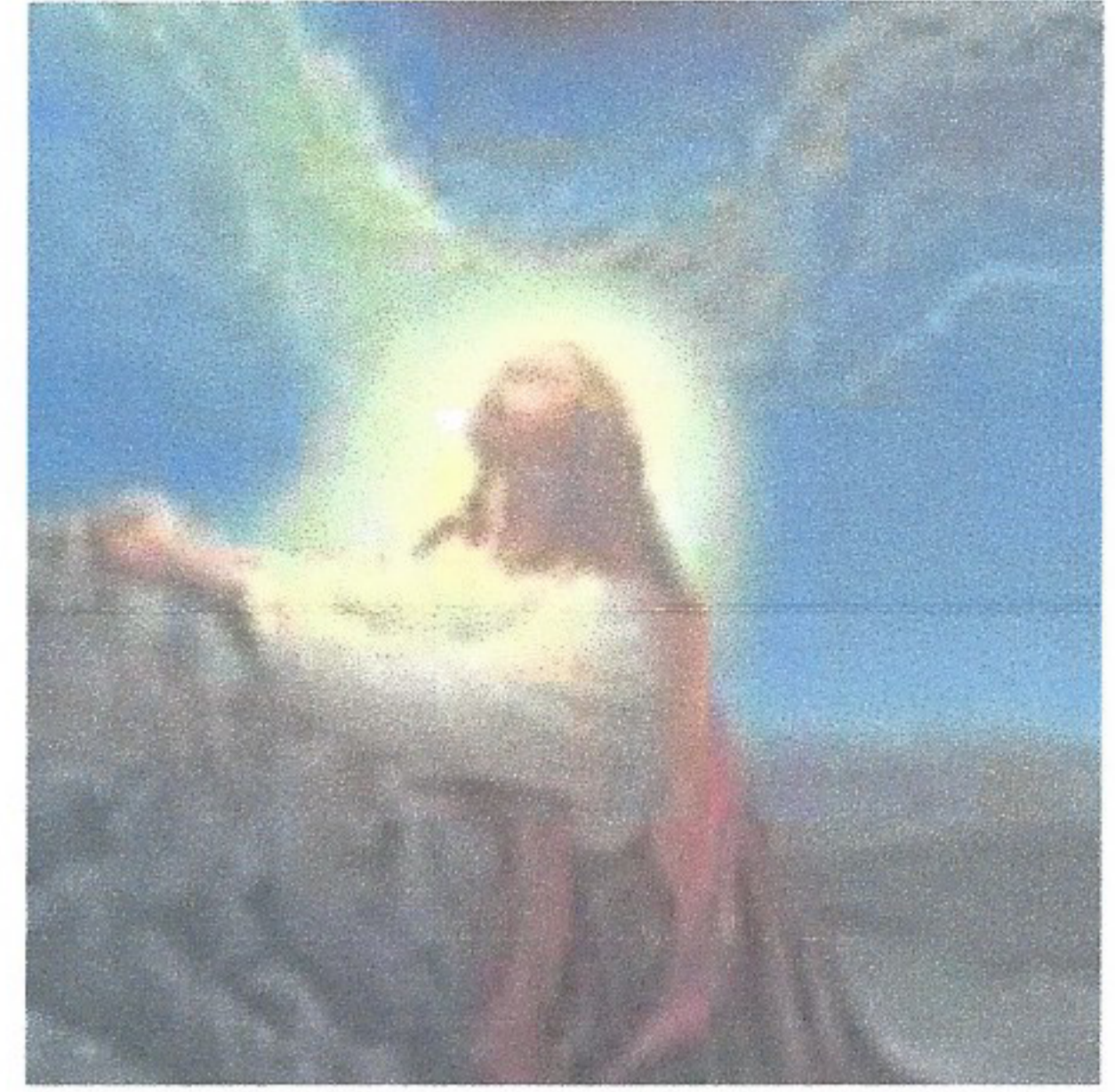
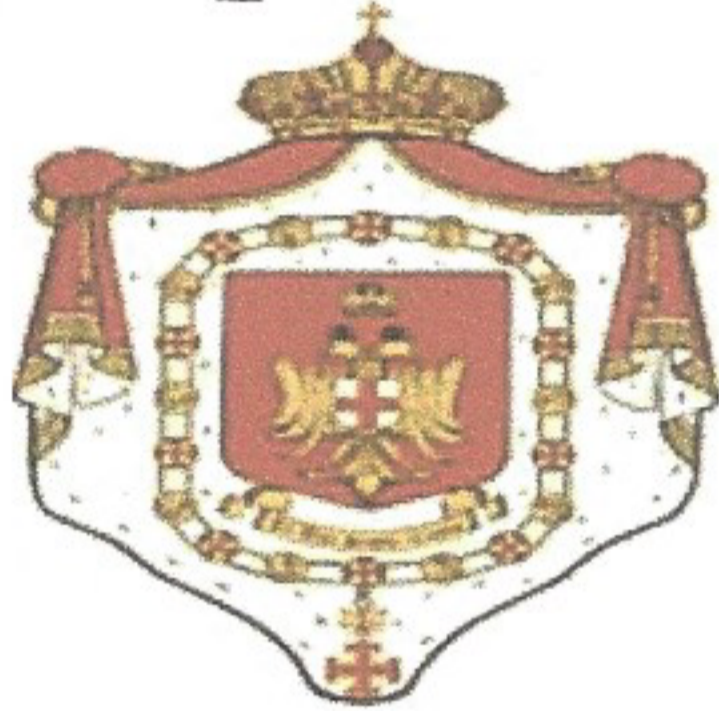


# Kýrie Eléison

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## Open Letter to Count Sandro Calleja of the O.S.S., Patriarch Bartholomew, Pope Benedictine XVI



**Ordo**

**Sancti Sepulchri**

Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos

July 20, 2012

H.E. Chev. Count Carmel Sandro Calleja  
MALTA

My dear brother-in-Christ, Vicar Grand  
Master, Count Sandro Calleja,

Many blessed years have passed with  
you being a Guardian of the Faith and  
Work of our beloved Order. I believe  
the time of fruition has arrived for the  
Order of the Holy Sepulchre, (O.S.S.)  
whose devotion is for Culture, Charity,  
and Ecumenism in our Christian world  
which is paramount. Protection to our  
Christian faith as a Knighthood has  
never been needed as much as it is

today. The Holy Spirit has blessed my  
position and has indicated the  
importance of my hierarchal  
appointment to the Magisterium of the  
O.S.S. Our Lord has put me in an  
intense study in order for me to  
understand the correct direction that is  
needed for my Priory of Spain, North  
and South America, throughout the  
world.

The following outline is a direction for  
our Order and your personal input:

- a. Inasmuch as our beloved Order  
embraces both the Eastern  
Orthodoxy and the Western  
Roman Catholicism and enjoys  
blessings from both hierarchal  
structures of the Ecclesia, O.S.S.  
will be a blessed vehicle of the  
Holy Spirit, and pathway to  
Christian Unity.
- b. We, the Grand Priory of Saint  
Michael, are organizing,  
preparing, financing, and  
implementing a plan blessed by  
our Lord to contribute to an  
ecumenical unity that our Lord

prayed in the Gospel of SAINT JOHN 17:21.

