

**CONVERSATIONS WITH
LUBOMYR CARDINAL HUSAR**



**UKRAINIAN
CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY**

**INSTITUTE
OF ECUMENICAL
STUDIES**

Antoine Arjakovsky

**CONVERSATIONS WITH
LUBOMYR CARDINAL HUSAR**

Towards a Post-Confessional Christianity



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Foreword

History has known religious leaders who are remarkable for their tireless missionary activity and monumental institution building. Some great churchmen have left a legacy of voluminous theological writings. Others have inspired with a charisma and spiritual power that seem super-human or defy the laws of nature. Today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, most of us hope for spiritual guides who can touch us personally. Patriarch Lubomyr Husar is one of those unique figures who make an immediate, warm, welcoming impression and contact people on a basic human level. This direct simplicity has been nourished by his unusually rich experience and personal trials. Lubomyr Husar's complex life has carried him across many lands and cultures and brought him to serve the Church in a variety of contexts and ministries. Some of the complexities came with a hidden twist; most have been lived with an exemplary lightness and a singular grace.

He was born in 1933 in Polish-ruled western Ukraine, in the city of Lviv, which had a multifaceted Jewish, Armenian, German-Austrian, Greek, Moldavian, Roma, as well as Ukrainian and Polish historical legacy. Lubomyr's childhood was marked by successive Soviet and Nazi occupations and the ultimate flight of his family before the advance of the Red Army. As a teenage high-school student in post-war Austria, deprived of homeland and possessions, he came to know the trials of a displaced person, the fate of countless millions of refugees in today's world. As a young man he came by immigrant ship with his family to the United States where he pursued seminary and university studies and, after ordination in 1958, served as a seminary professor and parish pastor. In the 1950s and 60s he saw how the American middle class achieved an unprecedented prosperity and how so much of society's traditional life was questioned and changed. He experienced the pulse of great financial and political centers such as New York City and Washington D. C. and the rhythms of small town and rural settings.

Subsequently, in Rome, Italy in the dynamic post-Vatican II years, the affable priest became a university professor after writing a groundbreaking doctoral dissertation on the ecumenism of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky (1865–1944), the outstanding Ukrainian ecclesiastical figure of modern times. There, in 1972, after a decade and a half of serving in the diocesan clergy, he entered contemplative monastic life. Since the monastery of the Studites near Rome that he was entering was not able to provide the proper formation for a novice, Father Lubomyr went through the novitiate in the Benedictine monastery of Metten, in German Bavaria. Soon after final vows, he was named abbot of the Studite monks and received the monastic title of “archimandrite.” During twenty-five years of Roman residence, Father Archimandrite Lubomyr travelled widely in Europe and in North and South America, visiting the dispersed Studite monastics in his charge, giving retreats and Lenten missions, and lecturing widely to captive audiences of clergy and laity. Finally, since the mid-1990s, when he was able to return to his homeland, he has served as a singular spokesman for a revival of authentic, vibrant Christian personal life and social witness in the tumultuous and traumatized world of post-Soviet Ukraine. Since 2001, Lubomyr Husar has been head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC), cardinal and patriarch to his people.

I had the good fortune to first see Father Lubomyr in my childhood. He was a pastor at a summer vacation spot frequented by Ukrainian immigrants in the United States, a place called Soyuzivka, in the Borscht Belt of the Catskill Mountains. I was too young to remember well the first impressions, but as I grew up, my parents’ respect for Father Husar introduced me to a widely held esteem for this peace-filled pastor and spellbinding preacher. His spiritual solicitude, ability to listen and connect with people at their level and at the point of their need was known by rank-and-file faithful, community leaders, boy scouts, students, the intelligentsia and intellectuals. Among “the people,” Father Lubomyr Husar was always held in particular regard. There was a warmth and decency about his person. Father Lubomyr always enjoyed a hearty meal in common and a good laugh.

In 1980, after graduating from college I headed to the seminary in Rome to study at the Ukrainian Catholic University, created by Patriarch Josyf Slipyj (1892–1984). A wise friend of mine, who was

a convert and who was completing studies for the priesthood at the North American College in Rome, advised me that the most important thing for a seminarian is to have a good personal spiritual director. Having heard so much about Father Husar during my teenage years, I turned to this, somewhat legendary, priest who was archimandrite of the Studite monks in the Monastery of St. Theodore in Castelgandolfo, near Rome. We seminarians looked to Archimandrite Lubomyr for spiritual counsel and confession. We also went to his monastery for major feasts and for our annual week-long retreats. In the Ukrainian ecclesial community in Rome and among the Ukrainian pilgrims that came from different continents to the Eternal City, the monastery headed by Archimandrite Lubomyr, simply called “Studion”, was known for its genuine hospitality, atmosphere of joy and humour, great natural and liturgical beauty, and a spiritual radiance that belied the rigors of the ascetic, contemplative Studite life.

Archimandrite Lubomyr gave guidance with wisdom and common sense. I remember when in my first months in the seminary I was earnestly reading Augustine’s *Confessions* for the first time. No stranger myself to a battle with scruples, I was, nevertheless, bewildered by Augustine’s harsh self-condemnation for stealing fruits from a tree as an adolescent. For me, this Augustine was too intense. I asked Father Lubomyr what to do if I was put off by a spiritual classic? He responded simply: “If you can’t read him, don’t. Maybe you are not yet ready for Augustine.” His advice was down-to-earth, never narrow, categorical, or ideological. Archimandrite Lubomyr’s word and manner, but especially his person, opened up new aspects of the spiritual life for all people who met him.

The Studite community near Rome was a very small one, consisting of maybe seven or eight monks at the high point of its development. Despite the multi-cultural, cosmopolitan exposure and geographic variety of his life, today’s patriarch and cardinal lived for many years in a small world, the world of a diminutive exiled Church, struggling for its survival and scraping to safeguard its imperilled identity. With immigrant settlements in Europe and the Americas that dated back at least to the late 1800s, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic community was in many ways established in the West. At the same time its identity was strongly marked by the awareness of the vicious, ongoing persecution of the Church in the homeland and harsh trials

endured by relatives and friends left behind the Iron Curtain. There, the Church was driven into the catacombs. Its life was invisible to the world at large.

This abiding sense of living on the margins was common to both the homeland and to the refugees. The émigrés often felt adrift in the tumultuous sea of twentieth-century history. Dispersed in many lands and continents, their small numbers, humble material resources, and feeble political influence seemed inconsequential. Their life was largely unnoticed, their name unknown or at best misunderstood, even in the Catholic communion: Where is Ukraine? Who and what are the Greek Catholics? Their cause remained largely overlooked in the battle of geo-political titans. In the modern megalopolis of Rome, where in a city of 4 million there were no more than 200 Ukrainian Greek Catholic priests, seminarians, and members of religious orders—and almost no lay people—the life of Archimandrite Lubomyr and his Studites was a hidden one. Yet, little did we know how hidden much of his life really was! Some further details about the global context are essential to understand the providential turns in Archimandrite Lubomyr’s biography.

As time passed from the end of World War II and the human and material devastation and displacement that it caused, the hard realities that were left in the war’s wake had to be confronted. Among them was the impasse of the Cold War and ideological East-West confrontation. The Catholic Church also modified its position. Instead of the explicit and categorical condemnation of communism expressed by Pius XII, John XXIII, delicately shifting emphases, proposed an openness to dialogue with the Soviet block. The dialogue was to be political but, even more importantly, ecumenical. The Russian Orthodox Church had been savagely decimated by Soviet rule in the 1920s and 1930s. After the war it was induced by Stalin to play a central role in the liquidation of the UGCC in 1945–1946, enthusiastically absorbing many of its parishes in western Ukraine. Guided by a new ecumenical vision, the pope invited Russian Orthodox observers to the great Council of the world’s Catholics called “Vatican II” (1962–1965). The Council opened, the Orthodox from the Soviet Union and other eastern countries were prominently present, but the Greek Catholics of Ukraine, outlaws in their own land, were not.

In February of 1963, in response to Pope John's conciliatory stance and various gestures, especially those promoting a peaceful resolution of the Cuban missal crisis, Chairman Nikita Khrushchev mandated the release of the Greek Catholic Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj. Since his arrest in 1945 and the prohibition of his Church, the metropolitan had spent 18 years in Soviet prisons, labor camps and Siberian exile. Thought by many to have perished in the Gulag, miraculously he was summoned from the Siberian silence and cold to participate in the heated debates of the second session of the Vatican Council. Slipyj was head of a Church that was legally banned in the USSR and whose last remnants were under vigilant and reliable KGB scrutiny. At 71, seemingly broken in body, and no longer considered a credible threat by the Soviets, he was expected to be lost in the tumult of the Council, to receive formal honors in the Vatican, and to live out his days quietly in some Roman monastery.

Head of the largest catacomb Church in the world, Metropolitan, and later Major Archbishop, Cardinal and Patriarch Josyf Slipyj had no intention of playing along with a script consigning him and his flock to oblivion. Over the next decade he surprised his most hopeful faithful and profoundly confounded his erstwhile captors. Despite his advanced age, he embarked on a multifaceted program of galvanizing—spiritually, intellectually, institutionally, and ecclesiological—the Ukrainian community in the free world. In November of 1963, mere months after arriving, Slipyj established in Rome the Ukrainian Catholic University. There he began to build the church of Saint Sophia (Holy Wisdom), a jewel of a shrine that was to serve as a pro-cathedral in exile until the head of the UGCC could return to his home see.

To revitalize prayer life, he began reorganizing the Studite monks, purchased for them a beautiful monastery, and drafted Father Lubomyr Husar into the monastic project. Named archbishop major and cardinal, Slipyj assembled the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchs dispersed on different continents into a synod of bishops, increasingly conscious of its eastern ecclesiological identity. Beginning in the late 1960s, he visited every major Ukrainian Catholic community on all continents and served as an irrepressible advocate of the existence and rights of the catacomb Church in the USSR. Appealing to historical developments in the Church of Kyiv, Slipyj developed strong arguments for

the recognition of a Ukrainian patriarchate. Encouraged by the currents of the Vatican Council and by the yearnings of his flock, in 1975 he began to use the title of patriarch.

Despite Patriarch Josyf's extraordinary activity in the West (not always applauded in the Roman decasteries), in the Soviet Union by the mid 1970s thirty years had elapsed from dissolution of the visible structures of the Greek Catholic Church. At the high point of the Vatican's new *Ostpolitik*, the large ecumenism between the Catholic and the Russian Orthodox Churches did not always have space for the tiny Greek Catholic entity. The Soviet authorities and the Russian Orthodox hierarchy were convinced that the UGCC was a disappearing remnant of the past. Information from the depth of the catacombs emerged rarely and with elusive content. For many church leaders and religious observers, even in the Vatican, it was not clear that the UGCC, having endured decades of brutal repression could still be in existence in the USSR. Its long-term viability was considered highly speculative.

Given these prevailing opinions and doubts, Josyf Slipyj feared that the hierarchy in Ukraine might die out and not be replaced by the Holy See, which was evidently avoiding confrontation with the Kremlin. In 1977, to ensure hierarchical continuity he decided to consecrate three bishops for Ukraine secretly, as was done in the Soviet Union in the catacomb Church. These bishops were to serve as a reserve hierarchy and their role was meant for future circumstances, which could not be fully foreseen. The consecration occurred in the Studite monastery of Castelgandolfo. One of those secret bishops was Archimandrite Lubomyr.

The consecration occurred *sub urbe* without the knowledge and blessing of Rome. From a strictly canonical point of view, one that does not always foresee the vexing complexities of real life, it was a valid but illicit ordination. Providence and history will yet judge the bold decision. Patriarch Joseph believed that he was insuring the future of the hierarchy of his martyr Church. It was with great humility and discretion that the three secret bishops received their consecration and subsequently lived their hidden episcopal life. Bishop Lubomyr remained a clandestine bishop for nineteen years, first in Rome and after 1993 in Ukraine. His colleagues of the faculty of the Pontificia Università Urbaniana, where he was a professor of ecclesiology, did

not know that he was a bishop. Most people in the Church did not know that he was a bishop. We seminarians living and studying under the care of Patriarch Josyf initially also did not know.

It has never been easy to keep a secret in ecclesiastical Rome. Over the years evidence regarding the consecration eventually leaked. Since Josyf Slipyj was a great Christian confessor, imprisoned and tortured for unswerving loyalty to the pope, a cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, there was no move in the Vatican to censure either the consecrator or those who were consecrated. As long as their status was kept secret the Vatican tolerated this canonical irregularity. Bishop Lubomyr maintained his clandestine episcopal status with great grace and exemplary humility continuing to live and work as a monk, archimandrite, teacher, and spiritual director. When Patriarch Josyf died in 1984, he was succeeded by Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky, who in exile continued to lead the UGCC. Lubomyr Husar served as Lubachivsky's advisor and from 1985 to 1991 as his protosyncellus (vicar general). In 1986 Myroslav Ivan became cardinal and in 1991, on the eve of Palm Sunday, returned to his See of Lviv where ebullient crowds of hundreds of thousands greeted the homecoming of their exiled patriarch.

During the quarter of a century that Father (Bishop) Lubomyr spent in Rome, he became known to increasingly wide circles as a man of profound insight. Already then he was considered by many as the best preacher in the UGCC in the free world. At least we seminarians thought so. With the onset of *Perestroika*, the legalization of the Greek Catholic Church (1989), the fall of the Soviet Union, and the independence of Ukraine (1991), Lubomyr Husar came to visit the homeland that he was forced to leave almost half a century before and ultimately, in 1993, moved his monastery to Ukraine. Near Lviv, he continued to foster monastic life, offer spiritual direction for seminarians, students, and intellectuals until the spring of 1996 when he was recognized bishop and appointed exarch in Kyiv. It is a poorly kept secret that John Paul II—who developed a profound understanding of the vicissitudes of the UGCC, a sympathy for the vision of Patriarch Josyf, and an authentic respect for the humble “catacomb” monk-bishop Lubomyr—personally supervised the delicate process of the recognition of his episcopacy. A few months later Bishop Lubomyr became special auxiliary to the ailing head of the Church with full

administrative responsibilities, again with the direct involvement of John Paul II.

In the last years of the life of Patriarch Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky, Bishop Lubomyr fulfilled the functions of the head of the Church. Already then and subsequently since January 2001, when he was elected to replace his deceased predecessor, the voice of Bishop and later Patriarch Lubomyr in Ukrainian society has been a unique one. He has spoken out and written pastoral letters, direct in style and sophisticated in content, on a wide range of social, economic, and political issues. His demands to the government to pay back-wages, summons to politicians to stop election fraud, exhortations to citizens to defend their dignity and voter rights, and invitations to church leaders of different confessions to search for common ground have greatly contributed to the ethical and religious discourse in times of crisis, civil unrest, and social conflict.

When it became clear—a year in advance of presidential elections and the fabled Orange Revolution of 2004—that the political process was becoming a manipulated farce and Ukrainian society was rapidly arriving at a time of reckoning, Patriarch Lubomyr instituted a Church-wide policy of spiritual and social preparations to help Ukrainian citizens defend their freedom and civic honor. This policy explicitly prohibited Church representatives from supporting candidates or parties. No campaigning was allowed in churches or on church property. Rather in every parish community through regular weekly prayer, specially formulated to address the explicitly moral challenge, the faithful were confirmed in their God-given image and likeness, their personal autonomy, and dignity. This spiritual plan of civic formation was based on fundamental Christian principles and human values, not on any temporary political arguments or calculations. No other Church leader initiated such a consistent, morally transparent, and effective spiritual program for the people. Most either evaded the burning issues or capitulated to government or other social pressures (and economic inducements) to identify their Church with one political force or the other. Arguably, no social institution played a greater role in morally empowering the population of Ukraine than the Church under Patriarch Lubomyr's clear, unambiguous, yet prudent leadership and guidance.

Although Greek Catholics are a minority in the Ukrainian population, it is safe to say that no spiritual leader in the country is respected for his moral stance more than Lubomyr Husar. He is a favorite not only of traditional churchgoers but also of students, intellectuals, artists, and musicians, political and social leaders, the media, and opinion makers. This is especially true of those who read his pastoral letters. However, the workingman raised in the atheistic atmosphere of the Soviet years is also taking notice. Once in a Kyiv taxi, a big city cabbie in his fifties noticing my clerical dress spontaneously asked: "Is Husar the head of your Church?" He then constituted with both defiance and pleasure: "I do not go to any church, but I love to listen to him on the radio!" In recent years, due to the onset of a progressing blindness, an onerous and debilitating handicap he endures with patience and grace, Patriarch Lubomyr's contact with the people has become even more direct, simple, and unmediated by a written text. He is a frequent and almost revered guest on national radio and television where his slow, serene, and mellow speaking style, deep baritone voice, and quick and self-deprecating wit have become beloved trademarks.

Having experienced so much in life and prayer, the aged hierarch is at ease with difficulties and radiates a calm when others fret and panic. He makes people feel comfortable with themselves, with God, and with the Church. This reputation transcends confessional divides and extends across Ukraine's borders. In Eastern and Western Europe, Cardinal Husar is known as a churchman of the highest rank who at the same time maintains a very direct personable contact with those whom he meets or addresses. Besides Ukrainian, he speaks German, Italian, English, and Polish completely fluently, and has competence in various other living and Classical or liturgical languages. He is able to answer the questions of journalists and entertain them with anecdotes in their native tongues. His ability to disarm with a joke and dispel conflict with a good story only reinforces the substantive content of his common sense message.

Many Ukrainians see Patriarch Lubomyr as a worthy successor in a very impressive lineage of Church leaders: Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky (1900–1944), a great mystic, true spiritual aristocrat, ecumenical pioneer, and founder of various cultural and social institutions as well as religious orders, including the Studites; Patriarch and

Cardinal Josyf Slipyj (1944–1984), the indefatigable scholar and tenacious defender of religious and human freedom who stood up to and overcame twentieth century totalitarianism; and Patriarch and Cardinal Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky (1984–2000), a humble man of profound prayer. Being a scholar who specialized in Sheptytsky, the spiritual son of Patriarch Josyf, and the successor of Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky, Lubomyr Husar has inherited a piece of the legacy of each of his twentieth century predecessors. He brings to a complex, young, independent Ukrainian society the richness of this inheritance articulated in matter-of-fact words and graced by the lightness of Christian joy.

