Abraham. [...]

[A] proselyte who is circumcised in order to be incorporated into the body of the Jewish people is thereby considered as a native-born among you, but we who are deemed worthy of being called a people [λαὸς] are likewise a proper nation [ἔθνος] because we are uncircumcised." (Dial. 119, 123) [The English translation is taken from *The Fathers of the Church.* A New Translation. Volume 6: Writings of Saint Justin Martyr. Eds. Hermigild Dressler, O.F.M. & al. Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1977 (1948), 331-332, 338. However, the biblical references and Greek words in the

concerning the existence of nations which I mentioned at the beginning.

As we all know, the name used by the early Church of itself, 'the people of God', was a direct loan from the self-understanding of the Old Testament's Israel. The contrastive conceptual pair ἔθνος, ἔθνη (the nations [of Gentiles]) - λαός (*go:jim, 'am;* the people [of God], i.e., the chosen people, God's own people) is used throughout the New Testament, especially in the Pauline writings and those closely related to them, as well as throughout the Old Testament (particularly in LXX, but obviously also in the earlier Hebrew text). Anyone familiar with the late Jewish and rabbinic intertestamental writings is bound to notice a battle between two ideas: on the one hand, these texts contain apocalyptic visions which describe the Jewish people's universal mission; on the other hand, the Jews are also envisioned as being so powerfully aware of their superior and priviledged position as to retire into their shell and submit other peoples to destruction. In rabbinism, the latter view won this battle. The early Church, however, chose a solution in which the Old Testament faith in God's creative activity and the focus of prophetism joined hands. Because of God's great salvific works (God's choice of Abaraham, the Exodus, the covenant, the promised land, and the return from the exile), Israel was God's people (*gen. auctoris* and *gen. possessoris*). In salvation history and revelation history, God's selection of Israel as his chosen people became reality through these saving works. Their precondition, however, was God's creative activity, which embraces all nations. The origin of the nations, which are many, lies in God, who is one. In the same way, the aim of God's selection of one people is that all nations will be blessed and enlightened. In the history of theology, Fr. Delitzsch has summed up this fact in what has become an almost classic crystallization: *"Die Selbstbeschränkung des Heils auf Israel ist nur ein Mittel seiner künftigen Entschränkung."*

The monogeny of creation and the *monergeia* of redemption

The idea that the existence of nations is a result of sin occasionally surfaces in the (rabbinic) intertestamental writings. Naturally, the origin of this idea lies in the story of the attempt to build the Tower of Babel and the subsequent confusion of languages (Gen. 11). The biblical text says in this connection: "They are one people, and they have all one language" (Gen. 11:6). The actual reason for the confusion of languages, however, was the hybris of humankind

square brackets have been added by the writer of this text.]

The background to the last idea mentioned in the above-quoted extract is found in Isa. 42:6:" I have given you as [...] a light to the nations". St Justin's interpretation of this seems to be that if proselytes join the Jewish community, they can no longer be a light to the nations. Correspondingly, those who have been enlightened by the new light are not allowed to become Jewish proselytes.

after Noah. In the Old Testament, before the story of the Tower of Babel, the existence of nations is presented in a positive light in the genealogy of Gen. 10, according to which the nations are descendants of Noah.[4] The multiplication of humankind (the filling of the earth) is based on God's promise to protect all humanity, i.e., on his covenant with Noah. What underlies this, in turn, is the stemming of humankind from one single human being or pair. Both in the Old Testament accounts of creation and in the New Testament, the origin of humankind and nations is explained through this monogenist view. This monogenism is also crucially important for the theological understanding of the nations' existence and of their mutual relations.

Christian faith regards the nations as stemming from one single origin. One of the most "Greek" passages of the New Testament is Paul's speech before the Areopagus, presented in the Book of Acts. The theological starting point for, and a basic theme of, this speech is the monogeny of humankind. All human beings stem from one common origin, given by God in his act of creation; this is what the multiplicity of nations derives from. This monogeny of nations is based on the Old Testament view of the nations' status before God. In the Old Testament, the existence of all nations as a result of God's work, and their characteristic legacies given to them as God's original gifts in his "apportionment" of the nations, are described before God's selection of Israel, and even as its fundamental precondition: "When the Most High apportioned the nations, when he divided humankind, he fixed the boundaries of the peoples..." (LXX: *ὅτε διεμέριζεν ὁ ὕψιστος ἔθνη, ὡς διέσπειρεν υἱοὺς Αδαμ, ἔστησεν ὅρια ἐθνῶν κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων Θεοῦ*; Deut. 32:8).