- c. July 28, 2012, I have been invited with my deacons to give a presentation in Atlanta, Georgia, on the subject of Christian Unity. The group is worldwide and is known as TLIG (True Life in God). This group is in dire need of a hierarchal Christian "Omophorion". They have been recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Benedictine XVI, yet have not received credibility nor special blessing from them (more of an attitude of let us wait and see "If it is of God") Holy Scripture ACTS 5:39. The Holy See of Constantinople has written and states, TLIG is not in proper ecclesiastical "phronema".

We, at Saint Michael Priory, and Holy Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Ecclesia, In Exile, Blessings of Kiev, have made an intense study of the publications of TLIG and found error in several areas: *The Shroud of Turin; embracing and giving credibility to muslim religious entities, reflective disobedience and error using spiritual locutions referencing our Lord, Jesus Christ.* However, few Christian clergy sparsely distributed throughout the world both Catholic and Orthodox have blessed this world leader who is a woman claiming to be a prophetess, named "Vassula".

My attendance as an Orthodox Archbishop in Atlanta is not intended in any manner to give credibility to this group. I am led by the Holy Spirit to accept their invitation, only to accomplish A RESCUE AND RECONCILIATION TO TLIG CHRISTIANS, WHO ARE BEING

LED TO BELIEVE IT IS AN APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT, which at this time is not in Spirit and Truth. My dear Count Sandro, you are always in our prayers and I send a Special Blessing to you, David Formosa, and all our O.S.S. Knights in Malta.

In Christ's Service,



Metropolitan Archbishop +Haralambos  
Primate of the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox  
Archdiocese Autocephalic Church in  
Exile

Knight Grand Cross and Prior of Saint  
Michael International (O.S.S.)

Grand Cross of St. Gregory, Vatican  
Decorated

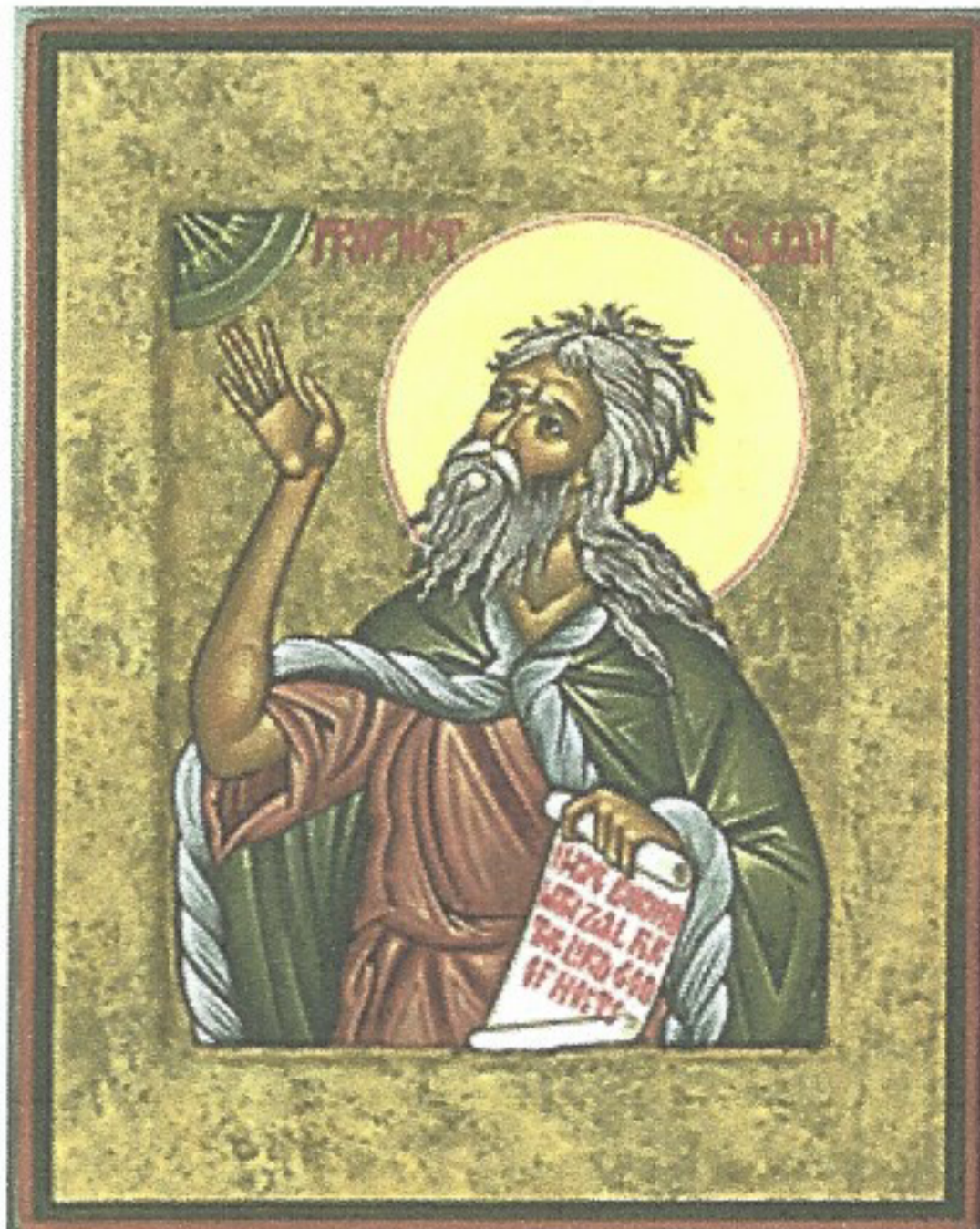
CC: His Holiness Patriarch  
Bartholomew