Lubomyr Husar communicates through an authentic humanity and with a beautiful touch of humor. It has been said that humor is very close to mystery. I suspect that through his humor and wisdom those that meet and speak with Lubomyr Husar are touched by mystery, and are invited to venture beyond to “the other.” Ukrainian Greek Catholics have come to appreciate the gift of their spiritual leader. We at the Ukrainian Catholic University are very proud that Patriarch Lubomyr is the Grand Chancellor of our institution. At the same time, maybe it is most appropriate that he is being introduced to a wider readership in French and English, as well as Ukrainian, through this volume of texts and interviews conducted by a non-Ukrainian, non-Greek Catholic. Professor Antoine Arjakovsky, an Orthodox Frenchman of Russian extraction, has provided the interested reader with a succinct and well-chosen body of written and spoken texts that bring out the person of the patriarch. As a historian, theologian, and professional diplomat, being both an intellectual descendant and interpreter of some of the greatest Russian thinkers of the twentieth century as well as the grandson of the recently canonized Orthodox martyr, Archpriest Dimitri Klepinin, Professor Arjakovsky brings the broadest of cultural and spiritual perspectives to his presentation of Lubomyr Husar.

Today, as Ukraine emerges out of the first stage of its post-Soviet experience marked by the Orange Revolution and its profound achievements and disappointments, Ukrainian society is in great need of genuine leaders who speak words of wisdom and words of truth. The Orange Revolution cannot be fully explained by political factors, economic criteria, or the interplay of international powers. All of these

were important. But in the end it was a moral, even spiritual revolution conducted in peace and with evident joy. Both of these are gifts of the Holy Spirit. Patriarch Lubomyr was able to find the words that gave meaning to the momentous upheavals of recent Ukrainian history, before, during and after the events. Ukraine today needs leaders who with a prophetic voice can articulate what faces this new society, what needs to be done, and in what spirit and manner.

The dearth of authentic, reliable leadership in Ukraine has many causes and explanations. The ability to lead consistently is not formed easily. Patriarch and Cardinal Lubomyr Husar is a Christian leader who has gone through a hard school of living freely with God in peace and joy—in many countries, in diverse cultures, in desperate crises, with countless people. Through war and totalitarian tyranny, homelessness, dispossession, and cultural dislocation, monastic obedience and poverty, ecclesiastical marginalization, the burdens of supreme spiritual accountability, and finally the hardships of blindness, unspeakable for a man of the word and intellect saddled with such multifaceted responsibility—Lubomyr Husar has radiated a composure firmly grounded in his faith and hope in God. He has maintained a freedom from the world, its ideologies and systems, its enticements and devices. He has endured Soviet and Nazi occupations and appreciated the prosperity of the free West, while preserving a critical stance towards its weaknesses. A laborer in many lands he has with great sacrifice served Ukraine both captive and free. Patriarch Lubomyr leads his Church guided by a great love for his people. May his vision of reconciliation, formed during his study of the ecumenical thought of Metropolitan Sheptytsky, continue to develop in Ukraine. May this land with a violent twentieth century history, considered by some a land of confessional conflicts, become known as a land of true peace, and authentic joy. By living these virtues Lubomyr Husar leads his faithful to them—and to their Source.

Borys Gudziak,
Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University

CONVERSATIONS

Itinerary

You were born in 1933 in Lviv. Could you please tell us about your parents and your grandparents as well as your roots? Where does your family come from? From which part of Ukraine?

As far as I know, my forebears are from Western Ukraine. We have a family tree that goes back to the eighteenth century, and all family members came from this part of Ukraine. My father was a bank official, my mother Rostyslava (born Demchuk) was a teacher. My grandfather on my mother's side was a priest and used to live in a village which I recently visited in Galicia. I was happily surprised to hear that although his death occurred long ago (1929), he was still remembered by the inhabitants. On my father's side my grandfather was a notary public. He lived and worked in Halych, where he died and was buried (in 1923). This is where our family grave is located.

This is a symbolic place for the Greek-Catholic Church.

Yes, indeed it is. There were several priests on my father's side in the past few generations, in both the direct and the indirect line.

Your father did not wish to become a priest?

No. My grandmother wished he would become one, and even brought him to the bishop, but he did not become a priest. He studied economy instead, in Vienna. It was particularly difficult for Ukrainian people to study at Lviv University after the First World War, and so he had to leave Ukraine to study.

Did your father know Metropolitan Sheptytsky?

My father worked as a bank official for one of the two banks that were close to the Church and to Metropolitan Sheptytsky, but he did

not have any personal contact with him. I have a vivid memory of the only time I saw the Metropolitan. It was in 1939, during the youth festival “Sokola Bat’ka” which was an occasion for all kinds of sports competitions. I was there with my father and suddenly a car pulled up, maybe fifteen or twenty meters from us. Then my father said, “Look! Look there. That is the Metropolitan.” At that time he was already unable to walk. That is the only time I saw him, but I remember him perfectly, with his long hair.

You experienced the Soviet occupation in 1939?

Yes, to 1941. Those were difficult times. I started going to school then. It was a terrible time, for people were beginning to be sent to Siberia. At night a truck would come. They would give you two hours to pack your things. So we always had our suitcases ready in case the truck would come. People were very nervous, for every time one heard the sound of a truck at one or two o’clock in the morning they simply could not go back to sleep. This is why my parents were glad to leave Ukraine.

In the meantime the Germans came.

Yes. Until 1944. I also have bad memories of these times. I used to attend the middle school. We lived in the eastern part of Lviv, while my friends used to come from the western side of the city. They used to tell me about the executions they witnessed on their way. You know that for every German killed the Nazis would murder ten citizens: five Poles and five Ukrainians. I also remember that once the Gestapo came to check whether we were not hiding any Jews. This was not the case, but somebody had denounced us.

My parents had become acquainted with a Jewish family who would go by the name of Stanger. They lived in the same building where I was born. Our mothers were quite close friends and my mother was very much attached to this family. I remember very clearly what happened in 1942. I was nine years old. They had three girls, one of whom came to our house (which might be why we were denounced later). She used to wear a white band around her arm with the star of David. I was next to my mother when she told her that her parents had been executed. She also said that her youngest sister, who was about

my age, had also been executed. She added that she was waiting for the same to happen to her. It was a real shock for my mother.

Metropolitan Sheptytsky hid Jewish people during the war, including the son of Lviv's rabbi?

Yes, in this very house* and also in some monasteries.

What was your religious education?

Our family was very religious. We used to attend Liturgy every Sunday and never missed Mass. My mother was very strict with fasts, which she always observed. We had to prepare ourselves very rigorously to receive the Holy Communion. We had this beautiful custom at home of asking forgiveness of one another. I had to ask my father, my mother, my grandmother, my sister, even a girl who was helping in the house for forgiveness, without forgetting our neighbour. The hardest of all was to ask forgiveness of my older sister, for we used to fight often when I was younger.

We had a very religious atmosphere in the house. Our parish was the church of Saints Peter and Paul on Lychakivska Street, where the Orthodox Autocephalous Church is now. Yet for reasons of convenience we used to go to the Redemptorists' church on Ivan Franko Street. My mother liked this church so much that she would stay for the next Liturgy to hear the second sermon. Meanwhile, my father would converse for hours with numerous people. We used to call him the "old artilleryman." In the meantime we, the children, had to wait! When the Soviets arrived we had to go to school at 7 a.m. Thus on feast days my sister and I would attend church at 5 a.m. and only after that go to school. The Metropolitan even allowed what at that time was a great novelty due to current events, namely, evening services. My parents both worked and had to leave early in the morning. My mother was a librarian at the Pedagogical Institute and was liable to be severely punished if she arrived late. After work they had to attend meetings that would last for one or two hours, and so they came back late. My sister took care of me and fed me. She also made sure I had

* In the residence of the Metropolitans facing St. George's Cathedral.

the right treatment, for as a child I was often sick. My health was very fragile and I would catch cold very easily. My ear maladies were also the cause of many troubles. I often had to stay at home, and my sister always took care of me. When my mother died I was already sixty years old, but I would introduce my sister saying, "This is my sister, who performs all motherly duties."

How was your exile?

Our family was very fortunate when we left Ukraine in 1944 and started our worldwide travels, for we were never separated. This is why we are very close. We ended up in Austria, in a suburb of Vienna, in a German camp that was meant to serve as our residence. We did not have the time to take anything with us. Each of us had only a suitcase. We had left all our possessions in Ukraine. Luckily my father spoke German and knew the region, so we managed to escape from the camp. Two days later we were told that the borders of the camp had been fenced and were under the constant surveillance of guards. We were very lucky! Thanks to one of his acquaintances my father found an office job and managed to feed his family.

We did not stay very long because the eastern front was frequently shifting. We could hear the bombshells. We were lucky for a second time. We had little with us, so we were very mobile. My dad decided that we should leave. Three days later we heard that the governor of the Vienna region had prohibited people from leaving the area.

This same year, 1944, we were able to reach the western part of Austria. I believe that it was Divine Providence that protected us and enabled us to stay together. We have always been very grateful to God for this because so many families were separated for several years. This is how we managed to escape from the Soviets and reached the American zone of Austria. Then in 1949 we went to the USA, where is time my parents as well as my sister passed away. My father died in 1963, my mother in 1992, and my sister in 2001. She had married in the States and had four children. She started by working in the factories as most immigrants did, and then took care of her children.

When did you decide to become a priest?

At a very early age. Obviously many children first wish to become taxi drivers, garbage men, etc. But very quickly I felt the desire to become a priest. At the age of ten, during the German occupation, I told my parents. They took me along with my grandmother to the fathers of the Redemptorist Church. It was 1943. A Belgian priest from that church did not really encourage me at that time. He told me that in such troubled times, I had better attend the regular school before joining his community. We left the following year.

At the beginning of 1944, when I was ten, I wrote a letter to the rector of our seminary in the USA telling him that I wanted to become a priest. Surprisingly, Fr. Ivakhiv replied and suggested I visit him during when I came to the States. Once I arrived there we settled in Brooklyn, New York. The parish priest was a friend of my father, as they had served in the same regiment during the First World War. Thanks to him I was able to start attending classes at the minor seminary of St. Basil at Stamford, Connecticut, only three weeks after my arrival. The seminary was only 45 minutes by train from my parents' house.

In 1950 I finished high school and then went to university. After earning my B.A. in Philosophy in 1954 I attended Theology classes at the Catholic University of Washington. There I graduated from St. Josaphat Seminary in 1958 with a canonical B.A in Theology. The subject of my B.A. paper concerned Metropolitan Sheptytsky, a pioneer of ecumenism. In September of this year, during the reconstruction of the seminary, I returned there and met with numerous friends. I was ordained there as a priest of the Stamford eparchy by Msgr. Ambrose Senyshyn.

What can you say about religious life in the USA then ? Did you have any ecumenical contacts?

At that time, that is before the Second Vatican Council, we were not even allowed to enter a non-Catholic church. When I was ordained, to enter an Orthodox church was sufficient to have you expelled from the seminary. It was only after the Vatican Council that a new ecumenical era began for us. I had a few contacts with some Protestants, but only on a personal level.

Many Greek-Catholics became Orthodox in America because the Latin Catholic hierarchy did not recognize the marriages of priests in the Eastern tradition.

Yes, this took place in 1928–1929. Nowadays it is still forbidden by Rome for married men to be ordained priests in the USA. This rather rigorist attitude of the Latin bishops caused about 100,000 to 300,000 Greek-Catholic faithful to join the Orthodox Church. These converts became the majority of the Orthodox Church in the USA (OCA).

This explains why nowadays in the USA, for instance at the St. Vladimir Institute, relationships between Greek-Catholics and Orthodox are more relaxed. Some families even include two persons of different Churches.

Yes. For example, Msgr. Moskal (Greek-Catholic bishop of Parma, Ohio) has Orthodox relatives. In most cases mixed families live in peace. Of course some families were divided, especially at the end of the 1920s.

At the end of the nineteenth century, when our faithful arrived in the USA the Latin rite was something foreign for them, and so they went to Orthodox churches. It was the time of the great Orthodox hierarchs such as Metropolitan Tikhon, who later became Patriarch of the Russian Church. Then Metropolitan Sheptytsky sent Msgr. Ortynsky, who structured the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in the USA. When the Bolshevik Revolution occurred, the Russian Church of America lost its support from Moscow. Then in the 1930s the Russian Church was very much supported by Greek-Catholic converts who were scandalised by the attitude of the Latin hierarchy towards them.

Msgr. Moskal wrote his licentiate dissertation precisely on this subject and notably on its social dimension. It was a time when the American “melting pot” was very strong. Nowadays these faithful represent the backbone of the OCA. It is true that the Greek-Catholics have better relations with the OCA than they have with the Moscow Patriarchate.

Did you not wish to become a monk before becoming a priest?

No, I wished to become a priest. I never really wanted to be a married priest. The position of the Latin Catholic Church towards married priests was never really a problem for me. At the seminary I wished for a while to become a priest of the Redemptorist order, but this was short-lived. I decided to become a monk when I was already a priest. But I did not find any monastery that wanted to welcome me. I wrote to a monastic community in Canada, but the answer was simply negative! It is only when I arrived in Italy in 1969 to carry on my studies in Theology that I heard about the Studite monastery in Grottaferrata. It had been founded in 1964 and the first hegumen (superior) was Fr. Antonii Ryzhak. A small group of studite monks had left Ukraine in 1944, and after brief stays in Germany and Chevetogne they had gone in 1951 to Canada and had settled in Ontario. Then when Josyf Slipyj arrived in Rome, he called some monks to Grottaferrata. I entered the community in 1972. M. Petrovych, A. Ryzhak and I were very interested in the idea of getting back to the ancient tradition of monasticism.

Can you tell us the story of the Studite renewal in the twentieth century?

You see, it's a rather complicated story. Monasticism in Ukraine started practically at the beginning of Ukrainian Christianity. It started with St. Anthony, who lived in the Kyivan caves. Anthony gave his blessing for candidates to pray and practice asceticism, and everyone lived in a cave. It was only Theodosius who introduced community life, as the highest Studite ideal. But we Ukrainians are very individualistic. And as long as Theodosius with his personal monastic authority lived, this monastery was really perfectly Studite. He sent two monks to Constantinople to receive the rule of St. Basil the Great, rewritten by Theodore of Studion. Theodore had been the hegumen of the Studion in Constantinople, which included over a thousand monks, in other words, a small army. He was a spiritual leader with great organizational skills. It was a golden age. After his death the idiorhythmic monastic life became very popular again. In the modern age, Western influence penetrated Ukraine. Despite some successes, monastic life in community disappeared.

This reached such an extent that in the nineteenth century the Basilian protohegumen (general superior) Clement Sarnicki called

upon the Holy Father to commission a monastic reform in the Greek-Catholic Church. But it was Sheptytsky who aimed, through the Studite reform, to reconnect monastic life to the old tradition.

People had become accustomed to the active spirituality of the modern Basilians and Redemptorists. Despite the efforts of Clement Sheptytsky and some others, we still do not know how to live again according to the pristine rule. Even in the Studite Lavra at Univ, there are good intentions but there is not yet sufficient intellectual potential and monastic experience. I think that what we really need to do is to have a group of our monks trained in an Athonite or some other good Orthodox monastery.

Does this mean that you wish to rediscover a philocalic spirituality?

Yes.

Sheptytsky also wished to rediscover the pristine rule. What failed? You must know the question fairly well, since in 1978 Josyf Cardinal Slipyj appointed you archimandrite of St. Theodore's monastery in Rome and General of the Studite order in Ukraine.

The typikon of 1904 was very simple and very severe. The second typikon, in 1920, was very much influenced by Latin spirituality. Someone had come to Rome and told Sheptytsky that if he wished his rule to be recognized by the Vatican it had to be introduced through the Jesuits. But it was not good advice, because in 1923 they rejected it. After that Andrew and Clement together wrote the current typikon.

In French.

Yes, because they spoke French better than Ukrainian. French was the language they used at home. Their mother wrote in French. In 1936, Clement brought the typikon to Rome because Andrew could not travel any more. He met the Frenchman Jean Charon, alias Cyrille Korolevskij, and asked him to proofread the text. But the latter added his own ideas! You understand that he was a recent convert to the Eastern Church, and did not have an inner sense of tradition. I have the copy with Korolevskij's additions at the monastery in Grottaferrata. In any case, a typikon is a very delicate thing. It needs to be lived,

not only to be read. This is the reason why I sent one of our monks to England to spend a month amongst the Orthodox community of St. John the Baptist in Maldon, with the agreement of their hegumen. Another member of our Grottaferrata monastery was an American who had spent eight years on Mount Athos. He was a disciple of Father Emilianos in Simono-Petra. But it is difficult to enter the tradition from without. He left Mount Athos simply because he found the Greek nationalism intollerable.

We must go back to our sources. There are numerous things that I appreciate in the Benedictines. But they are the children of Western culture, at its highest level. As for us, we look towards the East, for instance towards the monastery of Amba Bishoy in Egypt, towards people such as Pope Shenouda or Matta el Maskine. We need genuine monks in our Church, in other words people capable of making a difference, of representing the heart of the Church, to provide excellent candidates for the episcopate. We need time for that. I spoke one day with Metropolitan of Kyiv of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Volodymyr (Sabodan), and had an excellent conversation with him. He is in my opinion a remarkable person. We spoke about monasticism. He was not satisfied with the state of monasteries in the Orthodox Church nowadays. He sees the need for more contemplative prayer, spiritual formation and intellectual effort.

Regarding culture, I would like to come back to your studies in America, when you were studying at the University in Washington. Which authors did you read?

After theology in Washington, in the sixties I studied philosophy at Fordham University. I read many American authors. I also felt close to German spirituality. I read with great pleasure the spirituality of the sixteenth-century English "Holy Abandon." I was also fond of the books of Anthony Bloom as well as those of Paul Evdokimov. We have a very fine Ukrainian word for it, *yeleinyi*. This means that the authors are "anointed by the Spirit." Their books can be read several times with equal pleasure.

And Fr. Alexander Schmemmann?

Yes Fr. Schmemmann was rather a good popularizer. But for me Meyendorff was a deeper writer. When we were students in St. Josaphat,

we made all efforts to try to learn about our Eastern tradition. Our predecessors at the seminary had begun, but I think that my generation (those who were ordained in the fifties) was very motivated by this return to the roots. We even formed a little society called the Saint Josaphat Society, and we used to invite people like Francis Dvornik, who was in Dumbarton Oaks, to speak to us.