Paul's Areopagus speech in the Book of Acts emphasizes in a similar fashion the nations' concrete and historical being willed by God. However, this speech also links this "spatiotemporal" being of nations to the idea that humankind is one entirety which has its origin in creation, and which also has an irrevocable goal. Indeed, our Christian teaching of the unity of humankind as well as our view that humanity is given a necessary form of life as nations are both built on this monogenist basis: *ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνος πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντὸς προσώπου τῆς γῆς, ὁρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν*(cf. D, E 𝔐 etc. *αιματος*:)

[4] "Damit ist der Gedanke von der schöpfungsmäßigen Einheit der Menschheit in einer Klarheit ausgesprochen, die in der ganzen antiken Welt ohne Beispiel ist. Die literarischen Zusammenstellungen der Völkergruppen in der Völkertafel gehen sicher auf zeitgenössische kartographische oder listenartige Entwürfe zurück, in die die Völker gemäß ihren geschichtlich-politischen Beziehungen (also nicht sprachlichen oder gar rassischen) ohne Vorrang und ohne irgendeine Wertung eingezeichnet waren. Die Völkertafel hat also keine Mitte, auf die hin die einzelnen Völker bezogen wären, und Israel fehlt in ihr ganz." Von Rad, Gerhard. *Theologie des Alten Testaments I.* München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1961, S. 165.

("From one ancestor [King James Version: "of one blood"] he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they should live", Acts 17:26).

On the basis of Christian faith in God's creation, it is absolutely necessary to reject all kinds of ethnic discrimination, whether they be based on race, national or cultural superiority, or other anthropological differences. According to the principle of monogeny, the one and same human blood flows in the veins of every human being. Ultimately, there is no other blood-bond between human beings or within groups or nations but the bond of the same and equal human blood, the bond given in creation. Differences between nations, their distinctive features, and their concrete and historical existence are the diversity which is given and intended in God's creation and which must be accepted as such. Not even the fact that God selected Israel as his chosen people implies this people's biological or ethnical superiority. It only means that in salvation history, which aimed at salvation intended for all people, Israel was given a particular task. Through this very fact, all contempt and hostility between nations is deprived of any justification whatsoever. At the same time, all the race myths and blood myths which aim at raising one nation above others are also condemned totally and absolutely, and the same applies to all nationalism which leads people to think that their own nation has higher or more comprehensive rights than other nations do.

Thus, Christian faith allows and enables us to see the existence of humankind as nations in a positive light. On the other hand, however, in view of the early history of humanity described in the Old Testament, we must also admit that the multiplicity and diversity of nations' concrete and historical realizations does not only mirror the *richness* of God's original creation. Theologically, the ambivalence of humankind's existence as nations very essentially lies in the fact that the nations not only represent God's creative activity but also necessarily manifest the fallen state of humanity. The genealogy of Gen. 10 depicts the dynamic of creation as if it were a huge polyphonic choir. Very soon, however, in the pericope narrating the story of the Tower of Babel, the forces of division and heterogeneousness also enter the scene. The sea of nations becomes destructively rough. Once the nations' ability to understand each other and cooperate in a constructive manner changes into the human being's independent and sinful attempt to conquer the heaven, the diversity of nations also begins to be marked by a lack of mutual understanding, a failure to communicate successfully, and a mutual hostility. One of the most obvious manifestations of this corruption is the attempt of nationalistic or jingoistic doctrines and movements to make their own nation ideologically superior to others, or even to raise it to a position of absolute supremacy. In their extreme forms, such tendencies can turn into a pseudo-religion of national self-idealization, or even to a collective disease.

Naturally, these kinds of tendencies and developments can be explained and understood from historical or socio-psychological points of view; let us

consider, for example, a lost war or a "dishonourable" peace (like that of Versailles), or a total oppression of people by a totalitarian society (e.g., some aspects of the former Soviet Union), or attempts to deprive some peoples of their national existence (e.g., the way the Kurds have been treated), or ethnic cleansings and removals of populations for reasons of ethnic "purity" (e.g., ex-Jugoslavia). However, attempts to understand and explain these kinds of actions do not mean acceptance of nationalism. Even though nationalism may often arise from injustices to which the oppressor has been subjected, these can never justify nationalism as a principle.