CC: His Holiness Pope Benedictine XVI

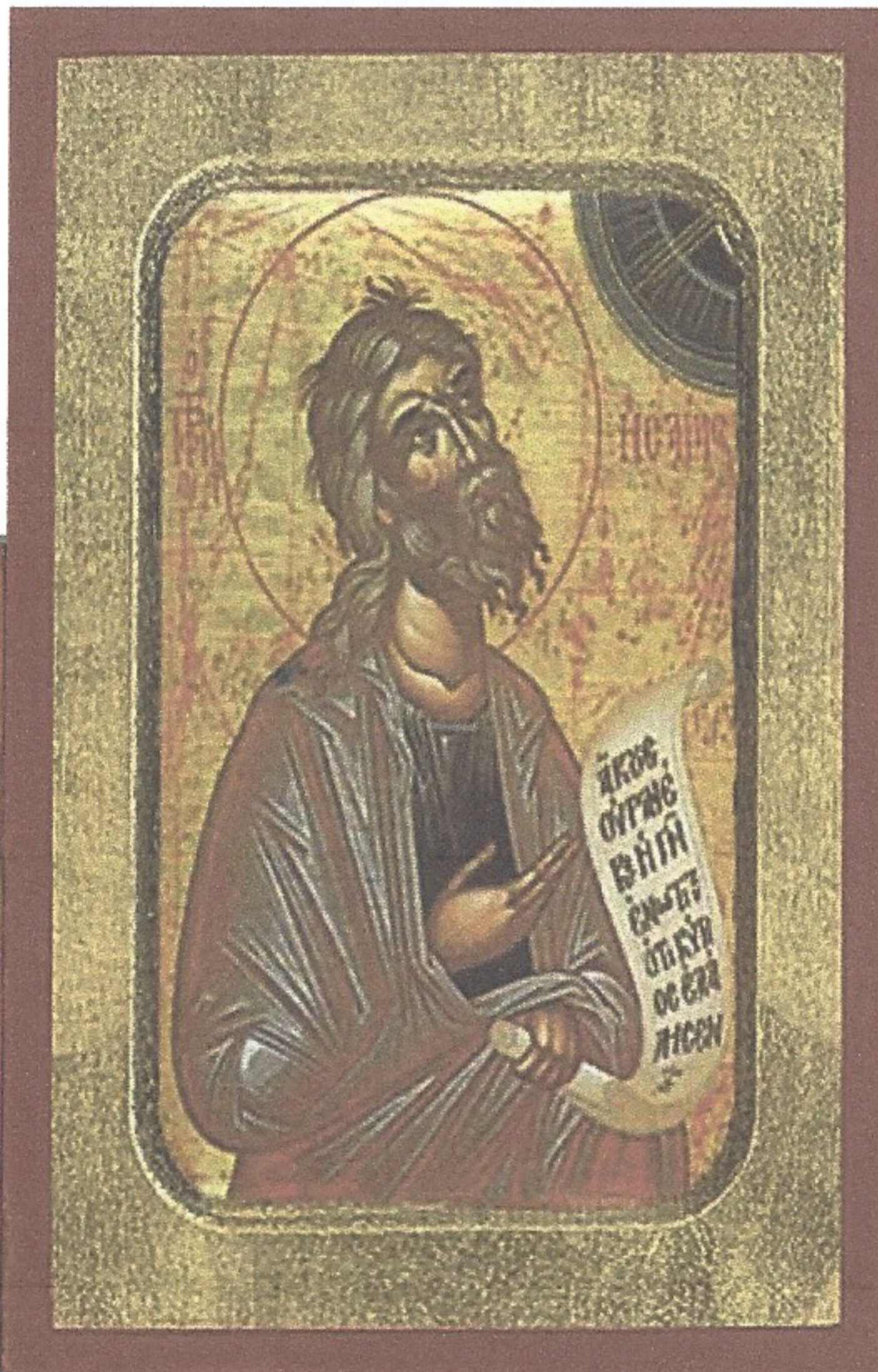
# Prophetic Study/Testing the Spirits

Malachi Ch. 4, Vs. 5-6 (Spirit of Elijah)  
Acts Ch. 5, Vs. 36-39 (If it is of God)  
Judges Ch. 11, Vs. 31-39 (Vows and Obedience)  
Genesis Ch. 3, Vs. 8 (God Walking in Garden)  
Genesis Ch. 19, Vs. 8 (Two Daughters Offered)  
Galatians Ch. 5, Vs. 25-26 (Live by Holy Spirit)  
Ephesians Ch. 2, Vs. 8 (Faith, Grace, Salvation)  
Luke Ch. 4, Vs. 1-12 (Devil Tempts Jesus)  
Luke Ch. 2, Vs. 36-37 (Prophetess Widow 84 years)  
Isaiah Ch. 21, Vs. 3-10 (Babylon Falling)

Isaiah Ch. 21, Vs. 9-10 (Babylon is to Fall)  
Isaiah Ch. 8, Vs. 3 (Prophetess Conceived)  
Isaiah Ch. 29, Vs. 23-24 (Err in Spirit)  
Isaiah Ch. 30, Vs. 1-5 (Rebellious Children)  
Numbers Ch. 24, Vs. 16-17 (Vision of God)  
Revelation Ch. 2, Vs. 13-14 (Teaching of Balaam)  
2 Timothy Ch. 2, Vs. 23-26 (Be Gentle Teaching)  
2 Timothy Ch. 3, Vs. 5 & 15 (Form, Deny Power)



**Elijah the Prophet**



**Isaiah the Prophet**

# Helping Fulfill the Lord's Prayer of Unity, and to Unite the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

The Unity Prayer that God in the Flesh asked of the Father – and which is written in Saint John, Chapter 17 – is the only time the Lord prayed to the Father and asked for something in return. For Him to do this must have been tremendously important, because He asked it just prior to Him leaving the Upper Room and going to the Garden of Gethsemane and the Cross.

The Order of the Holy Sepulchre – Ordo Sancti Sepulchri (O.S.S.) of Malta, is the oldest chivalric order in the world. It was founded in 324 A.D. by Constantine the Great. St. Constantine proclaimed Christianity the State religion in 325 A.D., and Constantine's mother, St. Helen, traveled to the Holy Land in 326 A.D. and located many Biblical sites, which included founding of basilicas on the Mount of Olives and at Bethlehem.

It is important to better understand the work that all of us must do in order to defend the Holy Sepulchre and the other sites. We must defend these sites, for the Knights and Dames of the O.S.S. of Malta are the defenders of the truth of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Knights swear on their lives to protect the Holy Sites – from both the enemies outside and inside the One, Holy,

Universal, and Apostolic Church. The mission of the O.S.S. is ecumenism – to reunite those who divided during the Great Schism of 1054.

Unity is what Jesus Christ prayed to His Father just before He went to the Cross. He prayed for Unity, which is stated in Saint John, Chapter 17, “I in You and You in Me and them in Us.” It is that call to Unity that the O.S.S. must continue.

It is also important for us to recite the Apostle's Creed – “I believe in One God, Father Almighty . . .” – at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. each day. This is to remind us all to whom we pledge our allegiance – our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, who died, was buried and on the Third Day Resurrected.

If you want further information about the O.S.S. and St. Michael International Grand Priory, please go to our website: [www.saintmichaelacademy.org](http://www.saintmichaelacademy.org)

In Christ's Service,

**Metropolitan Archbishop +Haralambos  
Primate of the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox  
Archdiocese Autocephalic Church in  
Exile**

**Knight Grand Cross and Prior of Saint  
Michael International (O.S.S.)**

**Grand Cross of St. Gregory, Vatican  
Decorated**

# The Unity Prayer of Jesus

*Saint John 17:* 1 These words spake Jesus, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, and said: Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee. [2] As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. [3] And this is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. [4] I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. [5] And now glorify, O Father, thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was. [6] I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou hast given me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word. [7] Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee: [8] For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have surely known that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. [9] I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine: [10] And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. [11] And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou has given me; that they may be one, as we are. [12] While I was with them, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. [13] And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have

my joy fulfilled in themselves. [14] I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. [15] I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil. [16] They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. [17] Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. [18] As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. [19] And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through truth. [20] Neither I pray for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; [21] That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. [22] And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: [23] I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me. [24] Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. [25] O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee: and these have known that thou hast sent me. [26] And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

# Fr. Demetrious Glimidakis is Ordained as Priest

By Fr. John H. Vesey

Fr. Demetrious Emmanuel Glimidakis was ordained as a priest on April 10, 2012 by Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos, Primate of the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Exile (Blessings of Kiev). Fr. Glimidakis is under the Omophorion of Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos.