Yet St. Josaphat did not leave an excellent memory for the Orthodox.

For the wrong reasons I think. St. Josaphat never attended school, yet his theology was very solid. He had learnt it from the liturgical books, without a trace of scholasticism and no reference whatsoever to Thomas Aquinas. He was a monk who did not know Latin, but he had a real desire to learn through liturgical books.

He died tragically, assassinated by the Orthodox who strongly objected to his methods.

Yes, this is true, but he was caricatured by the Orthodox world, who made of him a proselytist. We can indeed discuss his methods, but I wish that my Orthodox brothers would admit that his theology was liturgical and that he gave his life for unity. Our ecumenism nowadays is so feeble precisely because there are so few people who are prepared to dedicate their lives to unity. This is why I personally have a great devotion to St. Josaphat. He took very seriously such of our liturgical books as the *Octoechos*, the *Menaia*, etc. He wanted to enter into the spirit of our books. We have inherited this Latin mentality that consists in evaluating theology from what we have read in manuals. According to me, we must learn from the books with which we pray.

When Cardinal Slipyj ordained you a bishop secretly on 2 April 1977, as well as two other bishops, a new life started for you. I imagine that it was not easy for you to live as a clandestine bishop?

Cardinal Slipyj did very much for our people and for our Church outside Ukraine. But at the same time he was always very passionate about what took place within Ukraine. He was very concerned because he realised that the KGB could easily annihilate the hierarchy

of our Church. Furthermore, at the time the Vatican was conducting its famous Ostpolitik. The Soviet government took advantage of it and asked the Holy See to close our minor seminary in Rome. The seminary resisted, but we have never been well regarded in Rome. Then Slipyj ordained me in case the situation in Ukraine should call for it. I must confess that I never suffered, for I did not expect to intervene. I was on the sidelines, and waited. I was prepared to take part should I be needed, that is all. I did not experience any tragedy or any pain because I was not acting as a bishop. Bishop Khoma felt very much the way I did. We were absolutely not interested in acting as bishops or being referred to as such. Then, when the Church was recognized in 1990 we were not needed anymore. Finally, we were recognized by the Holy See and other bishops. We decided to get further involved not so much due to external persecutions but rather due to internal difficulties within our Synod. This is actually the reason why I became exarch, then auxiliary bishop to Myroslav Ivan Cardinal Lubachivsky.

You came back to Ukraine in 1993 and settled with your Studite community in the village of Kolodiyivka in the Ternopil region. It was a new country for you, which had been sovietized. I imagine that the encounter with the Church of the Catacombs must have been very moving. What were your first impressions on your arrival in Ukraine?

I came here with great admiration but had some disappointments. We thought that we were going to meet with the Church of the martyrs. We had to face the reality that people had really suffered. Some were ennobled by their suffering. Yet suffering had different consequences for others. I was coming from Italy, which in many aspects was like Ukraine, but it was difficult to feel at home. For a very simple reason. I had not grown up here. I did not have friends here. People would tell me that I spoke too much, too openly. They would find fault with my behaviour and even my Ukrainian, which is recognizably not from here. I guess that this is the fate of anybody who has not been in the country for forty-six years! But not any forty-six years. Those were a very significant forty-six years. Our personal development was very different during that time. And even now, I cannot say that I feel completely “at home.”

On 26 January 2001 you were elected Major Archbishop by the Synod. On February 21 you were appointed a Cardinal by John Paul II.

You are now a member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, but also a member of the Pontifical Congregation for the Eastern Churches, the Pontifical Commission for Culture and the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts. In June 2001 the pope came to Ukraine. I was very impressed in Kyiv by the Byzantine-rite liturgy that you concelebrated with Pope John Paul II, who let you preside. Was it not a visible sign of recognition of the local Church?

I think one of the great causes of success of the Pope's visit is due to the fact that he was a close neighbour. He spoke Ukrainian very well and he understood the native people. He had himself been through the communist era and spoke of things that touched our people. He spoke of the land, of love for one's country. He came very humbly, with a walking-stick. Nobody could fear this man. People were very touched. He had a strong charisma and truly respected our Church. He was one with us and we were one with him.

A last question. I know that you will have your eyes operated on in February. Have you been suffering for a long time from this severe myopia?

I have always been near-sighted, and I often read in very poorly lit rooms. During my childhood I spent two winters at home because as I told you, I was often ill. Of course a teacher would come to visit me, but most of the time I was on my own. So I took books one after another in my father's library. This probably did not help my vision. For the past three years things have got worse. I cannot read, and I cannot recognize people.

But will this operation help you to recover your eyesight?

No. Hopefully, it will simply help me not to become completely blind.

I think that people are going to pray that this operation goes well.

Thank you !

The Greek-Catholic Church and the Orange revolution*

Your Eminence, whereas the second round of the presidential elections was cancelled due to massive falsifications, another second round must take place in eight days to decide between Victor Yushchenko and Victor Yanukovich. Which is your analysis of the recent events?

For me, what was significant as regards the social aspects is that a very great number of people, in our Church or outside our Church, prayed during the events. The presence of the Church was very visible during these fifteen days in Kyiv and elsewhere. When the crisis was the most intense, in a spontaneous manner representatives of various Churches or religious organizations spoke and petitioned together. Well before the beginning of the campaign we had asked our faithful to pray for fair elections and we knew that everywhere, in the monasteries, in the parishes, people prayed. It is a phenomenon which was misunderstood in the West. I lived a long time in America, where one insists on the separation of Church and State. In Europe, too, one does not include the religious phenomenon in the analysis of political life. This separation also exists in our constitution, but the Ukrainian spirit is different. We know how much the Church is significant for the life of the State.

For the new second round of December 26, as for the first two rounds, you did not give instructions to vote for this or that candidate. But what recommendations will be given to your faithful?

The principle that we applied during the two first rounds of the elections is that the Church is not to be implicated in politics. But we will encourage our faithful to vote, and that people vote according to

* Interview conducted with Henri Tincq (*Le Monde*) on December 18, 2004.

their own conscience without selling their hearts, without selling their ballots. I will appeal this next Wednesday in the company of the other representatives of ecclesial communities. We started with six heads of churches, but then Lutherans and Baptists let us know that they wanted to also sign such a declaration. Wednesday I will take part in a round table with eight of these people, during which we will declare that we do not support any particular candidate. Unfortunately, we know that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate has taken a position orally and in writing in favour of the candidate Yanukovych. We do not do that, on principle.

Will the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate confirm its position supporting the government's candidate?

I do not know their position as of today. But they certainly did it before the second round.

You say that you do not take a position for this or that candidate, but many priests and lay people openly favoured Yushchenko. Isn't this double-talk?

Christians, as citizens, are free to adopt the political positions of their choice. But we ask clergy not to conduct any propaganda. We warn those who do so, and inflict punishments. In essence, the demonstrations on Independence Square were not demonstrations for Yushchenko but against falsifications. And Yushchenko became for the demonstrators a symbol of the truth. While Yanukovych, as the candidate of the government in power, came under the shadow which fell upon the government when they discovered the falsifications. Yushchenko became a symbol of the people's confidence in justice. This is why our laity, our priests, and our bishops were there on Independence Square. By virtue of the fact that they identified this struggle for justice with the person of Yushchenko. But we do not make propaganda and we did not publish any document saying "Vote for Yushchenko."

What are the moral values that are most at stake in the balloting of December 26? Is it democracy, the rejection of corruption, freedom, the national entity?

Even if this may sound abstract to you, it seems to me that it is the defence of human dignity and justice which is the primary issue. People felt that they had been lied to. They resented this and declared that this should not be so. At the beginning of the campaign we asked our faithful to request fair elections from the State. After the second round, however, it appeared that the elections had not been fair. The people revolted against this enormous lie. They felt insulted, humiliated, treated as objects and not as subjects having political rights.

Do you believe that in the event of a victory by Mr. Yushchenko, there would appear a risk of division in Ukraine?

An American political analyst commenting on the Bush/Kerry elections said that after the poll, half of the population would not be satisfied. And that is completely normal! I think that in Ukraine one will see the political wisdom of the Ukrainian people. And it will also be seen that the Ukrainian State will do everything to make us feel that those who voted against the winner are a part of the nation and are still appreciated. I do not envisage any division of the State. Historically, however, there were strong factors that contributed to a rift. At the time of the division of the Polish kingdom at the end of the eighteenth century, a part of Ukraine fell to the Austrian empire, while the other part was conquered by the Russian empire. The border was closed between these two empires. My father told me that before the First World War he needed a passport or a visa to go to Russia, whereas one could go freely to Europe. With the arrival of the communists in Eastern Ukraine, more than seven million people died at the time of the great famine in 1933. Who took their place? People from Russia. This gave a specific character to the Donbas region.

In the modern age, Eastern Ukraine was thus marked by the tsars and by the communist regime, while Western Ukraine was Austrian and then again Polish. Let us take the example of Germany, which was divided for only forty years and which is still divided today by so many differences. In our case this lasted two hundred years. Thus there are differences. But in 1991, 90% of the inhabitants of Ukraine voted for independence, whatever their origins. And today during the Orange Revolution most of the population has decided in favour of Yushchenko on Independence Square. At Kyiv's railway station approximately ten

thousand people expressed their support of Yanukovych. But there was no fighting in Kyiv! People do not feel hatred towards one another in spite of their different stories.

Today the responsibility of the State appears even more clearly, and so does that of the politicians who did not support communication among the various Ukrainian regions. We invited several thousand children from the East of Ukraine to Lviv to celebrate Christmas together in January. But of course this is very little. The new president, the new government, the new minister of education in particular, and all responsible citizens will have to work together.

Division was created by politics. If you allow me I would like to tell you an anecdote. A doctor, an architect, and a politician meet and argue about which profession is the most ancient. The doctor says, "It is mine, because God created Eve by an operation." The architect answers, "Sirs, the Lord initially created the world thanks to a plan, and to make plans is the task of the architect." The politician says, "No, no, no. In the Scriptures it is written that before God created the world there was chaos. And who created chaos? The politicians of course!"

Won't the current events further alienate the Greek-Catholics and the Orthodox from the Moscow Patriarchate?

We were never very close, but maintaining our relations will be even more difficult. But it is important to distinguish the people from the hierarchy. When the pope came there were people in the streets in Kyiv and Lviv, and they were not all Greek-Catholics. There were also Orthodox. A woman told me, "I am Orthodox and I want to pray with the pope." That's how people are. The hierarchs, on the other hand, who are influenced by political life, have many more difficulties. The candidate of the governing power was very much supported by the Russian State, which also acts through the Church. On the other hand, I am not very familiar with the mentality of the hierarchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the Moscow Patriarchate. It is very difficult for me to say how things will occur, but I do not see at the time being any change for the better.

Don't you think that if Mr. Yushchenko is elected, there will be a revision of the bond between the Orthodox Church in Ukraine and the Moscow patriarchate?

Yes there will be a revision. But what it will be and at which level, it is very difficult to say.

The Greek-Catholic Church has always been the voice of the Ukrainian people in their will to gain national independence. Are the people encouraged today in their struggle for the victory of Mr. Yushchenko?

We must be very careful. Why have both the Greek-Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church borne the national idea? Because there was nobody else to support the people in their aspirations. From the eighteenth century we did not have a State, which explains why the Church was the bearer of national identity. My predecessor here, Metropolitan Sheptytsky, who sought all his life to move away from politics, against his will was the ethnarch, one could say, of Ukrainian society. Since now a State exists, we should not succumb today to the temptation to replace it.

A delicate question. In view of the relationship to the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, is it proper to insist that the Greek-Catholics want to have their patriarchate in Kyiv?

Like the Holy Father John Paul II, we do not want to create clear-cut oppositions. But we must live. And our Church has responsibilities, and thus rights and duties, with respect to its faithful, although we are conscious that the Moscow Patriarchate does not favour that. And we cannot fail to deny that they are indifferent to our well-being. When we were persecuted they kept silent. They could not do much at the time because it was the Soviet Union. But when this régime ended, they did not ask for forgiveness. It seems to me that every Christian Church should be delighted by the growth of the Christian Churches.

You say that they did not ask for forgiveness. This is true, and I regret it very much, as do many Christians throughout the world. But you also say that we must live. However, do the Greek-Catholics have the impression that they cannot yet live normally in contemporary Ukraine?

We can live normally, but we are also entitled to normal development. It should be understood that the patriarchate is not a luxury. It is a common form of development. If Germany gave full rights to France while simply requiring that France belong to Germany, would the French be happy? No, you would say that you have the right to be yourselves—although you could live perfectly well belonging to Germany. It is the same thing here. The patriarchate is not a privilege, it is the standard form of existence for an Eastern Church.

There are millions of Ukrainians living in Russia, and among them there are also hundreds of thousands of Greek-Catholics. How is the Greek-Catholic Church in Russia organised? And what is the future of the Greek-Catholic Church in Russia?

We have to make a distinction. There is the Latin-rite Church in Russia. There are Ukrainian Greek-Catholics in Russia. There are Russian Catholics in Russia. The Latin Church has its hierarchy. Our Church exists under the jurisdiction of at least one bishop from Novosibirsk. We have parishes; we have priests, very few; but we do depend on the Latin bishops. The Russian Catholic Church has nobody, even though they have their own exarchate. The Holy See, which does not wish to offend the Patriarchate of Moscow, does not permit an exarch. There are three different Catholic groups.

Our situation is such that we are at the mercy of the Latin bishops, of whom only one is really very much interested in helping us — bishop Werth of Novosibirsk. The others are afraid and do not do anything. So our people are asking us to take the initiative. I have a letter from a group located fifty kilometres from the Arctic Circle. The closest Catholic parish is, I think, over two thousand kilometres from them. They would like to build a church. They have nobody to support them.

I do hope that there will be an evolution, which will naturally require very delicate negotiations on the part of the Vatican and on the part of the Ukrainian State. Because the Russians in Ukraine have all the rights: cultural, religious, etc. They celebrate in Russian, they have their own Church. They have their own societies and so on. We do not have this in Russia. But our government did not care. I hope that maybe the new government will care now and that the Vatican will have the courage to speak out for the human rights of those faithful who are

not of the Latin rite but Catholic, both Ukrainians and Russians. The difficulty is that it is not easy to converse with the government. To my mind, the European Union is sleeping, they are also not terribly interested in genuine human rights. We are not very enthusiastic because Europe should speak out and say, why do these people not have these rights? Maybe it is our fault that we did not speak about that loudly enough. But we are going to do it now. We are going to speak to the European Union and say please, defend these rights. You would like to speak with Russia, Russia would like to be in contact with Europe, so ask them what you asked Turkey: why don't Ukrainians have the same rights in Russia that Russians have in Ukraine?

Do you have figures on how many Greek-Catholics live in Russia?

No. The official 2001 census report asserted that there were over five million Ukrainians living in Russia. In other words, five million speaking Ukrainian at home. I am told that the actual figure is close to ten million. Of those, how many are Greek-Catholic? When Msgr. Gbur, who is now bishop of Stryi (Western Ukraine), went to Irkutsk to attend the consecration of the Latin bishop, who was his school-mate, an announcement was made that a Greek-Catholic Liturgy would be celebrated the following Sunday. Three hundred people came. I do not know how many Greek-Catholics there are in the Russian Federation. Is it one million? Ten million? Twenty-five million? I do not know. We have no way of knowing. But we do have some communities around Novosibirsk and Tiumen, where we have our own priests whom we send from here in an understanding with bishop Werth, and he very graciously accepts them. But only a minority of our faithful is being taken care of. In Rome I met a Latin-rite Polish priest who has served in Russia. He came up to me and said, I would like to let you know that in Sakhalin there are a hundred thousand Ukrainians. In Kamchatka—forty thousand Ukrainians! I am giving you this information; many of them come to our church, which means that they are Greek-Catholics. We do need the support of Europe. The European Union also has to speak out, because these people have rights, this is a question of human rights.

This year there was a discussion in the parliament about the new legislation on religions. What is your position? What would

you suggest for the future of this new law? Do you need a new law for religions in Ukraine?

Sooner or later, yes. But we are very happy that we had our share in the debate. Certainly we did our best to set the process into motion, even though it is primarily the task of the government. I was asked yesterday by a representative of one of the political groups I met in Kyiv to give my opinion about the future of the relationship between Church and State in Ukraine. I answered that we should not hurry but speak seriously. Let us discuss this seriously, because the people in the government still have much of a communist background. Church people still have very much of a mentality of the persecuted. Now, both you and we have to learn how to live with one another. Ukraine was under foreign occupation for over two hundred years. This is the first time that we have our own government and we do not know what to do with it. We have to learn how to live with our own government.

What should be the spirit of this new law?

Let us first examine the context. In the Austrian period, Galicia or Western Ukraine was 95% Greek-Catholic. Eastern Ukraine under the tsarist regime was over 95% Orthodox. There were very clear majorities. Nowadays we are a multi-denominational state with over seventy-five Churches and religions officially registered. The government has to develop a policy that will give equal rights to everybody but will also face the reality that four Churches (specifically the three Kyivan Churches and the Latin rite) represent 86% of believers. I think that by now, seventy-six religious bodies are officially recognized. Ukraine has still to develop a well-balanced religious policy, and we do not know how to do it. Should we have a specific concordat with each Church? or a general law? or both in an equal manner? Or should basic rights be ensured for all? Let us consider education, for example. Why cannot the Churches have their own schools? They answer no, because in that case Protestants could have their own denominational schools. This is why I suggested specific agreements between the government and the Orthodox Church, etc. As we did in Croatia, in Slovenia, and so on. I do not think we are fully ready for a meaningful religious law. I specifically asked the President, and Mr. Marchuk when he was

head of the National Security Office, as well as Mr. Kravchuk: Allow us to develop a conception of State-Church relations. Some progress was made. We do have a preamble. But this is not enough. There is still very much work to be done, especially in the field of education. Look. You know yourself the problems that we have concerning the recognition of theology as an academic discipline.

Is the Greek-Catholic Church favourable to the entry of Ukraine in the European Union?