Nations long for freedom from the consequences of the sin described above. They need the recognition of their rights in all circumstances, also when they are a minority in a state or society. However, in addition to this liberation, and at a more fundamental level, they also need salvation from the state of fallenness. Nations must be seen within the great continuum of the salvation history revealed in Scripture, the continuum of creation and redemption. In this sense, 'salvation' primarily refers to the salvation of an individual, but, in order to be 'salvation' in the proper sense of the word, it also necessarily affects communities, shapes their structures, and has a creative influence on the ethos and culture of nations.

Thus, the name used by the Church of itself, 'the people of God', cannot be theologically explained only by referring to the traditional and historical succession (cf. the old Israel). Rather, it should also be regarded as a specific ecclesiastical definition, or even a kind of spiritual cipher. The nations mirror the reality of this aeon's human being, and the basic quality of this reality is diversity. Our reality is, indeed, irrevocably diverse - both as the richness of creation (i.e., as the "filling of the earth") and as the post-lapsarian divisions of humankind, conflicts, wars, etc. The fact that the Church understands itself as the *people* of God implies the orientation of peoples and nations towards God.

In the above-mentioned Areopagus speech of Paul in the Book of Acts, this fact becomes powerfully obvious. Humankind's unity and monogenous origin as well as its division into nations which realize its historical life are related to a certain design of God, which we usually call the 'natural' or 'general' revelation. God has decreed that humankind must live as nations, "so that they concrete and historical lives of nations it cannot be realized as such. In his Areopagus speech, Paul spewould search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him - though indeed he is not far from each one of us" (*ἐποίησεν... ζητεῖν τὸν Θεὸν, εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτόν καὶ εὕροιεν, καί γε οὐ μακράν ἀπὸ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου ἡμῶν ὑπάρχοντα*; Acts 17:27).

Hence, this is an orientation decreed by God himself. However, in theaks about the knowing of God as something that can, even at its best, only mean knowing the Unknown God (*ἄγνωστος Θεός*). Paul's speech implies that God was already in Athens before the advent of Paul, but people did not recognize him. It is true that God chose Israel as his own people, and was present in the midst of this people, the people of the Old Covenant revelation, during its

journey through the desert and in its services of worship ("You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel"; Ps. 22:3). However, this does not negate the fact (which gradually emerges in the Old Testament traditions as revelation) that God is, in a hidden way, close to all nations - even so close that we can say: "In him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). We know that the early Church interpreted this creative activity of God as the presence of the Logos sown and spread as a seed in all humankind at the level of reason and conscience or moral consciousness (*λόγος σπερματικός*; St Justin). A later theological tradition which the Lutheran church is also familiar with calls this particular conception 'the natural knowing of God' (L. *cognitio Dei naturalis*). Thus, the Logos - i.e., God himself - was not to blame for having withdrawn from being universally seen by human beings (Rom. 1:19-20). Rather, the problem was that the human beings were blind, turned away from God, became alienated from the life of God (Eph. 4:18), had their minds filled with futile notions and darkness, and became totally corrupted. In his Areopagus speech, Paul actually even becomes emotionally agitated in the face of this state of affairs. In preaching God the Creator, he says that God is present among the nations of Gentiles, but not in their religion or cult (i.e., not in shrines made by human hands, nor in idols, nor in sacrifices offered to idols to fill their alleged needs; Acts 17:24-25). Their non-Christian religions do not disclose the living God, nor are they God-given ways to salvation. In spite of the human being's natural knowledge of God, human religions have made God unknown.

Thus, nations cannot "grow" into salvation or fight their way towards it. Such efforts would only result in attempts to re-build the Tower of Babel. The people of God is, in essence, a community of salvation, but only because it has been called to and taken into salvation: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

Recognition of the fact that all nations are God's creation and have a monogeneous origin is a starting point and precondition for salvation in Christ, which is a totally independent and sovereign work of God (monergism). "The people of God" does not exist for the purpose of nurturing nations or teaching them how to live out their national existence. Rather, this 'people' is there to proclaim to nations the message of salvation, which both tells about the now free access to God and bestows this gift of communion with God upon human beings. ("Through him both of us [i.e., the entire people of God, which consists of both Jews and Gentiles] have access in one Spirit to the Father"; Eph. 2:18).