**Fr. Demetri gives the Sign of the Cross during his ordination by Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos, seated.**

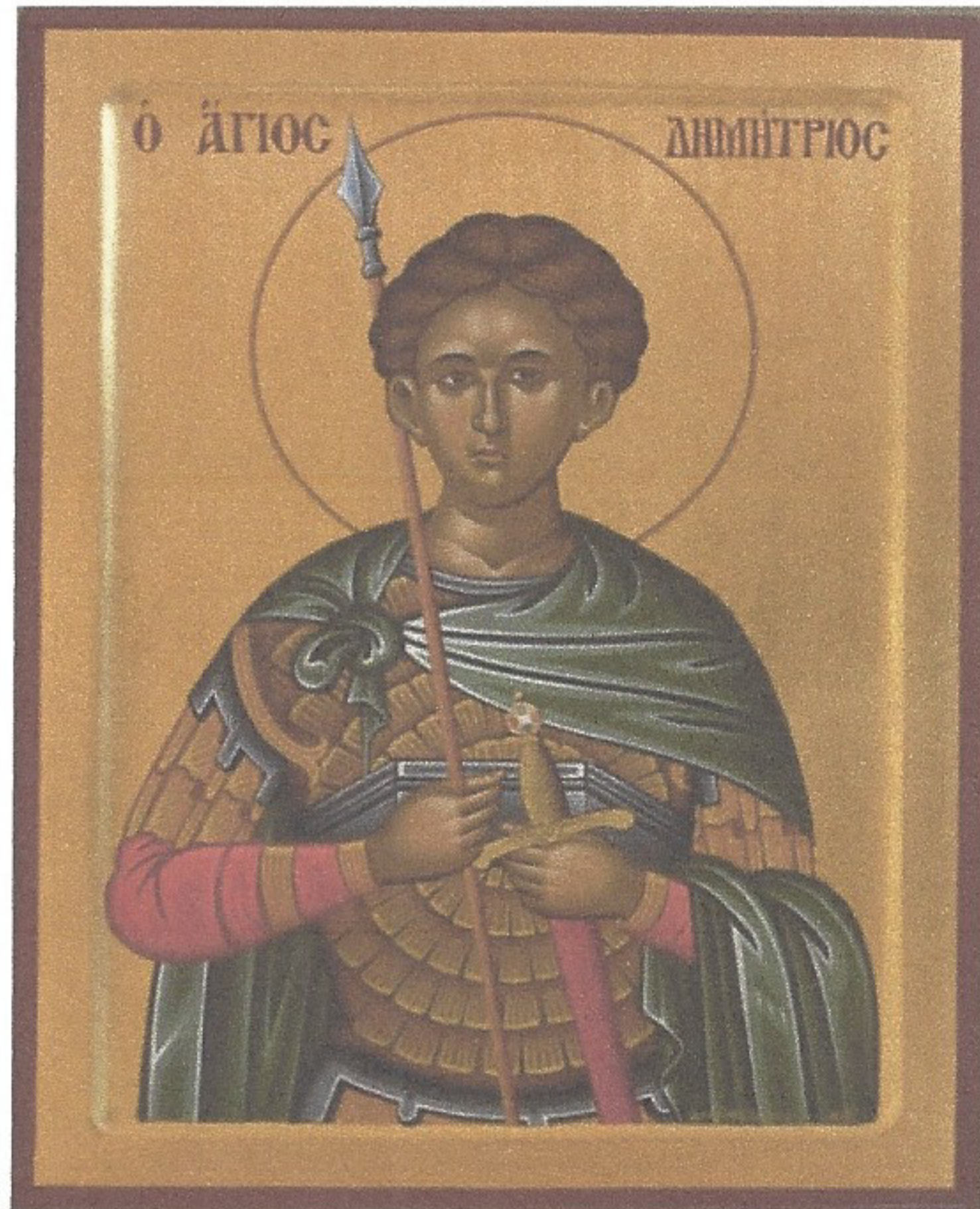
The elevation of Glimidakis to the priesthood took place during the Divine Liturgy in St. Michael Evangelical Orthodox Church in West Palm Beach, Fla. Also attending the ordination were Fr. Paul Warhola of the Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church in Denver, Colo.; Fr. Robert Hubal of Saints Peter and Paul Chapel in Bismarck, N.D.; and Fr. John Vesey of St. Michael Evangelical Orthodox Church in West Palm Beach, Fla.

Fr. Glimidakis completed seven years of education at Hellenic/Holy Cross Seminary School of Theology in Brookline, Mass., where he received a Bachelor's Degree in Arts and a Master's Degree in Divinity. After graduating in 2007, Fr. Demetri hoped he would be ordained as others who had been divorced and remarried and were

with the church. After a new ruling by the Synod of Bishops in October 2011, it voided any future for remarried seminarians to obtain ordination within the Greek Orthodox Church. "In fact I actually thought it was hopeless that I would get ordained," he said.

So when he was finally ordained by Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos, Fr. Glimidakis was completely overwhelmed. "Listening to the words of all of the prayers that were read over me during the ordination," Fr. Demetri said, "those were for me, but it was equally important for me to take that important step forward toward serving God. When the Holy Spirit fell over me, I couldn't stop crying."

"Yes," he added, "I realize I was serving God even before my ordination. I went to school for seven years, and I went there with MY plan, which was to serve the Greek Orthodox Church of America. One of my favorite sayings is this: If you want to hear God laugh, tell Him your plans, which is absolutely correct, particularly in this instance."