Yes, in principle. But you know it is necessary to specify things. Yesterday I saw on television a German representative of the European Union. He spoke about the opening of negotiations between the European Union and Turkey. He said that there are grounds to justify Turkey's integration since it is a "border case." But what is the case then for Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova, which belong to Europe and are not located in Asia? This German civil servant seemed to be unaware of it! I was very irritated by these remarks. How will the EU treat us if it does not even know where we are? I think that the EU must fulfill its duties before all. We are Europe. We do not have to be accepted into Europe.

General de Gaulle said that Europe reached from the Atlantic to the Urals.

Russia is part of both Europe and Asia. It is a specific case. In any event it is not a "border case."

I would like to get back to something that I do not understand. I understand the concern of the Greek-Catholic Church for separating the State and the Church. But why not take a firmer stand for a candidate such as Mr. Yushchenko, who symbolizes more the will to democracy and freedom, which are the values of the Gospel?

But we have a very firm position. The Church simply does not identify itself with a candidate, but with his values. I spoke personally with Mr. Yushchenko. We understand each other. But you must understand that we live in a transitional period from totalitarianism

to democracy. Democracy must be founded on a solid basis of human rights. When totalitarian States authorize the Church they want to use it as a tool. We struggle today so that this type of mentality does not exist anymore. In this room, during the legislative elections in 2002, the representatives came from all the political parties. All asked me to support them. Because for them the Church was a political organization. It is their manner of reasoning. We want to explain to them that the Church and the State are partners, that the Church is not the subject of the State and vice versa. We make the distinction between the Church and the State because we are independent of each other. But we work for the same people! We are partners and we do not owe each other anything. We also hope that we can support together a synthesis of Christian and humanistic values.

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Patriarchate*

Your Eminence, in the interview you gave to the magazine *30 Giorni* you explain the reasons for the transfer of your Cathedral See from Lviv to Kyiv. The three arguments are that there are 600,000 Greek-Catholics in Eastern Ukraine; the history of your church, which in 1596 was in Kyiv; and that this is the capital of Ukraine and other religions in Ukraine are also represented in Kyiv. Also at the end of the interview, you add an argument: you say that the main reproach against the Greek-Catholic Church is that you do not wish to sever the link between the church and the nation. Does this mean that your ecclesiology is more Eucharistic than territorial and national?

“Canonical territory” is a very old principle among Christians. Practically from the beginning it was always stated that there should be only one bishop for one territory, which I think is perfectly reasonable. It’s very Christian, it’s very traditional. It has, however, one drawback. It is not the idea itself that has a drawback, but we ourselves. The idea is perfect: a bishop, who is the father of all the Christians in a particular area, is supposed to take care of all of them no matter what their language, their culture might be. The assumption is, and the reality was at the beginning of the Christian centuries, that all these people have one faith. And the bishop as the good father, without having a huge territory but maybe one city territory, a manageable territory, would take care of all of them. But today we cannot apply this principle.

* Conversation published in *La France Catholique* (no. 2918) on February 20, 2004—i.e., nine months before the Orange Revolution. This conversation was later published in *Zenit*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *NG Religia*, and *Patriarkhat*.

Why not?

Because we are no longer one Church. We are a divided Church. Let's take the example of Germany. We have Catholics and we have Lutherans. They are very different. Would it be possible for one bishop to take care of all of them? In Eastern Europe today, Orthodox and Greek-Catholics are much closer to one another, because, as I see it, we do have one faith. Even though it is frequently said that we do differ in our faith. But I don't think this is true. However, the Patriarchate of Moscow, for example, and our Greek-Catholic Church of Ukraine differ. We are not anymore one Church. We are two churches, distinct churches. And because of that we do have, practically, two canonical territories. We cannot speak anymore of one canonical territory. Because the difference is so fundamental between us, up to the present, that I don't know any bishop who would be able equally to take care of people who do and who do not have the pope of Rome as the visible centre of the Universal Church. So the old principle does not apply.

How do you understand ecclesial communion?

I speak as a Catholic without wishing to impose my vision on anybody. Even if I belong to the Orthodox, in the sense of Byzantine, tradition, I am, at the same time, in communion with the Bishop of Rome. In this sense I am in eucharistic communion. I want to underline this. I will give you a very concrete example. What does this communion mean? We have in the city of Lviv Cardinal Jaworski, a Latin-rite bishop. And I am an Eastern-rite bishop. And yet we can concelebrate. Because we are in communion with one another, being in communion with the Bishop of Rome. I share with my Orthodox brother Metropolitan Volodymyr of Kyiv the same liturgical, spiritual, and theological tradition, and yet we cannot concelebrate. Because we are not in the same communion. This allows us to understand that we are not really one Church in each other's eyes.

On 29 November 2003, the pope received a letter from Patriarch Bartholomew in response to a letter of Cardinal Kasper addressed to Patriarch Aleksii. Cardinal Kasper justified the recognition of

the UGCC patriarchate by the canons that established patriarchal law in the Church at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Patriarch Bartholomew rejects this approach; he invokes the Council of Constantinople of 879–880 and speaks of the inviolability of the limits of traditional patriarchal sees. But the Metropolitanate of Kyiv, of which your see is the successor, signed the act of union with Rome at the Council of Florence in 1439 with Constantinople. And your Church, unlike Moscow and Constantinople, has never revoked it. Isn't this the reason for your disagreement with Patriarch Bartholomew, who doesn't accept the possibility of your Church becoming a patriarchate?

I have great difficulties understanding his argumentation. We have, we had a very close relationship with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Because it is through this patriarchate that Christianity officially came into what is Ukraine today. However, his argumentation is not very clear to me. There is not the least doubt that in the course of history patriarchates have been erected, created, and recognized in very different ways. The old classical way was that the ecumenical council, one of those original seven great councils, acknowledged the existence of certain patriarchates. That was in the first millennium. In the course of the second millennium the situation became very different. And when we come to today, it is still more different.

In what sense?

In the course of the second millennium, several patriarchates were established within the Orthodox Church and within the Catholic Church. In the Orthodox Church, Moscow, and more recently the Serbian, Romanian, Bulgarian and other patriarchates. They have not been established by an ecumenical council...

...but by a mother Church...

By a mother Church, which has acknowledged their existence, but not by an ecumenical council, because there has been no ecumenical council in the Orthodox Church in the second millennium. There is a desire to have one, but it has not materialized.

In the Catholic Church, it is necessary to take the position of the Bishop of Rome into consideration. The Second Vatican Council has recognized the existence of patriarchates within the Catholic Church, notably within the Eastern tradition, e.g. the Byzantine tradition, but not exclusively (as there is, for instance, an Armenian Catholic Patriarch who is not Byzantine). A new patriarchate must be established. Who can establish it? Usually it is the ecumenical council. But should we wait for an ecumenical council to be called before a patriarchate can be recognised or erected? Ideally speaking, maybe so. But life goes on and we don't know when the next ecumenical council will take place. This Ecumenical Council (Vatican II) said: "Let patriarchates be established." If there were an ecumenical council, it would be competent to do so. But if there is none, and there is a need to establish a patriarchate, let the pope do it himself with the mandate of the Ecumenical Council, being the person within the Catholic Church responsible for doing such things. It is not something that he is ascribing to himself as if he were an absolute ruler. He is acting within the Church as the one who is responsible, who can do it within the Catholic framework of thinking, having not only his own desire or will, but having behind him the mandate of the Ecumenical Council. And this mandate of the Ecumenical Council has been repeated in the Code of Canon Law. The pope himself in his very recent apostolic instruction for the bishops (*Pastores gregis*, 6) says again: "Patriarchates should be established." Because he is interested in doing what the Ecumenical Council has desired and established. So it is not, as somebody may think, an act of human fancy. No, he is working within the framework of the life of Churches, in which he himself is a very important part.

So, yes, the first five great patriarchates were established by ecumenical councils. But so many other existing ones were not. There is maybe one more element to it. I feel that too much is being made of the patriarchate. As if this were something exceptional. To my mind, a patriarchate is a normal form of existence in the Eastern Byzantine tradition. It is simply a development of church structure. And I don't feel that it ought to be overplayed. We don't desire it simply for prestige, or as a reward for our suffering or our martyrs. We look upon it as a pastoral instrument, and secondly as an ecumenical instrument. Because we feel that our patriarchate can be, within our unfortunately

divided Kyivan Church, a very strong ecumenical instrument that would lead the consciousness of the entire Church towards unity. This does not mean that all have to become Greek-Catholics. It means that we all have to return to our Church's original unity, even though it is a unity that, as it was originally, is also in communion with the successor of Saint Peter.

So the situation is a bit overplayed. We do not look upon the patriarchate as something extraordinary. According to canon law and according to this latest papal document, it is simply the normal way it ought to be.

The idea of patriarchates for the Western Church was spoken of during the Second Vatican Council. But I think that the Western Church is not ready for it. Even though we should never forget that the Bishop of Rome, also known as the Pope of Rome, is the Patriarch of the West. And this traditional title has never been abolished.

On 20 January 2004, Patriarch Aleksii declared to Agence France-Presse that in Ukraine “hundreds of thousands of Orthodox believers are a persecuted minority” and that there is an “expansion of the Greek-Catholic Church in the South and East of Ukraine,” that the majority of Ukrainians will not accept the erection of a Greek-Catholic patriarchate. So what is your reaction? It is quite tragic that last year Aleksii did not recognize the fact that in 1946 the Greek-Catholic Church was abolished by the Soviet State with the help of the Russian Orthodox Church. I suppose that it is difficult for you to talk to someone who thirteen years after the end of the Soviet Union still does not recognize the tragedy of your Church. How is it possible to have a dialogue with Moscow in these conditions?

The situation is very complex. Let us clarify it step by step. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (and unfortunately it remained so in the twentieth century), it was said that you cannot be a true Ukrainian, you cannot be a true Russian, unless you are denominationally Orthodox. And vice-versa: a true Orthodox is either Russian or Ukrainian or Greek, or Serbian, or something else. That means an identification, as if these two concepts were integrally and maybe ontologically connected. Our existence is a denial of this. In the sense that we are Ukrainian, we are Christians, we are of the Eastern tradition, and we also are in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome. Being in this communion does not

make us less Ukrainian, less Christian, less Orthodox in the sense of the Byzantine tradition. This has always been unthinkable for the Patriarchate of Moscow and for many other Orthodox Churches. And I think it is excessive. And that should be overcome.

Secondly, let us go back to the 1946 situation. The Soviet government, with a direct order from Stalin, liquidated our Church. I do not wish to make a general condemnation, because for us who have not lived under the Soviet régime it is rather hard to understand.

You were born in 1933?

Yes, but I left the Soviet Union in 1944. I didn't live in the worst, the darkest years. However, the fact is that the Russian Orthodox Church was used as an instrument in this liquidation and, unfortunately, to some extent, certainly collaborated, willingly or not. I will not go into this. Let God judge. I do not judge, because times were very difficult. Such, however, are the facts. The Soviet government gave the Patriarchate of Moscow a great number of churches. It was the only Church that was permitted to exist. People who wanted to go to church had to go to the Russian Orthodox Church. And many did go. In 1989, the Soviet government permitted the Greek-Catholic Church to register again. And then in 1990 and 1991, many of those communities that had gone to the Russian Orthodox Church said, "There is no need for us to be here anymore. Let us be what we were before, Greek-Catholic." And over one thousand communities registered as Greek-Catholic. Then there were difficulties about church buildings. Some of these difficulties have remained to this day.

How many churches are still disputed?

I would say that in western Ukraine there are over three hundred localities that are in conflict.

With the Moscow Patriarchate?

Especially with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. There is none with Moscow in the Lviv region, for example. I would say that there are about 25 localities where conflicts are pretty strong.

Can we speak about a religious war?

Absolutely not. I think that to speak about persecutions is very unjust. However, I can understand the Russian Orthodox Church. They were here for forty-five years. And when the opportunity came, people left them. That means a real pastoral failure. These people have not remained Orthodox. It is a wound for the Russian Orthodox Church which is very difficult to heal.

But is there any hope for a mutual rediscovery?

You see, from our side, my immediate predecessor, Cardinal Lubachivsky, proposed to the Russian Orthodox Church that we forgive each other. Our people, even if they have suffered much, even if many of them don't like the word "Orthodox," have no real hatred against the Russian Orthodox. I myself was celebrating in a locality in which on the same Sunday Metropolitan Volodymyr Sabodan (head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church) was consecrating a new Orthodox church. There was absolutely no opposition from the Greek-Catholics. The people said, "They built it, let them take care of it." The conflicts start when there is a church that was ours but is not ours anymore, when the government has given such a church to the Orthodox of the Moscow Patriarchate or the Patriarchate of Kyiv and lets them keep it. So our attitude is not the desire to fight, to take vengeance. I can speak very freely on our basic attitude, which is to gladly be friends with Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox. There is real hope. There is a declaration of the Patriarchate of Moscow which has not been sufficiently appreciated. The Patriarch of Moscow, speaking to Christians of the Russian tradition in Western Europe, has admitted that in Soviet times, the Patriarchate of Moscow did not conduct itself in an exemplary manner but gave in to the government.

When did he say that?

Last year he wrote a letter to the Russian immigrants, for he wishes to establish a Russian Metropolitanate in Western Europe that would be dependent on the Patriarchate of Moscow. And I think that it is a very interesting thing that he and those around him have realised that

it has not always been very good. To me this is a good sign. There is a recognition that in the past, for reasons of human weakness, there has been incorrect conduct which ought to be levelled out. So I do not lose hope that sooner or later the Moscow Patriarchate will realise that nobody is perfect. It paves the road for mutual understanding, for a Christian attitude towards one another.

Do you address the same words of mutual forgiveness of Cardinal Lubachivsky to Patriarch Aleksii and to the Russian Church today?

Yes, absolutely. We are always ready, even if they have never to this day expressed a desire for this act of mutual forgiveness.

I understand that the believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Metropolitan Volodymyr Sabodan can suppose that, because you are now in Kyiv, you could demand the chief sites of the Orthodox tradition such as the Kyivan Monastery of the Caves, the monastery of Pochaiv, and other churches. They may be afraid of that. Because you are very popular and you have chosen to use Ukrainian as the liturgical language. What kind of guarantees can you give to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church? What are your criteria for saying that a certain church does or does not belong to you?

There are certain churches, certain sanctuaries, which are national treasures, which belong to Ukraine. Such is our position. Somebody has to take care of them. The Greek-Catholic Church absolutely does not desire to take over the Caves or the Pochaiv Monastery. Let the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate take care of them. But it is not their property. They are the caretakers of national sanctuaries. These are not sanctuaries that belong to them to the exclusion of others. Why may we not come there? Why may we not buy candles in the Monastery of the Caves? Why are we excluded? We have no pretensions that it has to be ours. Since they are there, we accept this fact. But we should not let the government authorise the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate to privatize these places and say, This is our property. Because it is the property of the Ukrainian nation, of which they are guardians so as to let us and others come to visit and appreciate their spiritual goods.

But can a Greek-Catholic freely pray today in the Caves of Kyiv?

Yes, if he is not recognised. But I cannot come into the store and buy candles in the monastery. I will be asked, Are you Greek-Catholic? And they will not sell them to me.

Let us speak about the international dialogue concerning the Greek-Catholic Church. In Balamand (1993) the joint Catholic-Orthodox commission—to which the Greek-Catholic Church was not called—on the one hand condemned Uniatism, understood as a form of proselytism, and on the other hand recognized the existence of the Greek-Catholics as a Church. What is your position concerning this resolution, and how do you see the future today, since the international discussion was interrupted in Baltimore in 2000?

If we take Uniatism in this classical sense of trying to re-establish unity, we too do not accept it. We were tricked into it. This was not the intention of our bishops at the end of the sixteenth century. But that was the political situation within the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth of that time. And it was also the theological understanding of the Latin Church after the Council of Trent. But that is in the past. And we would not like to have Uniatism used anymore as a way of establishing unity. However, we are a fact, and our existence cannot be denied. In his letter to the pope, Patriarch Bartholomew says that he ought to do everything to diminish the Greek-Catholic Church. What right does he have to say this? We are here. We have made this choice. If I were faced today with this situation of four hundred years ago, I would certainly not choose the way in which it resulted at that time. In 1942 Metropolitan Sheptytsky, my predecessor, said very explicitly in his letters to the Orthodox, “This is not the way that we would like to conduct ourselves today.” So he has in this sense condemned this way, and we would not use it today. But we are children of the past, for which we are not responsible. We are what we are. And one cannot tell us: Disappear! Become Latin or convert to the Orthodox confession! We wish to be Orthodox in the sense of being of this tradition. We have not always been very faithful to it. I think we have lost something on the way, which we have to regain. But we also wish to remain in communion with the pope of Rome as the successor of Saint Peter, as

the symbol of unity. We hope and we wish that all Churches would be in this communion. And we consider, even if it is not through our own merit, that we could be a good example of what it means to be Catholic in the sense of being in communion with the successor of Peter and not losing in any way our religious or national identity.

But the Orthodox are saying that you were latinized in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. What are the guarantees in the twenty-first century that you will not lose your freedom?

It is true that we have been latinized. And this is the great merit of Metropolitan Sheptytsky at the beginning of the twentieth century: that he tried to reverse this process. Personally, I consider myself a follower of Metropolitan Sheptytsky, together with many others who would like to get rid of all that has illegitimately entered into our spiritual, theological, liturgical, canonical heritage. We were told, "If you want to be a real Catholic, you have to be Latin." And they pushed us into it. And it is only with Metropolitan Sheptytsky that we could say, "Dear brothers from Rome, one can be Catholic without being Latin." And we were attacked on two fronts, Catholic-Latin and Orthodox-Byzantine. And we said, "No, dear brothers, one can be Ukrainian, one can be Byzantine, one can be at the same time Catholic. These different elements do not contradict one another." So this is why neither the Latin Church nor the Orthodox Church is very happy with us.

What are the conditions for Eucharistic communion between the believers of the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church? Is it necessary to have the same theology of marriage, of the filioque, of purgatory?

No. Practically, our attitude is that between the Orthodox and us there are no differences in faith. Questions like purgatory, the Immaculate Conception or the *filioque* are theological concepts, not faith. And they of course are very different, but they are ultimately complementary. So they do not represent a different faith. They represent a different understanding of the gift of faith. What is our practical stand on intercommunion? If a Catholic finds himself in a position where there is no Catholic church around, he can freely go to the

Orthodox church and receive sacraments. Likewise when an Orthodox cannot find an Orthodox priest, we don't refuse him the sacraments, especially confession and Holy Communion. The only problem is the scandal if you give the impression that it doesn't make a difference what you are. You are what you are. But the circumstances are such that if you are in need, we are open to help you or to being helped.