In contrast to the diversity of nations, the basic characteristic of the people of God is *unity*. Even though my deliberate starting point for this presentation was the self-understanding of the Early Church as the people of God, the theological conclusion to be drawn from the aspect of unity is nevertheless that *continuity in history* is part of the Church's being the people of God, in spite of all obstructions, limitations, captivities and distortions. If we make use of the historical classification suggested by A. Mayer-Pfannholz, we can characterize

the different "states" of this continuity as follows: *1. The Church as Mystery:* the Early Church. (With the possible exception of Asia Minor, the Church remained subcultural, because, unlike the Jewish religion, it was not a *religio licita*.) *2. The Church as Empire:* the Western Church and Byzantium of the Middle Ages. (The rivalry of the Church with the governing political authorities of society; the superior or inferior position of the Church.) *3. The Church as Confession.* (The Church during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in each state or region). *4. The Church as Society:* the Age of Enlightenment. (The Church loses its originality and distinctiveness, which society adopts as its own "property" and ideal.)

The new disclosure of God's unity and the reconciliation of nations in Christ

The people of God according to the Old Covenant, i.e., those who were Israel according to the flesh, proclaimed and professed one God, Creator and Saviour. In their view, however, it was impossible for other nations to confess this one God, if these at the same time remained nations, i.e., stayed outside Israel "according to the flesh". But, in Jesus Christ, God revealed his unity in such a way that the purpose of his selection of Israel as his chosen people was unveiled, and all nations gained access to communion with the people of God. However, God did not "change" because of the New Testament's Christ-revelation. Early Christianity was fundamentally different from Gnosticism, Manichæism, or the doctrine of the Marcionite sect, because Christians confessed that the one and only God, who creates by his word (i.e., through the Son in the Holy Spirit) is also the one who saves us in his incarnate Son and gathers God's people from all nations through the Spirit.

God's people according to the New Covenant, i.e., the spiritual Israel, acknowledged the status of the Old Covenant's Israel as God's chosen people by adhering to the same God the Father whom the "first" Israel had proclaimed. However, the Old Covenant's Israel rejected the New Covenant, which is why the Old Testament prophets had seen their people become God's people in the proper sense of the word only in the future (God in the midst of his people; Rom. 9:24-26). This rejection of the New Covenant by the Old Israel became an opportunity for other nations to join the people of God. At that point, this 'people' had to stop defining itself in terms of its ethnic and political existence, and become a spiritual Israel which recognizes nations as a fact of creation, but does not regard national boundaries as barriers, but, rather, as invitations. However, if national frontiers are to be crossed, enmity between nations must be abolished - and, indeed, while we acknowledge that the existence of nations is part of God's irrevocable creation (monogenism) and the division of the nations in the shadow of the Tower of Babel is also absolutely irreversible, we at the same time proclaim that through God's sovereign and

independent activity *(monergeia)* in the saving work of Christ, enmity was reconciled once and for all.

Christ's saving work is intended for all humankind. Hence, it is irreversible, irrevocable and eschatological in relation to nations, too. Nations have no other blood-bond than the creation of all humanity out of one human being or couple; accordingly, the nations of Gentiles, which used to be "far off" and without the citizenship of the people of God, have now been brought "near" by the blood of Christ (Eph. 2:11-15). The unity of God's people in Christ is intended for all people, but it cannot, as such, replace either the natural diversity or the historical or social bonds between nations. Nor can it become a foundation for the unity of humankind within history.

The people of God cannot and must not maintain any enmity or hostility among nations. Nor can it bind itself to any one nation in such a manner as to make a stand against another. Admittedly, it is one calling of this 'people' to speak in favour of the nation in which it happens to have a historical home, but it cannot make itself an instrument of that nation's aspirations to have more power. The claim that it is possible for the Church both to work for the nation in which it lives *and* to cross national boundaries at the same time has always been put to the hardest tests during social and political crises.