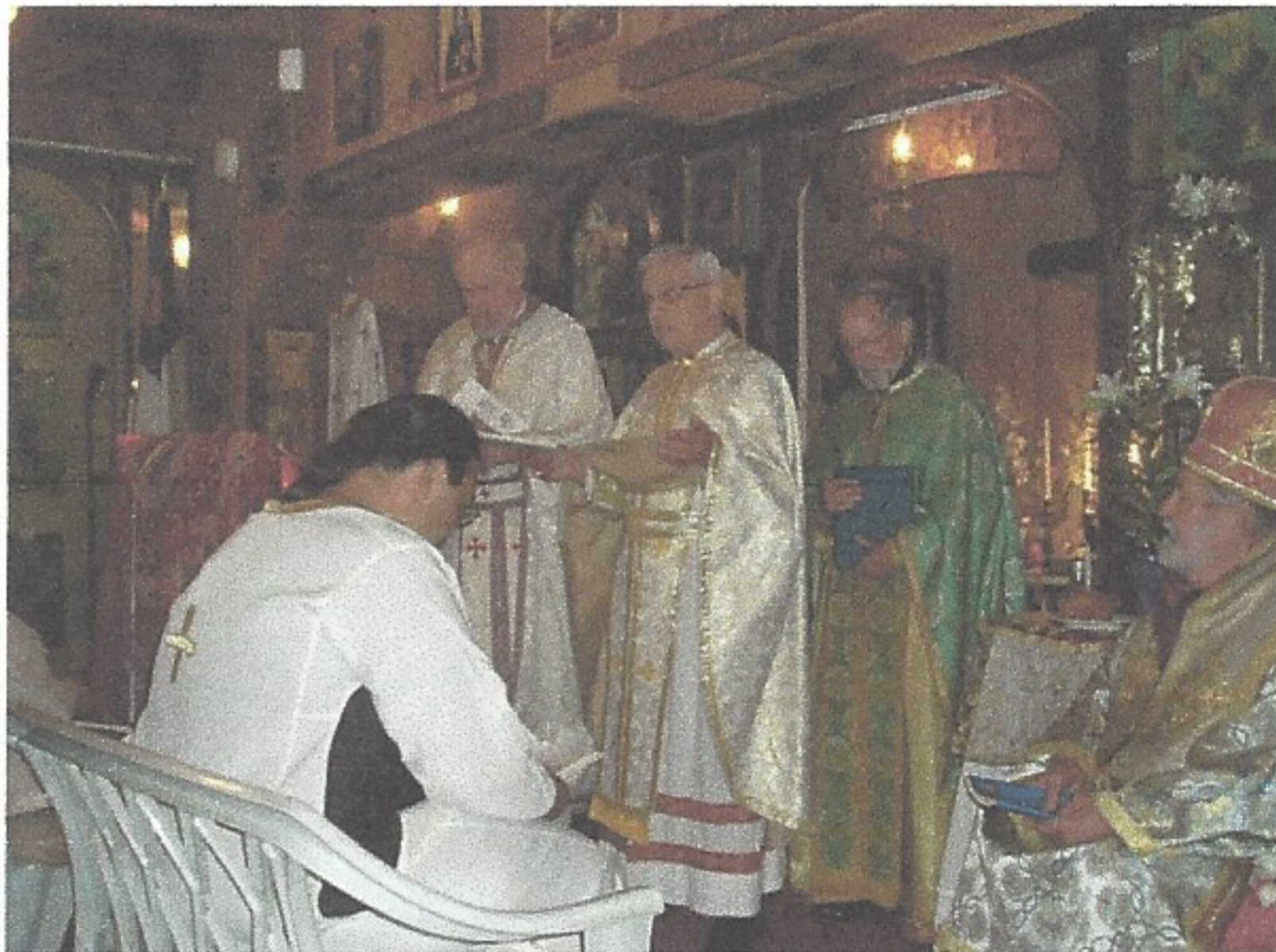


**St. Demetrios – Fr. Demetri's namesake.**

God has His own plan and it involved Fr. Demetri and Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Fort Pierce, Fla.

“I hadn’t been to church for months, but then God told me to go on this particular Sunday back in March, 2012,” Fr. Demetri said. “So I knew I had to go to Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Fort Pierce, Florida. On the Internet hub, I had written a sermon, ‘Deny Yourself and Pick Up your Cross and Follow Me’ and I had to give the sermon, but first I had to ask the presiding priest for permission to do it. Eventually he agreed and I gave it.”

Fr. Demetri saw, seated in the church, a priest – the man he learned later was Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos. “He told him, ‘I liked what you had to say.’ I thanked him and thanked God for giving me the words.”



**Prior to his ordination, Fr. Demetri (seated) is addressed by (from left) Fr. Warhola, Fr. Hubal, Fr. Vesey and Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos.**

Afterwards, during the church’s coffee hour, Fr. Demetri talked with Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos and told him about the seven years he had been in the seminary, due to the changing of rules by the Synod. “Then he told me, ‘if you give me your paperwork, and it reads like what

you’ve told me, I’ll ordain you.’ My response was, “What? Are you serious?”

To which Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos responded, “Who am I to stand in the way of the Holy Spirit?” Fr. Demetri had his Presbytera printed out the material and presented it to his Eminence when they met him again a short time later. His Eminence looked through it and liked what he saw.

Then Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos repeated what he said earlier: “Why should I stand in the way of the Holy Spirit and your ordination?”

Although Fr. Demetri was at first afraid of leaving everything he had ever known in the Greek Orthodox Church, he quickly realized, “I think God’s concern isn’t where I’m serving, but that I’m serving Him.”

**“I Want to Serve God.”**

“All I have ever wanted is to serve God,” Fr. Demetri said. Which is why he is writing religious-oriented books and putting his sermons on the Internet hubpage and taking a chaplaincy course? “I’m trying to glorify God with the talents I have. I keep in mind the Parable of Jesus that concerned burying the talents and that we should NOT bury our talents.”

Fr. Demetri sees evangelism as one of his callings. “I have a talent for writing, which is why I have written the books and the blogs (sermons). I also have a talent for giving sermons and for speaking. God says don’t bury your talents, so I’m just trying to use those talents; to produce more. I believe in what I’m writing; I believe God wants me to write.”

He even fashioned a writer’s prayer that he always prays before writing. “God, give me the words I need and help me glorify You through the words I write.”

Fr. Demetri has written two books and is finishing up his third one. The first book was called, “Crimson Knight”, which is about the battle and the struggle within; the

personal war. The second book, “The Twin Kings”, deals with the destruction of the family, which in turn leads to the destruction of the kingdom. It is scheduled to come out during Christmas of 2012. The third book, which is untitled, delves into the history of one of the characters from the other two books, and his struggles. “I write because I love it, but what I’m really doing is writing for the glory of Jesus Christ,” he said.

**“There are no Coincidences with God.”**

He is quick to point out that there is no such thing as a coincidence with God. “I call them God-incidences,” Fr. Demetri said. Once such God-incidence involved his clergy shirt. “The Bible book store had a shirt that somebody had ordered and they didn’t know how they got it, and it fit me; I was like, whoa, this is another God-incidence.”

Fr. Demetri is from Craig, Col., a small town in northwest Colorado that’s 208 miles northwest of Denver in the Rocky Mountains; sitting at 6,200 feet. “It’s a country place and I really miss it,” he said.

His father is Emmanuel Demetrious Glimidakis, who is originally from Crete, Greece, and his mother, Jeannie, grew up in California. They have another son, Vasili, who still lives with them in Craig.

Fr. Demetri grew up doing landscaping and shepherding sheep on his father’s ranch, but then he felt a calling to the ministry and left – with the blessings of his father and mother – for Brookline, Mass., to complete his seminary work at the Hellenic/Holy Cross Seminary School of Theology.

Fr. Demetri says he and his wife should have met while he was at Brookline, but God had other plans for them. “I worked more than 40 hours a week on the maintenance crew at the school, in addition to putting in 16 credit-hours a semester,” he said, “plus I was taking care of my son on the weekends or whenever I could.”

He found out later that his future wife was attending workshops and visiting the same chapel where he attended at numerous times during his education. “We never once ran into each other.”

But every time he would talk with my mother, he would ask why he hadn’t found the right woman yet, she would quote Saint Matthew 6:33, “Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and His Righteousness and everything will be added unto you.” She said, “When God has a woman for you, you will be ready and so will she. God has somebody out there for you, but don’t rush it.”



**Fr. Demetri and his Presbytera celebrate after his ordination as a priest.**

Fr. Demetri and Presbytera didn’t even have their first conversation until after he returned to Colorado. “That’s when I was telling a buddy of mine that I was praying that I would meet a godly woman. This was about three years after I had returned home. At the same time, my future wife was telling my friend that she wanted to meet a godly man. One day he decided to put the two of us together and we started talking. Nearly seven months later we got married.”

**“You Must Work Together.”**

When Fr. Demetri was asked how important it was to have a woman who has the same love of the Lord as you do, as well as her intense interest in theology? If you are going to be married, it’s essential – as a



priest – you and your spouse must work together; you can't be divided. Jesus Christ talked many times about a Kingdom divided cannot stand. The same applies to a household divided; it cannot stand.

Fr. Demetri compared himself and his wife to being like Moses and the Israelites. “She is like the Israelites and says, ‘Why did you bring us to the sea?’ and I’m like Moses who says, ‘Don’t worry. God will provide a way.’” With the two of us, we are a whole fabric.”

During his ordination, Fr. Demetri said it was particularly important for him to surround himself with members of his family and church friends. That included Jerred Catt, his “brother” who lives in Grand Junction, Colo.

“Because the ordination happened so quickly, Jerred was the only representative from my side of the family who attended,” Fr. Demetri said. That made it doubly important that Jerred was chrismated at the same time that Fr. Demetri was ordained as a priest.

He wished that his father and mother and brother could have attended his ordination, but he knew it was impossible. He also knew that their prayers were with him on that important date.