The Gift of Faith*

Recently the Greek-Catholic Church celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception. In the Eastern Church Father Sergius Bulgakov, the Russian Orthodox theologian, also insisted on the importance of the total holiness of the Mother of God. But it is still difficult for Orthodox people to understand that the Mother of God, who is human as are all people, is considered from her conception as Immaculate. There is a veneration of the Mother of God because she is human. The Orthodox Byzantine and Latin traditions developed differently in terms of the Mother of God's history. Could you tell us your vision, considering that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is in between these two traditions?

I think that we should realise that our faith considers it a fact that God has chosen this particular woman through whom, so to say, he came into the world as a human being according to human laws. He did not appear but was incarnated and became a child. Of course he is not the fruit of a natural conception, He came thanks to the intervention of the Holy Spirit, so in a certain sense we cannot completely avoid this "*Deus ex machina* moment," so to speak, but then everything else is perfectly human, normal. This particular woman was chosen.

I remember in Indian literature the description of the woman Shakuntala, in whom the author tries to present a perfect woman. Now, our idea of perfection of course is very limited. We are only human beings, and here is a woman whom God chooses to be His Mother on earth, that is for his Son who is incarnated, who assumes a perfectly human nature. I think it is perfectly normal for all of us to wish our mother to be some sort of ideal. I may refer to a little experience from my own life. My sister, as I have mentioned, was older

* Interview taken on December 24, 2004.

than me by five years. In the last years of her life, after the death of my father, my mother lived with my sister and so naturally, she had her own room; she had her belongings there, and then when she did die, some time after her death my sister and I were sitting and conversing. We came to the topic of our mother. My sister was telling me that she had found certain letters, certain writings about which we did not know. It was her private life. My sister of course having found them had read them, read them with admiration. Although we were over sixty years old, we looked at my mother with the admiring eyes of a child. You know that even physically, children look up to look at their mother. A mother is everything to a child. I believe that it is natural for men to wish and to see their own mother, not ideally, but through a certain ray of light.

Now let us imagine God who chooses His own mother. This is something we cannot do. We can only accept our mother. He prepared His mother to be His mother. I understand the difficulties you mention for the Orthodox. I think that any normal human being feels this similar difficulty somehow: How would I make my mother if I could decide on this? This of course is impossible for us, but not for Him.

Then what ultimately is her holiness? I think if you look at the legends, the apocrypha, people are trying to describe a woman according to their own ideas of the ideal: that she is sitting there, praying, singing songs, reading the Scriptures, and then angels come and sweep the courtyard, the birds bring bread, or something like this. All these are legends that we tell to children. Many people think this way. They cannot imagine Mary sweeping the courtyard, washing the dishes, doing the laundry. I think that our concepts of holiness are very limited, very unrealistic I would say.

Christ lived in this little village of Nazareth with His Mother and with Joseph, who people thought was his father: a perfectly normal family. It seems they did not notice anything. At least it is not reflected in the Scriptures. There was nothing about which they would have said, "Oh I do remember, he did this, he did that. No. Is he not one of us?" They did not notice. Now, what is the sense of holiness? What kind of a woman was she? She went to bring water, certainly she spoke with all the women, all her neighbours, and Joseph was there talking with men and doing his business, doing his work as a carpenter. Jesus attended the synagogue and prayed with the people of the village.

Now, over this very realistic, very down to earth picture of the reality of the life of this family we superimpose our theological reflections. I think in a certain sense we kill the reality by our highly developed, highly conceived thoughts. Our reflection then is this: as in most of Christology, is very difficult to square this reality with normal human life. Here is Christ walking through the villages and cities of Palestine. But before he was helping Joseph, he was maybe doing his business himself already. Maybe Joseph had died before; we do not know. They did not notice any difference. He went to the synagogue, he prayed with them like everybody else. I think we have to be very careful when we begin to apply our theological reflections. Our theological reflections are conditioned by our general culture. The Latin culture of which Descartes is one of the expressions seeks clear ideas that are often distinct by logic and law. We wish that something should mean this and nothing else. Then they come up with, maybe to a certain extent, a negative concept or a negatively expressed idea: the Immaculate Conception, *sine macula, Makellos* in German, without any trace of imperfection. We have a different approach. I am not saying that it is any better. It is simply complementary. We look at the Virgin Mary as All Holy even though we do not perfectly understand what holiness is. The Latin thought is clearer. She was sinless. It is very clear. Yet when one speaks of *Pan Hagia*, we enter into a mystery.

She was *Pan Hagia* but she was born in a fallen world, as were we all.

Yes, but although she was born in a fallen world she was not tempted by sin as we are. She did not know the “blemish” of original sin. Yet we prefer to say, “She was so good that even the idea of sinning did not occur to her.” We face a mystery. We must admit that it is not a normal thing, and that we do not really know what holiness is. This is why we must be humble. Theologians use the categories of thinking they know, the cultural concepts they are used to employing as an explanation. But what does “Immaculate” mean in everyday life? What does “All Holy” mean in practical life? It is hard to grasp. Simply that she was a good woman, a good neighbour, a good mother, that people certainly liked her. She was one of them. That is it. What else did they see? They never even suspected what was happening in that

house. Who was living in that house? I think, driven by our desire to understand a mystery, we are torturing ourselves unnecessarily when it would be better to my mind, simply to wait.

But people also want to understand the Scriptures. In the West, for instance, the place of Joseph has been more developed as also the figure of father generally. It is very clearly stated in the Scriptures that Jesus is the son of David through Joseph. At the same time Joseph is not the father of Christ. How may we explain such a thing?

Tomorrow we will celebrate the Sunday of the Forefathers. We will read the Gospel of the 14 generations times 3 that led to the beginning of Christ. It's very formalized, for obviously there were more generations than that from the Creation. But what is the meaning? The meaning is that of legal continuity. At that time, the spirit in Jewish society was that the succession of generations took place in certain conditions which were fulfilled by Christ, not so much by a physical descent, but rather by a juridical one.

On the Sunday after Christmas we celebrate the family of Jesus: David, Joseph, and James the brother of Jesus. They juridically belong to Jesus' family, which is very important for the Jewish family. The Messiah's inheritance from David has been realised by Joseph, and so the account of the census and registration in Bethlehem is very significant, very important, for it establishes the legitimacy of the succession.

I regret nonetheless that Saint Joseph has been somewhat cast aside in our Eastern tradition, just because the tradition wished to protect the virginity of Mary. He is thus presented as this old, old man, too old for any physical desire! This is not correct, I think, because when we see in our society a very old man marrying a very young woman we laugh at it. In the USA this man would be called a "sugar daddy"! In my opinion, Joseph was a mature and experienced man. All things considered, he was also chosen to be the protector of this family. And on a legal level the husband of Mary. He was responsible for her and for Jesus. He was the father of the house. It was his vocation par excellence. This is why I believe that we do not pay enough attention to Joseph.

Concerning Eastern and Western spirituality, there are also differences in regard to the wisdom of God or *Sapientia*. In the

Ukrainian Orthodox tradition Sophia is very important. Whereas in the Byzantine tradition it is Jesus Christ who is the Wisdom of God, in the Slavic tradition Sophia is connected with the Mother of God. Who, finally, is the Wisdom of God?

You see—no, Sophia is not the Mother of God. We have the prayer of Saint Ephrem during Lent, and in the second part we speak of *tsilomudrie*, the spirit of purity, *smirennomudrie*, the spirit of humility: Give me the spirit of purity, the spirit of humility, the way of pure thinking, of seeing things purely, of seeing things humbly. By contrast, in the same prayer we speak of *serebrolubie*, the love of money. Wisdom is the way with which God looks at the world. God looks at the world in a sophianic and global way. And conversely men say, “May I find the spirit of purity and wisdom. Let me participate in the divine manner of seeing things.” Christ said in this matter that he who sins with a woman or even he who looks at a woman with wrong desires sins against *tsilomudrie*, and therefore against Sophia. He was pure at the level of thinking.

Generally in our representation of Sophia, which we see as the Wisdom of God in the Old Testament, we identify it with our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Word of God. Then come the Mother of God and Saint John the Baptist, who form the Deesis that adores Sophia.

Those who are in Creation are praying to God. For Father Sergius Bulgakov, the Mother of God and Saint John the Baptist, but also the angels, testify to the presence of the Wisdom of God in Creation.

Yes, we lost this in the Western tradition. Nineteenth-century Russian theologians revived this very patristic way of seeing things. Bulgakov, who was exiled in the West, brought it to Western culture. The West accepted him as speaking for the East, and has not remembered that it, too, has this in its own tradition. But somehow this “Sophia thinking” has not been very prominent. I think the issue is that illuminism and rationalism have to a certain extent almost killed Sophia thinking. I think maybe for the West—and maybe I am in no position to say this—but maybe something is slowly coming back. This rationalism of the West: we are beginning now to realise that this is not enough. We need a deeper, a wider, a bigger way of thinking, which is Sophia thinking.

Metropolitan Sheptytsky wrote a book about the Wisdom of God, and also Cardinal Slipyj wrote about the Wisdom of God and when he arrived in Rome, he decided to build a cathedral dedicated to Saint Sophia. Can you tell us a few words about Cardinal Slipyj, whom you knew well?

I think Sheptytsky and Slipyj were two very different persons. I think Cardinal Slipyj became a real Eastern thinker, or at least began to see things in an Eastern way, after his eighteen years of reflecting on things in the Gulag. He changed many of his views because he saw reality in a different way. The Lviv Theological Academy was in the 1930s a thoroughly neo-scholastic school. Sheptytsky, who was not a philosopher, who did not belong to a school, wrote a very interesting book, "The Gift of Pentecost," which to my mind is almost patristic. It could have been easily written in the fourth, fifth, sixth century. It's a very different way of thinking. He was not by his nature a thinker according to the Western tradition. I remember how Father Cyril in Chevotogne told me the following story. He or maybe his friend Lev Gillet—I do not remember which—had gone to visit Sheptytsky in Lviv in the twenties. They were speaking about the ecumenical situation after Malines, when Cyril or Lev told Sheptytsky, "Your Excellency, don't you realise you are contradicting yourself?" Sheptytsky replied without the least embarrassment, "But I am an Eastern person!" To him, logical thinking was not an absolute value as long as you could express certain thoughts. It is the same thing when you read an apophthegm of the Holy Fathers of the Desert. You can find contradictory instructions. Because life is such that it cannot be perfectly logical and develop a system for everything. Life is such that sometimes you have to look this way, sometimes that way. It is larger than systems. I think this was the temperament of Sheptytsky.

As for Slipyj, after he was freed from the Gulag in 1963, he was very much taken up with administrative and church-political affairs in Rome, for he defended our persecuted Church. This did not give him the freedom of time, of a spiritual atmosphere to be a creative theologian. This was in the 1960s. He started the Ukrainian Catholic University but did not have the patience to see it grow. His style was to issue a decree and then live according to it. Having said that, I attended some of his classes on the Holy Trinity. He was not the same

man that I would see so often in his office. He was in his true element. And this despite the fact that his audience was not necessarily up to the level of what he was talking about.

Although he was taken up by administrative tasks he showed that ecclesiology should be pastoral. Is this thought not an opportunity today for the ecumenical movement, which is faced with the problem of territory?

Yes. It could be also very well applied to Sheptytsky that he was a pastor, whereas Slipyj at the beginning was terrified at presiding over funerals. This lasted until he went to the Gulag, where he learned about the pastoral dimension of the priesthood. He did not have time to learn this before. Slipyj was a scholar, a director, a publisher. When he came to Rome after his imprisonment his activity was primarily pastoral. And the memorandums he wrote at that time were first of all pastoral—but the Vatican did not understand this.

Do you think that for the future of the Greek-Catholic Patriarchate it could be a good solution that the patriarch has in his charge not only the bishops who live in Ukraine, but also bishops all over the world, yet allowing them to take actions in tandem with their local bishop?

That is the way it is now. But there are problems. Canon law has a very weak understanding of solutions for global situations. We are not an international Church. We are not a purely national Church. We are a global Church, which means we are spread out through different countries. Bishop Losten of Stamford and Bishop Stasiuk of Melbourne live in different contexts. They are members of the local Latin conference. At the same time they are members of our Greek-Catholic synod.

I am currently engaged in a discussion with the Holy See about the appointment of bishops. Because in the Latin rite the triangular management of the Church goes like this: they have the Holy Father, they have a metropolitan with so many suffragans, and then they have the nuncio. And everything is done in this triangle. Now, we have the pope, we have the nuncio, and we have the metropolitan plus twenty-four bishops who are supposed to vote for somebody. The code does

not know how to manage this situation. I explained to the Holy See that if the decision belonged only to the twelve or fourteen or fifteen bishops from amongst those who reside in Ukraine there would be no problem, as we are on the spot and know all the potential candidates fairly well. But what can Msgr Stasiuk say about our priests when he lives in Australia and nonetheless has his word to say?

About the dialogue with Rome. In France, the Orthodox-Catholic Commission proposed to remember the importance of the thirty-fourth canon of the Apostles, according to which bishops must know who is the first whilst the first must serve unity, as in the life of the Trinity. It is also mentioned in this document that the primacy of the bishop of Rome is not purely honorific, but that he must dispose of real means to exercise his role. How do you see this primacy of the Holy See in the Christian world, now that the pope has called in *Ut unum sint* for reflection about this, or even reform?

It's a very complicated issue. I am very happy that the Holy Father has brought this up for discussion. Because we are burdened with history and with a certain mentality that is not necessarily evangelical. It is juridical. Now, what is happening? How do I see the solution to this? In a very fine balance between the primacy of Peter and the local authority of the Synod, or of the bishops' conference. In a very fine balance. Now, no balance ever stays perfectly balanced. That means it is always a little this way, a little that way. Now, to establish this I think we have to recognize, to my mind, that the pope of Rome is the successor of Saint Peter. And I feel that this is very important for the Church. Why? Because he is a symbol of oneness. We have basically two symbols of unity: the Holy Eucharist and the pope.

But the Orthodox say that Peter is our brother and not our Father.

Here is a very important point. In the development of the second millennium: once the East and the West separated, the development of Roman theology became juridical. Jurists, these experts of jurisprudence, they, like every lawyer, need clear and distinct ideas. Things have to be clear. Now, how do you express the position of Peter

judicially? They said: *cum Petro et sub Petro*. My solution is this: *cum Petro*, yes. *Sub Petro*, no. In what sense? I absolutely do not deny the primacy of Peter and his specific office to support his brothers, to keep them united. However, when we say *sub Petro*, what is the temptation and what has been the temptation over the ages and what has been this sin over the ages? That the will of the pope was presented as the will of God. Now, I am with Peter serving God. I follow Peter serving God. But I do not follow Peter and say, Peter, what do you want? I say Peter, let us do what God wants from us.

How can Peter maintain the unity of the Church if he's just a brother?

No, he is more than a brother. He is like an elder brother. He is the one whom I follow. He does not follow me. I follow him. The question you bring up—about defending the power, the *potestas* of Peter—must be juridically formulated. I recognize that Peter has power, but limits need to be established. For example, if I begin to teach nonsense: four persons in our Trinity. Peter has the right to interfere, because he is supposed to watch over my faith, help me in my faith. He could use that power to interrupt my teaching.

And you also have this power vis-à-vis Peter?

Yes, but this is of a different nature. But I believe that God granted him this power because of his office. He needs this gift of infallibility, for I need a Church that teaches me exactly what God wishes me to know. But this infallibility has different expressions. The first level is that of the Church. The infallibility is in the Church. Not outside. In the Church and within the Church, it operates in the unity of the bishops. If all the bishops, or what we call the “moral majority” teach that the Mother of God is free from sin, then the Church expresses itself normally. I speak of bishops as teachers, not as theologians. The Church can speak differently through councils. Bishops come together because when there is some danger. Bishops come together and say, for example, that communism is a big danger for the Church.

Then Peter, in cases of necessity, acts with that very same infallibility of the Church; it is given to him but it is given within the

Church. He is not apart from the Church. When a need arises, when there is at stake some question of faith or morals he is the mouth of the Church. It's the Church speaking, not the pope. But it is speaking through the mouth of the pope. I believe that in cases of necessity the pope has this gift from God to speak in the name of the Church, not in his own name but in the name of the Church.

Ex cathedra.

Yes, *ex cathedra*. In a way that obliges all of us. The source is not he, but God, who gave this gift to the Church of which he is at this moment the mouth. And I obey him the way I will obey the entire Church. It's always in the Church. And I personally find this very important.

But what happened? Slipjy in his Testament made it very clear: the difficulty in the exercise of the primacy is the Curia, which assumes too many things. My great grandfather had difficulties with his skin. When he would shave, he would have blisters. So a wise doctor said, "Look, father (he was a priest), I suggest you grow yourself a beard. Then you will not have to shave, you will not disturb your skin and things will be well." To be able to grow a beard he had to write to Rome to get permission to grow a beard. This is a reality. This is in my family. We do not do this anymore today, but there are many other things that we still do.

We need a good balance between what the particular Church can do and what the pope can do for the entire Church. I am speaking about the pope, not only as bishop of Rome but as the bishop successor of Saint Peter. Fully respecting on the one hand his primacy—I am a strong believer in his primacy—on the other hand respecting the particular Church. I will tell you very frankly, I am over 70 today and I have seen all sorts of bishops, and I do not absolutely see that those chosen by Rome are any better than those not chosen by Rome, or chosen in a different way. And if you go through history, we have had Rome choose, we have had the emperor choose, we have had all sorts of people choose.

So, the particular Church can choose its bishops?

I personally would say that the particular Church, via a definite procedure and on the basis of serious investigations, should be able to choose its own bishops. Maybe the exception could be the head of the particular Church as it is now, so that Rome can ensure that he is well in communion. These things are to be worked on. I do not think that this procedure that we now have, that is appointment from Rome, is in its nature superior to what a good particular Church could do. Another example where the Holy See, the pope is very important is in the relationship between Church and State. See, when the State knows that we are part of a larger body, that we are not subservient to the State, but that we are on a level no lower than the State, then I think it is much easier for us.