The recognition that nations are God's creation negates neither the division of humankind into nations nor the nations' diversity. According to utopian idealism - which was created in the popular philosophy of antiquity and further nourished by the spiritualism of the Middle Ages and the legacy of the Enlightenment, and which still has its advocates - nations cease to exist and humankind becomes a unified and immanent "kingdom of God". Christianity, however, cannot agree with such ideas. Even though these notions emerge repeatedly and in new forms, their essence is the same as that of millennial speculations. According to Christian faith, humankind will live as nations until the Last Judgement ("All the nations will be gathered before him"; Matt. 25:32), but the nations are freed from enmity and called to live together.

Conclusion

For the time being, many are willing to believe that the realization of the visible unity of God's people is a way to achieve the unity of humankind. According to this view, the Christian Church would still have this one string to its bow. In other words, the visibly unity of the Church would be a "sacrament" or efficacious instrument of the unity of humankind. However, such an idea would narrow the sufficiency and once-for-all nature of Christ's salvific work. The abolition of enmity among nations is part of his saving work, but the actual aim of his sacrifice was to give human beings access to communion with God, i.e., to salvation. Moreover, the unity of the Church includes no promise that the whole of humanity would become the people of

God. All nations have access to communion with God, but no nation can declare itself *the* people of God. Nor can this epithet be used of humankind (although the opposite view is held by Karl Rahner, for example). Such a goal would only lead the Church to another attempt to become an empire - and all previous attempts of this kind have proved to be errors.

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND AND THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN 1970-1995

The Rev. Heikki Jääskeläinen, Secretary to the Archbishop

Archbishop Martti **Simojoki** and Metropolitan **Nikodim** are regarded as the "architects" of the relations between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church.

In 1967, on the basis of conversations he had had, Archbishop Simojoki suggested to Patriarch **Aleksi** that theological discussions be commenced between these two churches. During the preparations, it was agreed that both doctrinal and socioethical issues be chosen as subjects for the planned discussions.

In terms of participants, these discussions have been high-level talks from the very beginning. Over the years, the Finnish delegations have been led by Archbishops Martti Simojoki, Mikko **Juva** and John **Vikström**. The Heads of the Russian delegations, in turn, have been Metropolitan **Filaret** of Minsk, Metropolitan **Antoni** of Leningrad, Metropolitan **Aleksi** of Leningrad (the present Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia), and Metropolitan Vladimir.

Turku 1970

The first discussions were held at the ecclesiastical conference centre of Sinappi, Turku (Finland), on March 19th-22nd, 1970. The first of these discussions' two themes looked at the eucharist as a manifestation of the unity of believers, and the second dealt with the theological foundations of the Church's efforts to promote peace.

Zagorsk 1971

The second discussions were arranged at the Trinity-St Sergi Lavra (Monastery) in Zagorsk (Russia/USSR) on December 12th-16th, 1971. In Zagorsk, the question of the eucharist was mainly approached from the viewpoint of this sacrament's sacricifial nature. The socioethical topic of this conference was "Justice and Violence".

Järvenpää 1974

The third discussions, in turn, were organized at the Institute for Advanced Training at Järvenpää (Finland) on May 23rd-28th, 1974. This was the first time when representatives from other Finland-based Christian churches also

participated in the discussions; they were present as observers. The topics of these Järvenpää discussions were: 1) "The Eucharist and Priesthood", 2) "Work for Peace in Christian Churches Today", and, 3) "The Christian Doctrine of Salvation".

Kiev 1977
The fourth discussions took place in Kiev (Ukraine/USSR) at the centre of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the Moscow Patriarchate on April 12th-15th, 1977. The themes were: 1) "Salvation as Justification and Deification", and, 2) "Salvation and the Kingdom of Peace: an Object of Faith and an Ethical Task".

Turku 1980
The fifth discussions were held at the Christian Education Centre of Turku (Finland) on June 5th-11th, 1980. The themes on the agenda were: 1) "Faith and Love as Elements of Salvation", and, 2) "The Theological Foundations of Churches' Work for Peace".

Leningrad 1983
The sixth discussions were arranged at the Leningrad Theological Academy (Russia/USSR), June 3rd-13th, 1983. For the first time, an observer from the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church took part in the discussions. The delegates worshipped, for example, in the Finnish church of Pushkin. The topics of the Leningrad discussions were 1) "The Nature of the Church", and, 2) "Churches' Work for Promoting Peace in the Modern World". The 500th anniversary marking Martin Luther's birth also influenced the discussions.