#### **“Need People There Who Love Me.”**

“So it was important that I had Jerred Catt and as many people who love me to be present for my ordination. That was a tremendous plus for me,” he said. “I knew that the people who loved me – my family – would be happy for my ordination, and they were,” Fr. Demetri said. That includes his 17-year-old son. When he told Emmanuel, his reaction was, “Cool.”

A short time later, Donnie Schmedeke, another of Fr. Demetri’s “brothers” from Craig, visited him and Joann, with Donnie’s wife, Amy, and then they all attended a Divine Liturgy co-celebrated by Fr. John Vesey and Fr. Demetri.

“Donnie always told me that a dog gives you five minutes of fame, no matter what you have done, no matter how mad you are, or no matter how long you have been gone. If you walk out the door and come back in five minutes later, the dog acts like you have been gone for three years,” Fr. Demetri said.

So, in one of his blogs (sermons) on the Internet, he wrote about his dog and God. “One way, God spelled backwards is dog. But the loyalties that a dog has are like God – He will neither leave us nor forsake us. My dog is a protector; God is a protector. He’s not God. He didn’t die on the cross; he didn’t suffer. But no matter how angry I am, my dog – and God – is always there for me. Even when I felt so alone, I wasn’t. Even when we walk away from God, He moves forward to hold us.”

**If you are interested in reading more that is written by Fr. Demetri Glimidakis, please go to**

**<http://ironknight.hubpages.com>**

“When it comes to talking and spreading our message of Unity, and providing an outreach to others, if we are the Body of Christ, our arms need to be reaching out,” Fr. Demetri said. “Jesus came all the way to meet us. He left the comfort of His Throne; He left His Kingdom and came to us. We are also to be fishers of men. You must leave the shores of your comfort in order to throw out the net. He also told us to leave the 99 sheep to go find the one that is lost. We need to do that and I try to be the best example of Jesus I can be.”

#### **What it is Like to be a Priest?”**

When asked what it is like to be a priest, Fr. Demetri responded, “I feel different, but I don’t, if you know what I mean? I find it so strange to see changes in the people with whom I attended seminary. I saw so many of them become arrogant and so full of themselves; just because they got ordained.

That was one thing that I prayed to God that He would never let me do. If you would joke with them after they were ordained, they would say, I can't joke with you. I'm a priest now."

He added, "I'm not going to be Fr. Demetrious 24 hours a day. But if we are at the church, calling me Father then is a term of respect; it's not just a title. The title, Father, is something God gives you, to add to you and to make you whole."

Fr. Demetri is a firm believer in the Unity Message that Jesus Christ prayed to the Father, and which is described so eloquently in Saint John, Chapter 17. "Is Unity possible – the Unity that Jesus Christ prayed and asked for? With God, anything is possible. But in order for us to be involved in that Unity, man must put aside their ego. Money and greed is what corrupts. Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely," he said.

Metropolitan Archbishop + Haralambos, who ordained Fr. Demetri, has Saint John Chapter 17's Unity Message as his centrist message, which Jesus Christ asked the Father, You in Me, Me in You and them (the people) in Us?

**"The Church is Divided, Which is why we are Talking About Unity."**

Fr. Demetri said, "The Church is divided; the churches are divided and that's why we are talking about Unity, which Jesus Christ was talking about to His disciples just as He went to Gethsemane and the Cross. When Jesus came, one of the biggest symbolic acts was the Temple veil splitting. There was no longer the division between God and man. Before Christ came, man did not even want to speak God's Name. When God came to Earth as Jesus Christ, God in the Flesh, He became tangible; something real. Everything God touched when He was on Earth he blessed with His hands and feet. So Christ united us again, in a way that was more personal. So, when the Holy Spirit

came upon us, He united us with each other."

**"God Wants to Bless Us."**

"God wants to bless us," Fr. Demetri said, "so why don't we expect those blessings. My struggle is still Christ's struggle. He's still walking to Golgotha because that act of going to the Cross not only encompassed time then, it encompassed time from the beginning until the end. He is carrying the Cross for you and me and for all of us, and the Unity that He asked of His Father is still happening.

"Yes, it happened more than 2,000 years ago, but He did it for all of us who lived and will ever live. He not only talked about Unity, He showed it when He washed the feet of His disciples; the servant is not greater than his master. And when the Master gets down on His hands and knees to wash your feet, He is showing you, I am not greater than you either. Christ is greater than us, but He became man to show us that we are not the all-encompassing force in the universe."

Fr. Demetri added, "You are not an army of one. We are an army of Christians, and if we are standing together against an enemy, we are stronger because we are working in Unity. If all of our faith holds together, we are stronger. But Satan doesn't want that; he wants the division, especially between the churches. Unless you stand for something, you'll fall for anything." Satan will do all he can to keep people from being united. It can't happen until we stand up against him. We as Christians do not always take stands against anything; we accept anything. Not everybody, but most people. But, as I have said, you follow the law of the Land until it comes against God's law."

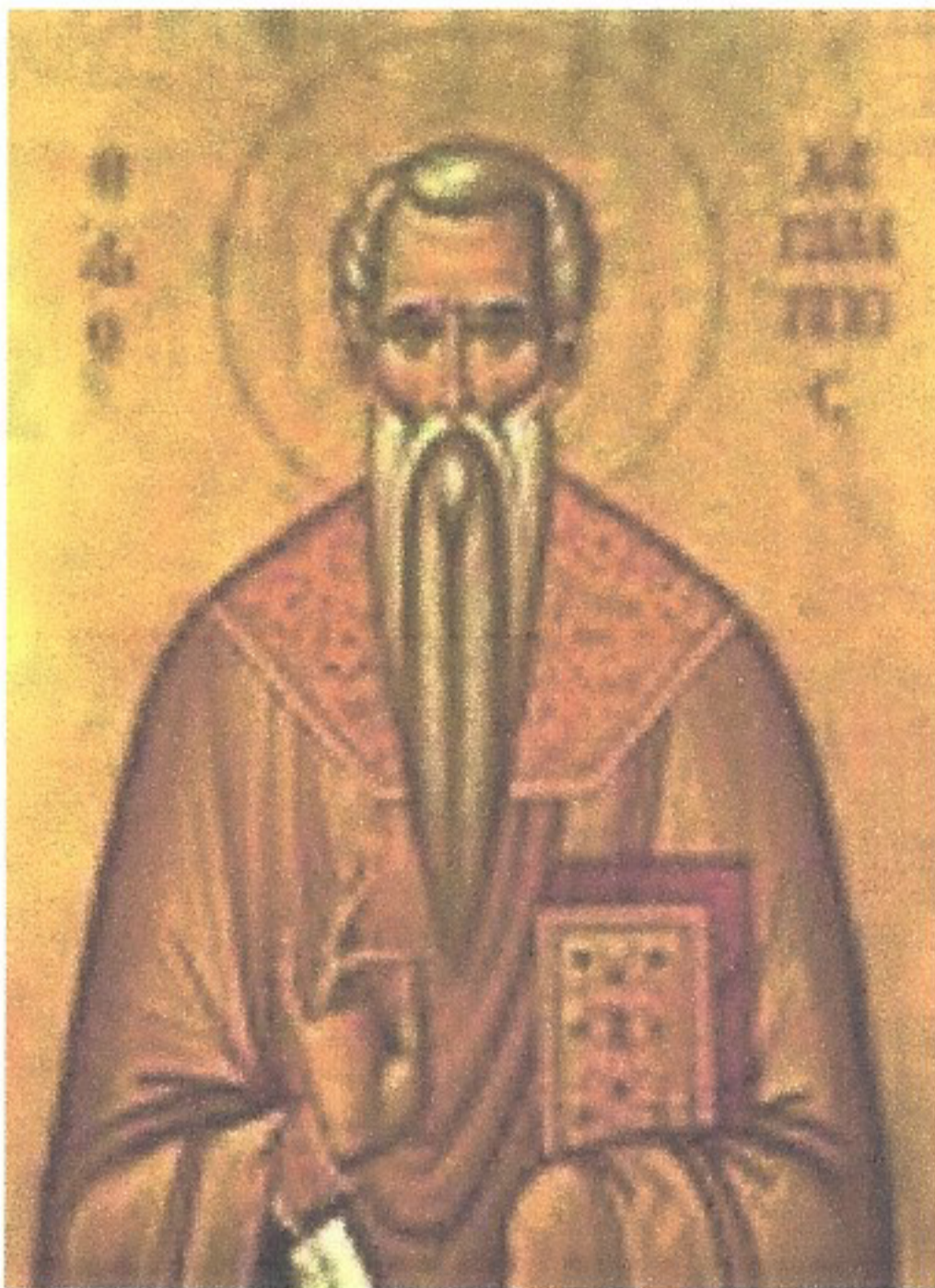
**"To be United with God is to be Truly United."**