Could we speak about some spiritual questions that are very important for people today? People nowadays find it difficult to see the actions of the saints, of the angels, and also of the fallen angels in the world. How do you explain to young people the reality of the spiritual forces in the world?

See, young people have not had enough experience to see it. It is not easy to explain it to them. But I think very soon in life, if we look a little closer, we realise that there are some forces that are interested in evil, in spreading evil in many forms. Basically in sowing discord, in having people fight one another, in having people curse one another. It is not something very tangible but this is something very real. Where does that come from? Who stands behind it? Why do people who have lived in such perfect peace, who have started something beautiful, see that suddenly something, somewhere, went wrong?

Many people read Harry Potter and do not always see the distinction between the angels and the demons, between magic and witchcraft.

In my experience, it is much easier to see the work of the devil than it is to see that of the angels, somehow. Because it is connatural for man to do good. So, if someone does good nobody looks for the source behind it. He did the right thing. If he did something wrong then people ask, "But why did he do it?" This is not good either for

him, or for the other, or for the family, and I think you can see the negative much better than you can see the positive. We do not appreciate sufficiently because we do not see sufficiently those intermediaries, those good messengers of God, how they operate, how they protect us, how they help us. And then we do not usually apply it to angels. We apply it directly to God. Because even in the Bible it is not always very clear. Because I think it's a question of expression, that frequently the biblical authors hesitate to use the name of God. So they use a sort of intermediate name which is not very clear. The angelic world is by no means as clear to us as is the diabolical world, the evil world.

Nowadays it is hard to admit the existence of the devil, because of rationalism and also maybe through fear of Manichaeism.

For me, the most difficult teaching of the Church is that of eternal punishment. It's the purest act of faith, but I really do not understand this doctrine. So I close my eyes and say, "Lord, you have said this and I believe it, but I do not understand it." I find it extremely difficult to admit and I am not surprised that people rebel against it. The famous millenary heresy used to say that after a thousand years God will release everybody that was condemned by the Church. You see, it is so difficult to think that someone we love should suffer, even if he committed a serious mistake. Then we have the other explanation that God does not like to send anybody to hell, but people go because they refuse God. But then on the other hand we do know that divine grace is with us and really to refuse God ultimately, it's not easy to understand how a person can do it. This is why this is to me a much more inextricable mystery than that of the Holy Trinity.

But there are some fathers like Gregory of Nyssa who believe in the *apocatastasis*. The idea that everyone can be saved, even the worst sinner, was not condemned.

I close my eyes and I make an act of faith hoping that divine grace works in such a way that nobody will ultimately go to hell. But we know that there are the evil spirits who have chosen the other way. So it is not much of a consolation. And I pray for everyone who dies or is dying that he would not have to suffer forever. But I must admit

that I do not know how the whole thing operates. I find it extremely difficult, I very frankly say this.

What do you say to those who rebel against innocent evil, against the death of young children for instance?

Personally I am convinced that no innocent person is sent away from God. Only those who consciously and persistently reject God will be punished forever. Because they made a choice here on earth. As the devils made their choice. But a child, an unborn child or a small child has never sinned, has never had a chance to make a choice. So I am perfectly convinced that God provides for these children in his own fatherly way so that none of them suffers any real punishment.

What is the meaning of suffering? When Jesus was asked whether it was the blind man or his parent who had sinned to deserve such a fate, Jesus said that it was neither the one nor the other but it was so for the Glory of God to manifest itself. What does that mean?

Precisely that: we simply do not know how this operates. My faith is that everything that happens reflects the glory of God. And even the rejection of those who really reject God shows, in a way, divine perfection which cannot stand evil or which is a jealous love, so to say. Now, I am sure that there is nothing that God does that is wrong. There are of course different solutions, as for instance the distinction between hell and purgatory as an intermediary space. But I feel that these are speculations. I am very much against this kind of speculation. I simply do not know. And I say I do not know and I am not willing to speculate how God is going to resolve things, unless we have some direct revelation. God did not give us a direct revelation on this point. So, when we come to God with faith we will see how things are in their proper place. And that everything really reflects the glory of God. Because even a punishment can reflect the glory of God. But only those who had very knowingly rejected God, only such people to my mind will have to remain without God; that, of course, is the worst punishment. Why should an innocent child not be received by God. No, this is all human speculation.

What do you think of people who guess the presence of these forces and who read their horoscopes?

I believe that in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* it is said that "There are more things on Earth, Horatio, than you and I know." See, we are only discovering the world. I think there are forces within us and around us which we have not yet discovered. How do you relate the almightiness of God and man's freedom? I do not know, but I assert both aspects. I think there are many more elements that influence us than we suspect. We simply have not discovered them yet. Some days I am in excellent form, other days for no obvious reason I am a wolf to my secretaries, to my people. Why? I do not know.

I am, for example, very sensitive to curses and blessings. When people ask for a blessing, I really try to do it consciously, to concentrate, even if it is a split second, to give them something from God. It's the same when I bless in church at the liturgy: I try to make this not a simple gesture or words but a conscious transferral of divine power through me. Curses—I am very sensitive to curses. Because this is a transferral of evil energy. And I think this is why cursing is a sin. Because you wish somebody evil. When a father or mother curses their child, this is something terrible. Such energies are intangible but they are real. Parents should bless their children, wish them good. I believe there are also energies that perhaps could even be measured somehow. It happened that I could feel how my mother felt even at a great distance. I have a little instrument that was offered to me in Rome. It enables me to know if a certain medication is good for my body or not. There is nothing magical about it. It is just a wave that goes one way or another. There are thousands of waves in this room, and if we had the capacity to receive of them, we would hear thousands of radio programs!

With regard to the energies present in Creation, the tradition of the Church repeats the psalm according to which "all creatures are glorifying God." The Eastern tradition has kept, more clearly than has the West, the importance of the cosmic invocation during the epiclesis in the liturgy. This year the Catholic Church is preparing a synod on the Eucharist. Will you insist on the importance of the

supplication of the Church to the Father to send His Holy Spirit for the transformation of the gifts?

Christ came, spoke, gave us sacraments, gave us Himself, gave us all the means necessary to prove His love to us and to make it possible for us to be saved. The Holy Spirit is the one who, if I may say so, personalizes this, who sort of establishes the connection between Christ and me, between this bread and wine and the body of Christ. That means he is the one who does this, who brings the world closer to God through Christ; that means he incorporates us into Christ. I find this very beautiful in the feast of the Jordan, of the blessing of the water. We bless water, we bless all the waters of the universe because we bless everything that God has made.

In the West, during the Council of Trent, the invocation of the Holy Spirit was rejected on the basis that it was inconceivable to invoke anyone after Christ had become present with the priest's recitation of the words of institution.

This is their way of seeing things. But now they have come back to it, to singing the epiclesis. I presume the epiclesis was sort of misunderstood. But now since the Second Vatican Council the words of the epiclesis are said before the words of the Lord. They say, "Send your Holy Spirit to make this bread and wine the body and blood of our Lord." And then they recount the story of the institution. We do it the other way round, but it does not matter because it's God who does it; if it's before or after, it is we who have to be before or after, not God. So I think they have realised that it is important to say it.

In the history of spirituality certain commemorations might be neglected for a while, like that of Saint Joseph. Certain persons, certain feasts, certain truths might be forgotten. The present pope a few years ago emphasised very strongly, and I think very justly, divine mercy. Did we not always believe in divine mercy? Did we not always say, Lord have mercy? We did. But I think that we need a little more emphasis. This is the year of the Eucharist. Nothing new will happen. The faith of the Church is always full, but men sometimes fail to keep it so. This is why it is important to make people become aware of it.

If we speak about levels of consciousness, some people like Prof. Ernst Suttner or Fr. Georgij Avvakumov believe that we are experiencing the end of a denominational period of the Church that started in the sixteenth century. The incorporation of Christians in Christ does not take place due to a passive belonging to an inherited denomination but rather by an active and trans-denominational identification to levels of consciousness of the ecclesial body. What do you think about the existence of these levels of consciousness that are both trans-denominational and trans-historical?

The Second Vatican Council speaks of the blessing of the community. In a certain sense it has not been sufficiently developed. It is based on one idea: that God died for all of us. There is nobody for whom Christ did not die. No matter they know it or not.

Now, the higher point of confessionalism, of ethno-confessionalism, was the branch-theory of English theology, that belonging to this or that denomination does not make any difference. The idea is that there is no real difference provided that you believe in God. I do not agree with this. God revealed himself in a certain way and we ought to recognize this fact: that it is not we who learn about him but he who in his kindness has spoken to us, revealed himself to us the way he is and the way he wants to be known. This is why Christ came to earth to tell us about the Father, to reveal to us the Father.

Confessionalism has been to my mind a certain kind of separation, a certain kind of fundamentalism maybe in this sense: if you do not do it the way I do it, you are not good. This is the basis of confessionalism, to my mind. And maybe we are today, to a certain extent, beginning to grow out of this narrowness. But the danger is of looking at the lowest common denominator and saying, Well, it's alright as long as you believe in God. No, it is not. You are, as you say, on a different level of consciousness. You believe in this way. Well, maybe you ought to learn a little more, you ought to come closer to what God said about Himself. And I think we have to take this in a very personal sense.

He is the one who took the first step. He created us. He told us who He is and what He wants our attitude to Him to be, what our relationship to Him should be. Divine law, the Ten Commandments and all the other prescriptions, are simply divine acts of charity to

teach us how we are supposed to love Him. Sometimes we imagine the Ten Commandments as laws, but we fail to understand them as an act of love.

Maybe we are moving towards this new attitude, but we have not made much progress, especially in the East. We are still very denominational here, and our confessionality is on the one hand religiously based on the fear of the other, on the ignorance of others, on being afraid of everybody else, and then of course it is partially motivated by this terrible politics that poisons the life of the Church.

In Western Europe, however, the danger consists in reducing religion to a merely private matter, and to the lowest common denominator. I therefore greatly regret that the preamble to the constitution of the European Union denies our Christian European roots. I do not understand why Europe systematically denies this historical fact. Try to understand Ukraine without the Church! It's impossible.

There are also in the West some divisive questions, for instance the question whether a woman can become a priest, the question of homosexuality, which is becoming more and more important, and also the question of inter-communion.

When I was in England I was asked about women and priesthood. And I must very frankly admit that I told some very respectable journalists that I really do not know what to say because we do not have this problem and I have never really entered into it. So I do not know.

But there were deaconess in the Eastern tradition?

I think the problem lies in the confusion of this question with feminism. I see no problem of renewing the ministry of deaconesses today. But what did they use to do? Social work? Church singing? I am in favour of a specific blessing of the Church for women's diaconical services. Yet in terms of liturgical services there is a preoccupation with equality that troubles me. But the question needs study since it is true that we are in a very male-centered world.

And in Christ there is no man or woman, and even more so during the liturgy, isn't it true?

There is a difference. I think we have to recognize it. And not to be ashamed of it, and not to say that men should behave like women and women like men. We are not women and women are not men. And there is I think something beautiful in being a woman that a man could never understand.

Some women would rather confess to other women rather than to men.

With all due respect, I must say they did it for nineteen centuries without the world falling apart. I believe the problem is a fad linked with feminism.

Much has been said about the recognition of homosexual marriage.

Homosexuality to my mind is nothing new. The only problem is that it has become very vocal, out of proportion, to my mind. Nobody is responsible for one's homosexuality. They simply are born that way. And they have to face this reality, unfortunately, as it is. I feel very sorry for these people because they are unable to experience conjugal love, which is love that is fruitful. God created men and women for them to have children together. Homosexuals cannot accomplish that; in this sense their love remains sterile. If they insist on living together, fine. But they cannot pretend that this is marriage. I also have serious doubts about their capacity to raise children, because then a child will grow up with homosexual tendencies. But the problem has become terribly noisy as if half of the world consisted of homosexuals. They are a tiny minority in humanity. And we should recognize their suffering, their rights, and that's it.

Do you think that a Eucharistic hospitality is possible between Protestants and Catholics?

I think this grew, very justly so, out of the desire for unity. And I think the question of the place of the Eucharist will be certainly discussed at the papal synod. We have some approaches or visions that are different from official Latin theology, but I hope that when we do get to this, in October, we will be able to present our view. I think

that the desire for unity is legitimate. There are simply conditions to attached to it. For instance we consider that one should confess and prepare oneself before going to communion. We spoke about this before the German Kirchentag in a plenary session of the Pontifical Commission for Promoting the Unity of Christians. This is a very pressing question.

POSTSCRIPT

A Few Words of Love **by Antoine Arjakovsky**

In the middle of the conversation with the cardinal, the tape recorder suddenly stops. The cardinal does not notice anything and continues talking. Despairingly, I look at the machine, which confirms that the battery is dead. The cardinal speaks on, and involuntarily I become a live recording machine, for the moment that it takes to replace the battery. The cardinal (does he know?) chooses this moment to confess. Sometimes he feels sad about the fact that people in Ukraine do not share the same culture as he, that they did not use to listen to the same hits on the radio...

No mistake, he said “hits.” For a moment, I think about the Beatles, Adriano Celentano, all those who weren’t heard in Ukraine in the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, and all those you do not spontaneously think about during a conversation with a cardinal. Involuntarily, I recall a song. “These Few Words of Love” by the French singer Michel Berger, a song of limitless tenderness. Why? I do not know. All of this happened in a few seconds.

After the battery was replaced, the conversation continued normally. But it is precisely this moment off record that came to my mind when I was writing this postscript. Maybe because Lubomyr Husar has something very human about him, an enormous desire to introduce the best things of the modern world into the Church, as well as the desire to share his own recollections with his brothers in Christ, thus risking creating a somewhat unexpected image of himself, different from the one we are used to.

I reread some of his sermons, which strengthen me in this impression. Father Borys Gudziak once told me, “For us, he is above all a pastor,” and his personal secretary Iryna Holota told me that the cardinal himself dictated or wrote with his own hand 98 per cent of the texts that bear his signature. When on March 29, 2001 the pope appointed him cardinal, he addressed his people who came to greet him with

the following words: “Cardinals are often considered to be the princes of the Church. For me, this is not the best title. But let us especially remind ourselves what kingdom the cardinals are princes of. It is the kingdom mentioned by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. There heavenly, not worldly, forces are active.”

Holodomor to Orange Revolution

This does not mean that he can be contained in benevolent and pious words, removed from the flesh of this world. Ukraine’s previous governments, formed in the eight years between 1996 and 2004 by President Leonid Kuchma, knew this well. A hundred times they wanted to hear words of support from the person considered, according to all polls, Ukraine’s most popular spiritual figure. A hundred times and one, long before the Orange Revolution, Lubomyr Husar exposed these corrupt undemocratic governments. On November 23, 2004, for instance, he sent an open letter to then-Prime Minister [and subsequent pro-government presidential candidate] Viktor Yanukovych.

The prime minister was then president of the organizing committee for the seventieth anniversary of the terrible *Holodomor*, the famine of 1933, which—today we can say this with certainty—was engineered by the Soviet regime. The year the cardinal was born, this frightful famine took the lives of more than seven million Ukrainians, especially in eastern Ukraine. Everything was done during a very humble commemoration ceremony on Saturday, November 22, visited only by a few national deputies and church hierarchs, to downplay the drama. The indignant cardinal “with a wounded heart” wrote to the head of government the next day, saying that nothing had been done to show that Ukraine constitutes a single body, a single nation in the face of this tragedy. “Who is responsible for this chaos?” he asked. The answer was not long in waiting: “The organizers, who failed to understand the significance and meaning of the event.”

At the same time, he had always seen the connection between the attempts of the Soviet regime to crush the Ukrainian nation by the *Holodomor* and the repeated humiliations carried out by the Ukrainian authorities since the achievement of independence in 1991. They were still permeated by the totalitarian culture according to which the people serve the state, not the other way around. Leonid Kuchma even

went so far as to publicly state to Russian President Vladimir Putin that Ukraine, as opposed to Russia, did not exist as a nation. The nation, heirs to Orthodox poet Taras Shevchenko and Greek-Catholic Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, stunned, did not stir. But from that moment, the spring, depressed to the point of breaking, was ready to hit back. On November 22, 2004, the exposure of massive electoral fraud called Ukrainians to the streets, with a spite for their rulers that had lasted for years—perhaps centuries.

In that very month of November 2004, Lubomyr Husar's friend Jean-Marie Lustiger served the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom at Notre Dame de Paris, and before a small group of Parisians said strong words of solidarity concerning the victims of this unsung famine. In the following month, some time after the Orange Revolution, Cardinal Husar expressed his gratitude for this gesture in a letter. Having confirmed the intuitive utterance of the Bishop of Paris that this famine cannot be senseless and calls upon the duty of historical truth, hope and forgiveness, Cardinal Husar established a mysterious connection between the revolutionaries of winter 2004 and the victims of the Holodomor of 1933:

“It is with great emotion and gratitude that I read your deep sermon, full of hope, about the terrible famine that plundered Ukraine in 1932–33. This unity we feel through your words of this ‘annihilation coming out of oblivion’ and the Liturgy served at Notre Dame de Paris already serves as proof of the everlasting remembrance of God, for which we ask at our memorial services for the souls of the deceased. I asked that this text and this prayer of our brothers from Paris be posted on the website of the Ukrainian Catholic University, in French and Ukrainian.

“Yes, truly, to be faithful to the truth is to create truth. To accept everlasting life is to participate in the kingdom. To ask forgiveness is to learn to forgive better. Ukrainians, hearkening to their ancestors in faith, have been fighting in these past weeks for truth, for a clear horizon and national unity.

“Having learnt that the Church of France has sent a message of solidarity with the Christians of Ukraine, I ask you also to sincerely thank, in the name of all Greek-Catholic believers, our Christian brothers of France for their prayers.”

Papal visit to Kyiv

Having returned from Kyiv's Independence Square, the students and staff of the Ukrainian Catholic University told me of another important moment that later made them brave the cold and risk their lives, challenging the Ukrainian state for three weeks: Pope John Paul II's visit to Ukraine in June 2001.

Despite the fact that some Orthodox faithful in Russia and in the West spoke of this visit as "a serious mistake," here, on the spot, Ukrainians felt that this man, dressed in white, stooped and with a kindly look in his eyes, who kept asking forgiveness, gathered them together as had no other person since independence was proclaimed in 1991. All polls show, in fact, that most of the population were well-disposed towards this visit. This means that most Orthodox Ukrainians were glad to see the outstretched hand of the Bishop of Rome.