Mikkeli 1986
The seventh discussions, in turn, were organized at the Varsavuori Hotel in Mikkeli (Finland) on June 4th-11th, 1986. The doctrinal theme chosen for this meeting was "Holiness, Sanctification and the Saints", and the socioethical one was "The Sermon on the Mount and Churches' Work for Peace in Today's World".

Piukhtitsa 1989
The eighth discussions took place at the Convent of Piukhtitsa (Estonia/USSR), on June 9th-19th, 1989. The topics of the discussions were: 1) "Creation (the First Article of Faith)", and, 2) "The Human Being's Responsibility for God's Creation".

Järvenpää 1992
Exactly 25 years after the agreement of Archbishop Simojoki and Patriarch Aleksi on commencing Finnish-Russian Lutheran-Orthodox theological discussions, the ninth round of these talks was held at Järvenpää (Finland) on

May 19th-28th, 1992. At Järvenpää, the theme was the apostolic faith and teaching, and its significance today.

Kiev 1995
The tenth discussions were held in Kiev (Ukraine) on August 27th - September 5th, 1995. The topics dealt with the mission of the Church today, and with peace and the issue of nationality after the cold war.

What has been accomplished through these discussions?

These Finnish-Russian Lutheran-Orthodox discussions have been an important element in these two churches' process of learning to know each other better, and also in their efforts to make their doctrines and lives more widely known in other churches. In Finland, dozens of theologians have participated in the preparatory seminars which are always held before the actual discussions.

During each round of these discussions, the visits of participants to local parishes around the conference area, and services in which participants and local people have worshipped together, have made the talks a living reality also locally.

From the beginning of the 1980s onwards, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland have had an exchange programme for scholarship students. Within the framework of this programme, several Russian theologians have studied in Helsinki, and Finnish ones at the St Petersburg Theological Academy.

These talks have also had an encouraging effect on the recovery of Lutheran and Finnish parish life in the area around St Petersburg (formerly Leningrad), and on the new dawn of the church of the Ingrians, who are ethnically of Finnish origin.

This series of discussions has also produced useful material for other churches' theological talks with Orthodox churches. Programmes of the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches, for example, have benefited from these Finnish-Russian Lutheran-Orthodox discussions.

Further, these discussions have also, for their part, stimulated the doctrinal discussions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland with the Finnish Orthodox Church, the Evangelical Free Church of Finland and Finland's Pentecostal Movement.

These Finnish-Russian talks have also influenced Finnish and European Luther research because of the "in ipsa idest Christus adest" perspective, which was re-discovered in these discussions. This aspect emphasizes the real presence of Christ in faith.

The Russian Orthodox have said that, as a result of this discussion series, they have learned to understand that "Lutheranism" does not equal "Protestantism". Finnish Lutherans, in turn, have found points of contact

between the Lutheran doctrine of justification and the Orthodox doctrine of *theosis* (deification, divinization).

The three previous rounds of these discussions have also provided the Finns with an opportunity to follow closely the development of the Russian Orthodox Church during these years of rapid social changes.[1]

[1] Translator's note: My special thanks are due to the translator Markku Tuominen, who carried the main responsibility for transliterating the Russian names and book titles of this volume from the Russian alphabet into the Latin one. The transliteration system used in this volume is the U.S. Library of Congress system minus ligatures and diacritical symbols, as is common in most U.S. libraries and in several scholarly journals in social sciences and humanities. Some deviations from this system have been made, especially in connection with certain proper nouns which already have a more or less fixed anglicized equivalent. The most important deviation from the overall spelling system is that, in accordance with the preference of both *The (New) Encyclopædia Britannica* and *The Encyclopedia Americana*, the names of peoples living in the former Soviet Union territory are written with 'y' instead of 'i' in such words as Yakut, Koryak, Vyatka, etc.

EDITORIAL STAFF

Juhani Forsberg, Executive Secretary for Theology
Heikki Jääskeläinen, Secretary to the Archbishop
Heikki Mäkeläinen, General Secretary for Program Units
Simo Repo, Acting Associate Secretary for Ministry to Finns Abroad (Editor)

DISTRIBUTION:

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Church Council
Box 185
FIN-00161 HELSINKI
FAX +358-9-18 02 454