"To be United with God is to be truly United," Fr. Demetri said. "It's all there in

the Cross. The horizontal line is the relationship with God; the vertical line is our relationship with each other. In the center is Jesus Christ. That's where He hung; that's what bridged us. That was Christ's message – His first commandment: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind. And the second commandment is just as important. It's impossible to love others if you don't love

yourself. And if you don't love yourself and others, how are you going to love the Lord?"

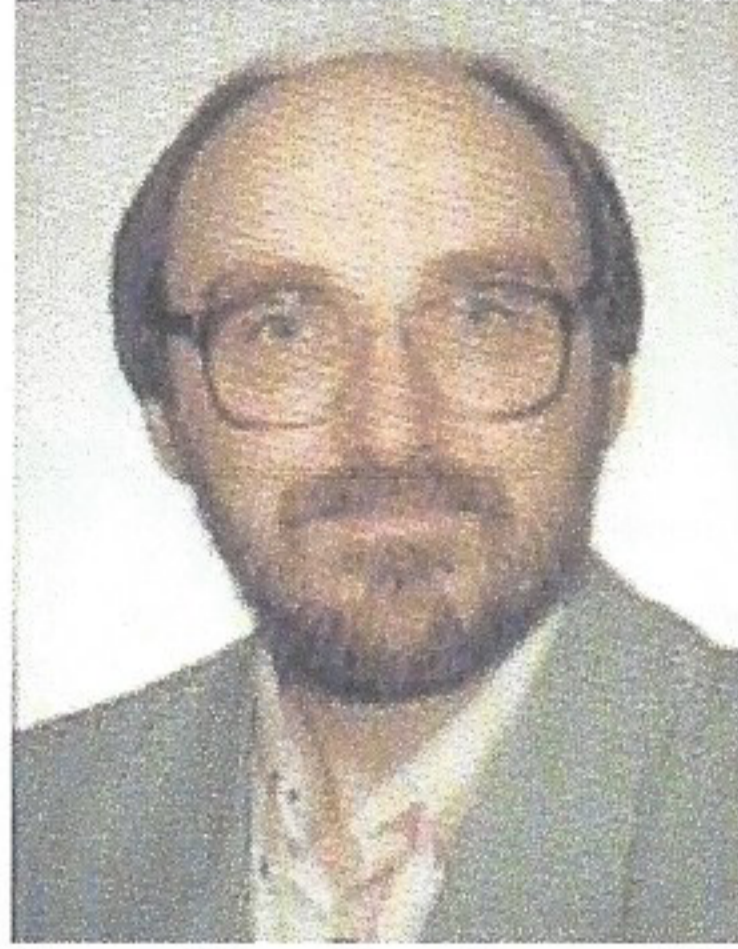
Fr. Demetri added, "In Isaiah 55, which is read during the Blessing of Holy Water, the Lord says, 'My ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts. When I think of something, it doesn't leave Heaven and come back unfulfilled.' How I see things from my limited perspective is not how God sees them, since He sees the beginning and the end."



**Saint Haralambos**

# The Heresy of Phyletism and the 1872 Council of Constantinople

By Rev. Fr. Stephane Bigham – Author



Rev. Fr. Stephane Bigham, lecturer at the Faculty of Theology, Ethics and Philosophy at the University of Sherbrooke (Quebec) in Orthodox theology.

## The Definition of Phyletism

Phyletism is the name of an ecclesiological heresy which says that the Church can be territorially organized on an ethnic, racial, or cultural basis so that within a given geographic territory, there can exist several Church jurisdictions, directing their pastoral care only to the members of specific ethnic groups. A Church council in 1872 officially defined and condemned this heresy. It reacted to a proposition made by Bulgarians of the Patriarchate of Constantinople who wanted to establish a Church jurisdiction, sanctioned by the Turkish government, on the territory of the Patriarchate: The formation in the same place of a particular [local] Church based on race which only receives faithful of that same ethnic group and is run by pastors of only of the same ethnic group, as the adherents of Phyletism claim, is an event without precedent.\*

## II. The Historical Context before the Council

To understand why in the middle of the 19th century the Bulgarians of the Ottoman Empire asked to have an ethnic jurisdiction within the Patriarchate of Constantinople,

we have to go back in history to the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries to see the forces that were at work both inside and outside the Empire. It was these forces that inspired the Bulgarian request. The political philosophies of the American and French Revolutions seeped into Turkish controlled areas and stimulated the conquered, minority peoples to dream about getting free from the Turkish yoke and creating their own national states. All the revolts of the peoples subject to the Turks lived and breathed the idea of a national state. Many among them remembered that they had already had their own empires and kingdoms and burned to restore past glories at the expense of the dying Ottoman Empire.

Alongside this dream of political and cultural hegemony, there was also a growing hope of being free from the Patriarch of Constantinople and forming their own autonomous or independent Church. Most of the non Greek, Orthodox ethnic groups felt doubly dominated by foreigners: politically by the Turks and ecclesiastically by the Phanariots, that is the Greek aristocracy of Constantinople, rich and cultivated living in the Phanar quarter and having privileged relations with the sultan. Greek bishops governed dioceses whose faithful were not Greek and thus promoted a cultural and linguistic policy of Hellenization. In the minds of these non Greeks, it was not possible to separate the two ideas: political independence from Turkey and a national Church using the national language.

Greeks themselves were the first to defy the sultan and to successfully revolt against the Ottoman Empire in 1821. From the beginning, they established political and ecclesiastical independence from Constantinople. For the Orthodox Christian minorities of the Empire, the Church was the

only structure capable of uniting the various groups. It was natural therefore that the leadership of the Greek revolt and cultural renewal should come for the most part from the Orthodox Church. This was equally true for the subsequent revolts and renewals among the other Orthodox ethnic groups. The success of the Greeks, with the help of the British, French, and Russians, served as a model for the other Balkan peoples. Greek national passions were inflamed to such a point that once political independence was won, a national Church, free from Constantinople, was an absolute necessity, with or without the approval of the Patriarch. It was obviously preferable to proceed with his blessing, but if he was opposed, the Greeks would simply defy him. And if the Greeks could do it, why not others?