Petro Didula, a Greek-Catholic, editor-in-chief of the magazine "The Patriarchate", and the father of five children, told me that back then, during Pope John Paul II's visit, that he felt very deeply that the Ukrainian nation would withstand all internal and external forces trying to separate it. On the morning of November 22, 2004, when he and two friends were returning to Lviv from Odesa, where they had been observers in the second round of the presidential election, he heard the first news of fraud on independent radio. After a few minutes of silence, without counseling each other, and without hearing a single commanding word, the three friends decided to go to Kyiv's Independence Square...

"A Man of Peace"

Such were the words of Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, archbishop of Lyon, during his meeting with Cardinal Husar in November 2003, at a ceremony reconciling Russian, Ukrainian and Polish memory at the Lychakiv cemetery in Lviv. On November 1, to honor the feast of all saints and the anniversary of Metropolitan Sheptytsky's death, the Ukrainian Catholic University organized at the Lychakiv Cemetery in Lviv a ceremony commemorating the French, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian soldiers who died in the region at the end of World War I.

The initiative for this ceremony was voiced in June 2002, when a debate that suddenly seized the Polish and the Ukrainian people intensified. Everything began in March 2002, with renovation work on the Polish part of the cemetery. The municipal authorities of Lviv wanted to delete an old inscription from the times of the Polish occupation of Galicia (1920–1939), which commemorated the Polish soldiers who “died heroically for their homeland.” The government of independent Ukraine noted to the Polish consul that one can only die “heroically” for one’s own, not somebody else’s, land. The Polish media, however, used the incident to remember painful wounds, including the massacres of Volhynia in 1943, which even today stand in the way of Polish-Ukrainian relations to such an extent that Polish President Aleksandr Kwasniewski cancelled his long-planned visit to Ukraine in June.

At this moment, following an initiative by Taras Vozniak, editor-in-chief of *YI* magazine and Myroslav Marynovych, vice-rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University, and both cardinals of Lviv—Lubomyr Husar (ethnically Ukrainian) and Marian Jaworski (a Roman Catholic who was born in Poland)—decided to organise a common prayer ceremony at the graves of the fallen soldiers. The debate stopped at once. Both presidents, Kuchma and Kwasniewski, agreed on a common inscription of repentance and friendship to be engraved by the cemetery’s gate. On November 1, 2002, during the first commemoration ceremony, everything took place in a peaceful manner.

A year later, when this event was repeated, Patriarch Lubomyr told Cardinal Barbarin, “You will see that in four or five years people will forget why their ancestors fought against each other.” At a time when the Ukrainian media were expressing fears of a conflict with Russia over a dam on the Tuzla sandbank that the Russians had constructed in the Strait of Kerch, no better symbol could be imagined to illustrate the effectiveness of Christians coming together against war. On June 3, 2004, we see the tireless cardinal in Legnica, Poland, this time next to Cardinal Glemp, holding a service of forgiveness and reconciliation between the two nations, the Polish and the Ukrainian, in the presence of 200,000 young people.

A man of peace, indeed. For precisely this peace that Christ gave his disciples is necessary to address, as Patriarch Lubomyr did, Patriarch Aleksii II of the Orthodox Church “of Moscow and all Rus.” Cardinal

Husar, who reads Russian, never misses an opportunity to send his respects to Aleksii's representative in Kyiv, Metropolitan Volodymyr (Sabodan), head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—Moscow Patriarchate, with whom he has met many times. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic patriarch knows the latter's spiritual significance and values him as theologian and ecclesiologist. The metropolitan does not have to be reminded that Ukraine is a multiconfessional state, and the patriarch does not need to ask his permission to establish an exarchate, as he did in Odesa or Donetsk. Moreover, Cardinal Husar knows that, despite what was written in the Western media, most of Metropolitan Volodymyr's Orthodox parishes are not found in the Donbas (Eastern Ukraine), a region more and more under the influence of secularization, but in Volhynia (Western Ukraine), a region that on December 26, 2004 voted for Viktor Yushchenko!

He is aware, as well, that despite all the attempts of the Ukrainian bishops under Patriarch Aleksii II, the Orthodox Christians of Ukraine,—as Konstiantyn Sigov, director of the Spirit and Letter Publishing House and professor of the Kyiv Mohyla Academy, has written,—want a reconciled Church, capable of being itself, at once Ukrainian, independent, and open to Moscow, Rome and Constantinople. Why so much distrust, then? Because, as the cardinal wrote in the newspaper “The Day” of April 25, 2003, a panicky fear of opening to the world reigns among the Orthodox connected with Moscow. We can help them overcome that fear, he continues, because we know from experience that “the real problem is the fact that the West does not understand the East, and vice versa.”

That is why, when on November 26, 2002, Lubomyr Husar heard on the radio that Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow was planning a trip to Ukraine, he wrote him an open letter, inviting him to come to Lviv to meet with him. However, Patriarch Aleksii has never once, in the eleven years since the collapse of the Communist regime, regretted or publicly recognized that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was forcefully “unified” with the Moscow Patriarchate by the Soviet regime, in a pseudo-council in Lviv in 1946, with the forced participation of the Moscow Patriarchate. Still, Patriarch Lubomyr wrote that “the road will be long, but the time has come to start walking that road together.”

From the depths of modernity, the arrival of the vertical era

To bring “the best of the modern world” into the Church, listening to his people dispersed all over the world, Lubomyr Husar travels extensively, despite problems with eyesight. In 2003 alone, *Blahovisnyk* [Bringer of the Good News], the official paper of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, mentioned numerous trips to Poland, Italy, Canada, Germany, and the United States, apart from frequent visits to various regions of Ukraine. Everywhere, he is moved by the attention of the Ukrainian community. In his speeches, he never fails to thank, in addition to the local authorities and the organizational committees, “the little children who brought me flowers.”

When asked about the suffering of the world, as for instance, the terrible tsunami of December 2004 that took the lives of over 150,000 people in a few seconds, the cardinal says, along with Professor Adolphe Gesché of the University of Leuven, that the role of the Church is not to be a judge of meaning.

The suffering and the absurdity only prove what the Church has been saying for two thousand years, that is, that our world, already saved, is still under the influence of decadent forces. God cannot intend evil, wrote Metropolitan Sheptytsky, explicitly referring to the Epistle of James. Instead, in God life everlasting is promised to all who wish it. And those who have no strength left but keep faith, hope and love—especially love—will be comforted!

But the modern world we live in is not to be identified with the Kingdom of God, the cardinal stresses. It is no longer possible to sing praises to modernity in a country that has experienced the tragedy of Chernobyl. And the cardinal uses every opportunity to awaken the postmodern consciousness of his fellow citizens. On the Feast of the Transfiguration, the day when, in the Byzantine tradition, the fruits of the earth that “bring us closer to God” are blessed, he turns to his faithful with the following words: “Open your eyes to the destruction of the forests of Transcarpathia! Do you understand that our world is at risk of losing the seasons of the year it had, because of climatic change? Do you understand your responsibility for this silent tragedy, in which you participate every time you buy a Christmas tree?”

When in June 2002, a plane crashed on dozens of children who came to see a military air show in a suburb of Lviv, because not a

single most elementary safety precaution had been made, he published a pastoral letter, a cry of sorts, calling upon the Ukrainian people to demand that the government respect the dignity of the human person in everything.

Lubomyr Husar exposes also the modern freedom that is understood as rational choice, which is an illusion. Rather than understand that they are created, rather than strive towards their heavenly form, the source of true human freedom, because it is the creator and source of independence, modern people fool themselves. They imagine themselves to be heroes who have emerged from the abyss of the evolution of the species thanks to their *cogito*, and only fall into various harmful dependencies, from alcohol to drugs, via the “district demagogue.”

In another text of June 17, 2001, the cardinal asks himself, “Will the individual of the twenty-first century agree to turn to God as Father with humility and trust?” Not as a person of the Enlightenment, to “a thing in itself” or a supreme Being, but as a little child, who turns to his or her father or mother. “Father, Mother, help me ... I am in pain.” However, this is a necessary condition for again finding the vertical temporality, the temporality of Jacob’s ladder and the monks of the desert.

A post-confessional man

Lubomyr Husar condemns the two faces of confessionalism which most Christians still live with today—minimalism and doctrinal relativism on the one hand, and traditionalistic rigorism and a one-sided identity on the other. This is possibly the most precious gift of the Church he leads. It is precisely because of that gift as well, received through baptism, that this Church has suffered so much, torn apart between the West and the East. In the end, as Husar told Dana Romanets of the newspaper *Ukrayina Moloda* (Young Ukraine) on April 4, 2003, the trap of confessionalism, of seeking identity for the modern person, lies in asking oneself who one is, “rather than asking [him or her]self what it is that God is calling us to.”

That is why today Lubomyr Husar openly states that every Christian should unite these apparently contradictory forces, the humble faithfulness of Peter, the creative mind of Paul, and the mystical vision of John. The Church of Christ, he thinks, should also remain

open to our Muslim brothers, including the Crimean Tatars. And to the Jewish people, whom he speaks for at every opportunity, as he did after an explosion set off by terrorists at the Brodsky Synagogue in Kyiv on April 13, 2002. For him, the Church is the heart of the world; that is why it is “multidirectional.” In this, he agrees with the idea of the Lutheran theologian Konrad Reiser, former secretary general of the World Council of Churches, who says that the Church is being torn apart between the poles of unity, universality, apostolicity and holiness.

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has received this communion with the Catholic Church because of its faithfulness to the decisions of the Council of Florence, which, unlike other Orthodox churches, it has never denied. It is this wish throughout its history to be together with Rome and Constantinople that gives this Church a special role in the contemporary ecumenical movement. The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, because of its self-identification with Orthodoxy, and its constantly-affirmed communion with Rome, is living proof of the necessary distinction between the conceptual definition of Orthodoxy and the mystical, non-confessional approach in every Church of Christ, through opening up.

The patriarch’s very simple message is as follows: Unity has been given by God. Christians should place it at the top of their hierarchy of truths. Therefore, it must be experienced, even if disagreements between Christians stand in the way of perfect communion, clear thinking and absolute trust. Only common participation in the same chalice and the invocation of the Holy Spirit shall make these fruits of the kingdom come and already be present, visible.

Therefore, should Christians acknowledge Cardinal Husar, major archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, as patriarch of the Greek-Catholic Church? Yes, obviously. To say the opposite would mean, as Father Mykhailo Dymyd, director of the Institute of Canon Law in Lviv, has written, to oppose the Second Vatican Council, which opened the way for recognizing particular Churches *sui iuris*. But it would also mean to discard the truest Orthodox ecclesiology, the ecclesiology of the eucharistic communion of sister Churches, defended once by Metropolitan Nicodemus (Rotov) and currently by Metropolitan John (Zizioulas).

Can they recognize him as patriarch of the Church of Kyiv already today? This is a much more complex question. The patriarch himself intends that the transfer of his patriarchal residence to Kyiv should be considered as an outstretched hand, rather than as an attempt to seize the heritage shared by other Orthodox Churches.

That is why Lubomyr Husar blessed the creation of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies at the Ukrainian Catholic University. One of the goals of the university is to create an interconfessional academic community, whose task it will be to propose ways for the various Christian Churches in Ukraine which consider themselves heirs to the Kyivan Church, united from the tenth to the sixteenth century, to come closer. It is important, he repeats, to understand that the status of patriarchate is not in itself the completion. More than the organization of an ecclesiological body which has become historically natural in the East, it is a “spiritual condition” which tries to support the Church’s calling, “the salvation of people through serving God and neighbor.”

Lubomyr Husar was asked to whom the Cathedral of St. Sophia should belong. St. Sophia is a pearl constructed by Prince Yaroslav the Wise in the eleventh century and a national treasure of the Ukrainians, which was closed to spiritual use in the Soviet era. He answered that it should belong to the head of the reconciled Church of Kyiv. And he added that this could be a representative of an Orthodox Church that represents the majority. On April 17, 2002, in answering the same question, he expressed the supposition that, pending the day of reconciliation, St. Sophia could be entrusted to different Christian Churches in turns, according to a plan established on the basis of equality, making sure that the cathedral is used for special occasions. Cardinal Husar is overseeing the construction of a new cathedral on the banks of the Dnipro River to safeguard the holy place [St. Sophia] from any attempts at seizure and to open the horizon of reconciliation.

A brief historical digression

This was the dream of the “Orthodox” Metropolitan Peter Mohyla and the “Uniate” Metropolitan Joseph Rutskyi of Kyiv, shattered in Rome in 1629. Both were trying to establish a single patriarchate in Kyiv. However, a wave of confessionalism and exclusivism on the one hand, and the dismemberment of Ukraine between the Russian and

the Austrian empires on the other hand, stood in the way of continued discussion of this issue. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the rebirth of Orthodox thought in the confessional sense of the term, and the comprehension of the sins of the Russian Church after the Bolshevik Revolution, have promoted a new definition of what the Church is by the best Orthodox theologians. The Church was seen not only as a Church faithful to the seven Ecumenical Councils, but more deeply, as “life with Christ and in Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

The legacy of the Council of Florence of 1438–1439, of the union declared despite all differences and disagreements, was interpreted more positively by prominent Orthodox thinkers such as Father Sergei Bulgakov, founder of the Institute of St. Serge in Paris; Olivier Clément, a professor at the same institute; and John Erickson, dean of St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Seminary near New York. Many prominent figures of the Orthodox world, such as Father Lev Gillet and Father Sergei Hackel, publicly spoke of their solidarity with the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in the hard times of Soviet persecution.

The “anti-Uniate” argumentation widespread in the Orthodox world in the era of the Tsarist Russian Empire showed cracks. The idea according to which it was impossible to combine the Orthodox faith and communion with Rome disappeared, as the Orthodox understood two things. First, that Greek-Catholics understand their connection with Rome not as dependence but as communion. Second, that the rebirth of the Greek-Catholic Church in the twentieth century has been accompanied by a desire to return the true Orthodox legacy where excessive Romanization had taken place.

As for the argument of canonical territory voiced by some Moscow Patriarchate theologians who are not scrupulous with regard to history, it has never been taken seriously. In reality, it is commonly known that the Kyivan Church throughout its history, from the emergence of the Church of Kyiv to the seventeenth century, was subordinated not to the bishop of Moscow but to the patriarch of Constantinople!

It is this sympathy for the Catholic Churches of the Byzantine rite that made the 1993 Balamand Agreements between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches possible. The agreements spoke of two things. They condemned Uniatism, understood as a form of proselytism. And they acknowledged these Churches’ right to exist.

However, three factors instantly put a stop to the movement of bringing the Churches closer: the ambiguity of the agreement, signed without the presence of the Greek-Catholics, who were not invited, but whom the agreement concerned above all; the consequential lack of repentance on both sides for all the persecutions that had been committed; and finally, the issue of returning church buildings to Churches that had been prohibited in the Soviet period.

The ambiguity lay in the fact that the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church had never considered itself a proselyte. That is why the joy of recognition for this Church will be complete only when its true calling is recognized, which is to affirm, whether it is convenient or not, that unity between Christians is possible in spite of all differences. To recognize the identity of the Greek-Catholic Churches means to recognize that unity not only is possible, but has existed for centuries, despite the divisions that some sees have considered irrevocable, and that today it brings abundant fruits, thanks to its martyrs.

Mutual repentance will come when this understanding is achieved. The problem of the transfer of church buildings will no longer be a problem, since Greek-Catholic Churches shall no longer be seen as a threat to Orthodox or Catholic identity. As far back as January 17, 2003, Cardinal Lubomyr Husar and Lviv's Roman Catholic Cardinal Marian Jaworski signed an agreement that put an end to the tensions that had arisen between them in the period of independence with regard to the transfer to the Greek-Catholic Church of buildings that had previously, in the years of the Polish occupation, belonged to the Roman Catholic Church.

Today, top-ranking bishops of the Orthodox Church, such as Archbishop Antony (Scherba) of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the United States of America, and Bishop Kallistos Ware of the Orthodox Church of England, both belonging to the Constantinople Patriarchate, have expressed friendship toward the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Many friends of this and other Eastern Churches can be found outside of the Constantinople Patriarchate, for instance in Romania and in the Patriarchate of Antioch. In Paris, the Joint Commission for Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue, which has been open to Bishop Michael Hrynchyshyn, Ukrainian Greek-Catholic exarch in Western Europe, published its findings in February 2004, thanks to Michel Stavrou and Rev. Hervé Legrand. The time of confessionalism,

proselytism and double-talk is coming to an end, the French theologians write. The time has come to frankly rebuild our common past, to ask each other's forgiveness wherever there are wounds, to recognize each other as we are, and to build the future together and freely.

For spiritual ecumenism

Cardinal Husar's rootedness in the Eastern tradition does not prevent him from opposing the decisions of the powerful in the name of the law of the Beatitudes, as many Orthodox in the world have done during the second war in Iraq. When in March 2003, because of allegations of hidden weapons of mass destruction, the US-led coalition occupied the country with the participation of Ukrainian troops, he resolutely condemned the Ukrainians' participation. He thinks the problem of terrorism cannot be resolved by bombs and cruelty. He bemoans the "decay of moral values" and the "atmosphere of lawlessness" that was used to justify it.

But in the purest Eastern spiritual tradition, he refuses to judge anybody and speaks of collective responsibility. That is why he calls all the faithful to pray, fast, ask forgiveness of the Lord, and feel responsible for the conflict "in their hearts." Well aware that his Church has for many centuries suffered Romanization, he knows the best of the Eastern tradition, like a person who has lost an arm. Ardently, despite all suspicions of the Curia's betrayal, and fears of a new betrayal by the Vatican, he seeks the prayer of the monks of the Kyivan Monastery of the Caves and the spirituality of the beggars for Christ. Yes, beggars for Christ, those who are not afraid of the human eye, because they know they live in the sight of the Lord.

However, his unshaken belief in the exceptional role of the pope as an evident witness of unity, when he acts in the name of the Church as a servant of the servants of God, does not prevent Lubomyr Husar from sharply criticizing the activities of the Roman Curia. On October 18, 2002, at a world conference in Warsaw, he said, "I state that we lack courage if we do not proclaim the following truth: We must distinguish between the pope and the Curia. Individually they are good people, and I know many of them personally. However, a bureaucracy tends to assign excessive importance to itself." The distance he maintains from political passions in Ukraine allows him to teach

Ukrainians to distinguish between exclusive chauvinism and what he calls “Christian patriotism.”