### III. The Bulgarian Exarchate

Other ethnic groups did indeed follow the Greek model and established their own national Churches and States, but in the case of Greece, Serbia, and Romania, the creation and recognition of the national, territorial Churches did not violate the ecclesiological principle of one bishop for one Church in one particular geographical territory. It was not very important that the geographical territory of the new Churches more or less coincided with the demography of the three peoples. Since one Church incorporates all the Orthodox Christians in a particular place, the theology of the Church was reflected in the organizational structure of the new Churches.

The Bulgarian case, however, was different from the three preceding ones because the Bulgarians were the last Balkan people to arouse their national conscience and to free themselves from the Turks, excluding the case of little Albania. Greece, Serbia, and Romania had been on the outer limits of the Ottoman Empire; the authorities in

Constantinople had great difficulty “pacifying” these regions. The Bulgarian people, however, were close to the capital, Constantinople, and this retarded the renewal of the Bulgarian national sentiment. In addition, the Bulgarians were more dispersed throughout the Empire, less concentrated, except in Constantinople, where there was a strong Bulgarian minority. Nonetheless, Bulgarian nationalism was reborn and took several forms: some more radical, others less. During the 1860s, various Bulgarian groups negotiated with the sultan and the Patriarch for the creation of an autonomous Bulgarian Church. Several rival groups proposed projects, but when the negotiations between the Bulgarian groups and the Patriarch became deadlocked, the sultan unilaterally intervened in February 1870 and established a Bulgarian Exarchate for most of the areas where Bulgarians lived. The new Exarch was more or less under the Patriarch’s authority and had to commemorate him in the liturgy and to receive from him the holy chrism, but the relations between the two Church leaders remained ambiguous. The fact that the Exarch lived near Constantinople did not help to solve the problem. The jurisdictions of the Exarch and the Patriarch overlapped, and this situation violated the principle of one bishop for one specific territory. The Patriarch could only reject this solution as a violation of the Church’s canonical order. What is more, he could not accept the Turkish government’s interference in the internal affairs of the Patriarchate.

In February 1872, a council of Bulgarian laymen and clerics elected Bishop Antime, metropolitan of Vidine, as the first Exarch. After being confirmed by the Sultan, he became the Bulgarian leader. Thus what had existed only in theory since 1870 suddenly became a very concrete reality when Bishop Antime declared the Bulgarian Church to be

independent of Constantinople. A council in Constantinople immediately deposed him and reduced him to lay status, and the Bulgarian schism began.

#### **IV. The Patriarch's Reaction**

To have as wide a discussion as possible of the Bulgarian Church question, the Patriarch convoked a general council of the Church for September 1872. For various reasons, not all the local Orthodox Churches attended, but those who did condemned Phyletism as an ecclesiological heresy. They also declared the Bulgarian Church to be in schism. This rupture was to last until 1945 when the Bulgarian Church became independent in accordance with the principle of territorial autocephaly: one bishop for all the Orthodox Christians in a given geographical region. In 1945, after two world wars, most Bulgarians lived within Bulgaria. Thus the Patriarch and the Bulgarians were able to heal the schism and to maintain their principles: for the Bulgarians, an autocephaly Church; for the Patriarch, one bishop for one territory.

At the time of the 1872 council, the Orthodox world reacted differently to the problem, as we see from the fact that certain Churches refused to attend. Most of the Greek Churches broke off contact with the Bulgarian Church. The other Churches, however, maintained friendly relations but did not concelebrate the sacraments with the new Church since it had been formally excommunicated.

How can we analyze the Patriarch's reaction to the Bulgarian crisis? Here are three points:

1. The Patriarch followed the solid, canonical, and ecclesiological Tradition by refusing to sanction the overlap of two jurisdictions based on ethnic identity.
2. He was also right in refusing to create an Exarchate imposed by the Turkish government, an obvious interference in the

Church's internal affairs. Such a refusal seems all the more surprising because the Patriarch was very accustomed to accepting governmental measures in the Church. This incident shows, on the other hand, that there were limits to such interference. The Patriarch could not accept just anything especially when a fundamental, ecclesiological principle was at stake.

3. We can blame the Patriarch and his predecessors for following a Hellenization policy in non Greek areas and for reacting so slowly, too little too late, to the crisis that was brewing. If the two sides, the Bulgarians and the Patriarch, had sought a solution right from the beginning of the national Bulgarian cultural renewal, when both were less allergic to compromise, they could probably have avoided the tragedy of schism. On the other hand, it is possible that the dynamic of the two groups was such that no compromise was possible. Only the concentration of the Bulgarian population inside Bulgaria during the 73 years following 1872 and the cooling of passions during this period allowed the healing of the schism. As for the Bulgarians, they were not wrong in wanting "their own" autocephaly Church, which had already existed in the past, but their patriotic fervor inflamed them to such an extent that they forgot an important ecclesiological principle.

The encyclical letter of the 1872 council is an eloquent expression of the Scriptures, the canons, and Tradition on how the Church is to be organized. The creation of such a document follows the best tradition of dogmatic declarations: the Church lives according to the mystery of salvation until a challenge is met, one that forces the Church to set verbal and conceptual boundaries around the mystery to protect it from corruption. It is easy to see how the Church is reticent to dogmatize about salvation in words and concepts: it prefers to live rather than rationally analyze the mystery.

Nonetheless, the 1872 declaration exists and represents an important theological affirmation about an element of the Church's nature. Even though we can evaluate the authority of the 1872 council in different ways, the theological content is certainly "an article of faith" and merits a larger conciliar development, one that will have more authority.

#### V. The Aftermath

The history of Phyletism and the Bulgarian schism, although very sad, has a great significance today, especially for the diaspora. In 1872, the Orthodox diaspora did not exist as an organized entity: at most, we can say that it had only just begun, except in North America where canonical authority was exercised by the bishop of the missionary diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church. At the time, there were no hidden interests that clouded the question of the Church's organization. The Patriarch's condemnation of Phyletism is based only on his loyalty to the canonical and theological tradition of the Church, nothing more. As we have said above, we should heartily applaud him for having courageously maintained the faith in a moment of crisis.

In 1922, however, fifty years later, the Patriarch of Constantinople, the successor of the Patriarch who condemned Phyletism in 1872, himself violated the organizational principle of the Church by establishing an ethnic, Greek jurisdiction for the Americas; there is no lack of irony here. By this action, Constantinople opened the flood gates to Phyletism so that nearly all the national autocephaly Churches created dioceses for "their own" in the Americas and in Western Europe. What happened that allowed Constantinople to correctly proclaim Orthodoxy in 1872 but in 1922 to become the main instigator of betraying that Orthodoxy on the ecclesiological level? Obviously exterior factors and hidden

motives contributed to the introduction and promotion what had been condemned just fifty years before.

Nonetheless, the condemnation of Phyletism by the 1872 Council of Constantinople and the affirmation of the ecclesiological principle, "one bishop for a given territory," remains for us in the diaspora, a lighthouse of Orthodoxy, and by that light we can judge our own faithfulness to the Church's holy Tradition.

*\*Maxime de Sardes, Le Patriarcat œcuménique dans l'Église orthodoxe, Paris, Éditions Beauchesne, 1975, p. 378.*

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