Lubomyr Husar is of the opinion that a patriarch, as well as the pope of Rome, has power if he stands up to serve unity and the poorest. Only on these conditions will he be able to release the energy. As an example, we might think of the case of Zenia Kushpeta, a Canadian of Ukrainian descent, friend to Jean Vanier and his two adherents in Ukraine, Borys Gudziak and Jeffrey Wills. Thanks to Cardinal Husar’s blessing, that is, to his prayer and his trust, in only a few years Zenia Kushpeta has succeeded in establishing more than twenty Faith and Light communities in Ukraine and a centre in Lviv for children with cerebral palsy.

Finally, his adherence to the tradition of the Church does not remove him from the world of the Reformation, but on the contrary brings him closer to all those who want to keep the living tradition open. He participates in numerous ecumenical gatherings of the Council of European Episcopal Conferences. On his seventieth birthday celebration, he invited the orphans of Lviv to join his table.

The patriarch frequently recalls the words Metropolitan Sheptytsky said in 1915, at the peak of World War I: “We are not divided into Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants and Anglicans. We are divided into those who want unity and those who do not want it.” And Lubomyr Husar adds: “Today the problem is in knowing whether it is unity we want, or whether we want the faithful of another Church joined to us, which is something completely different.”

Those in Rome or Moscow who seemingly want to turn the vision of the Church’s two lungs, that Europe breathes with both West and East, into a new ecclesiological Yalta, are reminded by Lubomyr Husar that the very same Church has only one heart. His dream is that every Christian, wherever he or she may live, will remain his or herself; that all will recognize the one evident centre of unity, the bishop of Rome; and that that person will serve all Churches in maintaining unity, concord, and peace.

This vision should not be considered a peace treaty or an architectural design. We are dealing with an eschatological vision that can only be experienced, today, with Him who is the way, the truth and the life. Of course, limits shall have to be provided, a balance of power

considered, everyone reassured. But that is not the most important thing. When at the end of the conversation I ask him a question on the prospects for the ecumenical movement, the Studite monk looks me in the eyes and asks, “Do you think that when a man and a woman decide to get married the thought of voicing conditions to each other enters their minds? Ecumenism is not a pact, but an act, a gesture of love, which bears witness to the limitless love of God. As long as that is remembered, it is enough to open our eyes. The Church is one wherever people accept this exceptional gift of unity in the glory of God.”

Spiritual. That is the word I was looking for. Lubomyr Husar is a spiritual person who leads us today again into the insane project of personalistic democracy, into the intense rhythm of pacified modernity, into the postconfessional era of Christianity. With a few words of love...

Paris—Lviv, January 5, 2005

**TEXTS BY
CARDINAL HUSAR**

The Ecumenical Mission of the Eastern Catholic Churches in the Vision of Metropolitan Sheptytsky († 1944)

The year 1907—“The times are coming when undoubtedly we will be called upon for that most important although difficult labour for the union of Eastern Churches. That work is for us a true ideal, it corresponds to our innermost desires. According to the opinion held generally by our people the clergy of our Province answering the call of Divine Providence can and should render the Universal Church, the Bride of Christ, valuable service in this respect.”¹

These words were directed by Andrei Sheptytsky to the 2,300 priests of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Galicia,² the ecclesiastical province of which he was the metropolitan. In view of the ever-recurring discussion³ of the role of the Eastern Catholic Churches in the ecumenical endeavour it is of interest to learn how one of those Churches, the Ukrainian Particular Church, and more specifically her prominent head, renowned in Union-minded circles, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky (1865–1944) looked upon the ecumenical mission of the Eastern Churches, those Churches which became separate entities due to their Union with the Roman Apostolic See in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁴

¹ *Зближаються часи* [“The Times Are Coming”], Pastoral Letter to the Clergy of the Province of Galicia, dated November 26, 1907. (Zhovkva: Basilian Press, 1908) p. 3. All translations from Ukrainian texts are by the author.

² Province in western Ukraine. Most of the inhabitants of Galicia are Catholics.

³ E.g., “Die katholischen Ostkirchen und die orthodoxe Kirche” (Ein Gespräch mit dem Metropolitan Chrysostomos [von Myra] and a reply to the same, “Kommentar” of Archbishop Elias Zoghby, in *Ut omnes unum*, (Paderborn: Wienfreundbund) November-December 1972, pp. 186–93.

⁴ Eastern Catholic Churches which entered into communion with the Roman Apostolic See in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries are generally known as “uniate” Churches. The term itself derives from the Polish word “unia” for Union and has become a technical term, but also a term of derision and as such is to be avoided. We use it here as a convenient term to describe a specific reality.

The call of Metropolitan Sheptytsky to the priests was contained in a pastoral letter issued on November 26, 1907, the fifteen-hundredth anniversary of the death of St. John Chrysostom. Its opening paragraph we have already quoted above. A little further on the Metropolitan writes:

Conscious of my duty, I have not neglected to do all in my power, and I do not desist now from doing all I can, to bring closer the moment when our prayers will be fulfilled and to prepare for that moment all necessary spiritual and apostolic resources. The time has come, Reverend Fathers, when I must ask for your assistance.⁵

What had Sheptytsky done by 1907 to justify his bold claim? In 1901 he became Archbishop of Lviv, an archeparchy counting 1,335,890 faithful in 754 parishes, and Metropolitan of Halych, the largest province of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, counting ca. 3,000,000 souls. With these titles, which reach back almost a thousand years, he became the *de facto* head of the entire Ukrainian Catholic Church. Within the first six years (1901–1907) he had revived the authentic forms of ancient Eastern monasticism by establishing monasteries (in 1904) with strict observance according to the rule of St. Theodore Studite;⁶ had sought, unsuccessfully, to settle Catholic farmers in predominantly Orthodox Belarus (also in 1904) with the purpose of offering a living proof that one can be both Catholic and Oriental;⁷ was the *spiritus movens* in the organization of Union congresses in Velehrad, of which the first congress with 69 participants convened in August 1907, to be followed by evermore numerous gatherings in 1909, 1911, 1924, 1927, 1932 and 1936;⁸ and had taken the

⁵ *Зближаються часи* [“The Times Are Coming”], Pastoral Letter to the Clergy of the Province of Galicia, dated November 26, 1907. (Zhovkva: Basilian Press, 1908), p. 4.

⁶ Sheptytsky, Clement “Митрополит Андрей і оновлення східної чернечої традиції” [“Metropolitan Andrei and the Renewal of the Eastern Monastic Tradition”], *Богословія* 4 (1926/1–2) 150–163. Clement Sheptytsky was a younger brother of the Metropolitan, who himself became a Studite monk.

⁷ Luckevich, A., “Мітрапаліт Шэпціцкі і беларускі рух” [“Metropolitan Sheptytsky and the Belarusian Movement”], *Богословія* (1926) 45–48; Soloduch, Adam, “Митрополит А. Шептицький і уніоністичні змагання та Білій Руси” [“Metropolitan A. Sheptytsky and Unionistic Efforts in Belarus”], *ibid.*, pp. 88–93. Both articles are by Belarusian authors.

⁸ *Acta conventus Velehradensis*, I. Prague: 1908; II. Prague: 1910; III. Prague: 1912; IV. Olomucii: 1925; V. Olomucii: 1927; VI. Olomucii: 1933; VII. Olomucii: 1937.

first steps to establish—with the full though secret backing of Pope Pius X—the Russian Catholic Church.⁹ In 1907 he undertook an incognito journey into the Russian Empire to learn at first hand the religious and ecclesiastical situation there.¹⁰ Those first attempts exude a certain charismatic as well as romantic flavor and in some respects would not meet the approval of present-day ecumenists. We must, however, remember that the year was 1907, when not only the word “ecumenism” but the very concept was not the general possession of Catholic (and non-Catholic) Christians.

In his pastoral letter of 1907 “The Times are Coming” Sheptytsky calls upon his priests to prepare themselves for the great task by intensive prayer and to instruct the laity to further the good cause by their prayers. The second means to be put into use at this early stage of preparation is to engage in scholarly work of the highest quality. For the purposes of this article it will suffice to analyse more closely only the already quoted opening words.

We are struck by the clear consciousness of Metropolitan Sheptytsky of the ecumenical mission of his Church. Work for the Union of Churches is not merely a personal enterprise, a hobby; it is not an esoteric undertaking reserved for a chosen few. It is the cause that must occupy the entire Church of Christ. Sheptytsky appeals to his priests in his function as the bishop of those who share with him the pastoral care of the flock. This clear consciousness grows out of several factors. The union of all particular Churches, both Eastern and Western, in the one Church of Christ is, in the words of Sheptytsky, “our innermost desire.” It is also, as we read a few lines further, “the object of our prayers.”

In his pastoral letter “The Times are Coming,” Sheptytsky does not elaborate that such a desire and the corresponding prayers arise from a profound comprehension of the nature of the Church. We find an explicit statement on this subject in a document written three and a half decades later, the “Decree on Unity” prepared by the Metropolitan for the Sobor (synod) of the Archeparchy of Lviv in 1943. There we read:

⁹ Sheptytsky, A., “Das Russische Katholische Exarchat”, in Berg, Ludwig (ed.) *Ex Oriente* (Mainz.; Matthias-Grünwald Verlag, 1927), pp. 78–89.

¹⁰ Korolevskij, Cyrille, *Metropolitane Andrej Szeptyckij* (Rome: Opera Theologicae Societatis Scientificaе Ucrainorum, 1964), pp. 192–93.

From the texts (of the Scriptures) already cited and many others also to be found in the Sacred Scriptures it is clear as the sunlight itself that unity among Christians is their unity with Christ and as such the most sacred aspect in the life of their souls: the source of their holiness, the measure of their reward, the only foundation of their hopes. On the contrary, anything that separates is the greatest danger in Christian life because it leads to an alienation from Christ. As there is no greater misfortune for a Christian than to be separated from Christ, so there is no greater danger than that something which divides him from his fellow man should stand in his way to Christ.¹¹

Position between East and West

The external stimulus for the task of Union is the situation of the Ukrainian Church on the borderline between the East and the West. In this case it is to be taken in the strict geographic and cultural sense, although in a certain sense each “uniate” Church can be considered a borderland on which East and West encounter each other. Being familiar with both sides makes it possible for Eastern-rite Catholics to interpret the West to the East and vice-versa. The advantages of such an ability are obvious when one contemplates a rapprochement of two partners who have lived in almost complete estrangement from each other for many centuries. At the inauguration of the Theological Academy in Lviv on October 6, 1929, the Metropolitan said:

Such a task (to work for the Union) is imposed on us first of all by the situation of our Church and of our land on the borderline between the western and the eastern worlds. That fact makes us into a sort of mediator between the two. We ought to make it possible for the East to learn the theology of the Western Church and to the West, that of the East. This office of mediator, when rightly executed, can have tremendous value for those two different cultures which in our land, in our institutions and in our souls come together and coalesce into one.¹²

¹¹ *Письма-послання Митрополита Андрія Шептицького з часів німецької окупації* [“Letters and Pastorals of Metropolitan Andrej Sheptytsky from the Period of German Occupation”] (Yorkton, Sask.: Bibliotheca Logos, vol. XXX, 1969), pp. 408–13. Quotation is from p. 413. Many documents used in this article are found in this book. We refer to it as *Logos XXX*.

¹² The full text in Ukrainian is found in *Греко-Католицька Богословська Академія у Львові в першім трьохлітті свого існування (1928–31)* [“Greek-Catholic Theological Academy in the First Three Years of Its Existence (1928–31)”]. (Lviv: Sumptibus Academiae, 1932), pp. 14–16. Our quotation is from p. 12.

The history of Eastern Europe demonstrates that such a position in between is a mixed blessing, especially when the neighbouring countries and peoples who represent diverse mentalities and spiritualities also have definite political ambitions. In the case of Ukraine the neighbours are Catholic Latin-rite Poland and Orthodox Eastern-rite Russia. Sheptytsky makes no secret of the fact that the pastoral concern for the continued existence of his Church plays an important part in his ecumenical thinking. On the one hand, as he states in his pastoral of 1907 “The Times are Coming,” the conflict between the East and the West makes the position of the third party, which happens to be situated between those two, well-nigh intolerable. From the ten eparchies and twelve million faithful at the turn of the eighteenth century, the Ukrainian Catholic Church has dwindled to three eparchies and roughly five million faithful in the relatively short period of two centuries.¹³ Such a rapid physical diminution and an increasing difficulty in upholding proper spiritual values and traditions make one anxious for the future of the Church.

On the other hand, the Ukrainian Church, having borne all the evil effects of disunion, keenly appreciates the blessings of unity and harmony among Christians. This is very pointedly stated in Sheptytsky’s decree “Work for the Union of Churches” promulgated at the Archeparchial Sobor in Lviv in 1940:

The work for the Union of Churches, we must consider as particularly commended to us by Divine Providence. First of all, because a large part of our people belongs to the Orthodox Church¹⁴ and carries all the consequences of the fatal split which rent all Churches of the East from the Universal Church.¹⁵ Since in Western Ukraine we are the only part of the Ukrainian people who have preserved the universal faith and the Byzantine-Slav rite, we more than other Slavs and Catholics can do something for the cause. If we can do it, we are obliged to do it—fraternal charity imposes that duty on us. As we are

¹³ *Зближаються часи* [“The Times Are Coming”], Pastoral Letter to the Clergy of the Province of Galicia, dated November 26, 1907. (Zhovkva: Basilian Press, 1908), p. 3.

¹⁴ The ratio of Orthodox to Catholics among Ukrainians was 8: 1. Of about 45 million Ukrainians, 40 million were Orthodox.

¹⁵ Sheptytsky preferably uses the term “universal” to describe the Catholic Church. The reasons for this will be explained further on in the body of the article.

we obliged, then we are also called, and as such we can count upon that help from God which is necessary for that most important and certainly not easy task. We can recognize our vocation and our duty from that tragic circumstance that maybe no nation in the world has suffered as much from that lethal disunity as has our own.¹⁶

Theoretical considerations about the nature of unity in the Church of Christ, and practical concern about the existence and well-being of the Church entrusted to him, combined to make Sheptytsky realise that something must be done to re-establish the lost unity between East and West.

The experience of living in Union with Rome

The “uniate” Churches and among them numerically the largest—the Ukrainian Catholic Church—have one asset which the Orthodox cannot claim and the Latins cannot appreciate, namely, they have the experience of living in Union with the Roman See. In the case of Ukrainians that experience was already over three centuries old when Sheptytsky became metropolitan of Halych in 1901. The formal act of the Union had been signed and ratified in 1596. How had the Union turned out? Was it a success or a failure? What had it accomplished? How did the Orthodox and the Latins react to it over the years? We shall try to answer these questions from the writings of Sheptytsky.

Before we proceed to quote pertinent sections from Sheptytsky’s writings, it is well for us to keep in mind that here we are approaching the very heart of the matter. The fundamental question which is asked in the Orthodox East is this: is it possible to be Catholic and Eastern at the same time? The Orthodox categorically answer it in the negative. Western missionaries who were sent into the Orthodox East have left the impression that it is not possible to be fully Catholic without being Latin.

What is at stake is more than the external liturgical rite. The crux is the understanding of the faith, or to put it in different words, in the theological understanding of the revealed truths, which eventually

¹⁶ The full text of the decree is given in *Logos* XXX, pp. 75–80. Our quotation is from pp. 75–76.

finds its expression in liturgical rites and canonical discipline. It is generally agreed by non-partisan theologians that the Eastern and Western views on the procession of the Holy Spirit, on purgatory, on the sinlessness of the Blessed Virgin, and on the primacy of the pope complement each other. That is true insofar as one admits the equality of various theologies. No one theology can claim to exhaust all possible understanding, no human concept is able to express adequately and comprehensively the entire revealed truth.

All revealed truths are important, but not all have equal immediacy. On the basis of this fact, the dogma of papal primacy, on account of its tremendous practical and immediate consequences in the daily life and rule of all Christians, has been by far more under discussion than any other controverted teaching. As is well known, due to differently conceived and developed ecclesiologies and due to a whole line of historical accidents the East and the West understand this doctrine in quite different ways. Should the Western view, with its various peculiarities, e.g., rigid centralization, be bodily transferred to the East? And when it is, can one speak meaningfully and truthfully of respecting and retaining not only the external liturgical rites, but also the theology, canon law, and mentality of the Eastern Churches once they decide to enter into Union with the See of Rome?

The Union of Brest, 1596

The existence of the Ukrainian “uniate” Church begins with the Union of Brest in 1596. Christianity was introduced as the state religion into Rus’-Ukraine¹⁷ in 988. Very soon thereafter a canonical structure was established with a metropolitan at the head. This Church was under strong Byzantine influence, as it was one of the metropolitanates in the patriarchate of Constantinople. The Ukrainian Church did not follow Constantinople into schism in 1054. It drifted into it about two centuries later. A separation from Rome was never formally declared, and some sort of contact was kept up. The metropolitans of Kyiv took part in the Councils of Lyon (1275) and Florence (1439).

¹⁷ Rus’ is the ancient name of the territory known today as Ukraine and Belarus.

Formally the Ukrainian Church remained under the patriarch of Constantinople. In the course of the sixteenth century the situation of the Church was very precarious. Constantinople lost not only its power but also its prestige in the Slavic world. The newly established patriarchate of Moscow looked upon Ukraine as its dependency; Latin Catholic Poland deemed it necessary to keep Ukraine in its political orbit by converting the “schismatics” to the Latin faith and rite. Since it was customary to equate the Catholic faith with the Latin rite and Polish nationality on the one hand and on the other, the Orthodox faith with the Oriental rite and Rus’ (later Ukrainian and Belarusian, not Russian) nationality, a highly complex situation developed in which religious and political realities became inextricably intertwined. In such a confused and highly charged situation the metropolitan of Kyiv and all his bishops decided that something must be done. Their solution was to break with the patriarch of Constantinople and to affirm their communion with the Apostolic See of Rome.

In recounting the happenings surrounding the Union of Brest (so named after the city in which the Rus’-Ukrainian bishops held their consultations and synod) of 1596, we limit ourselves to facts which are generally known and agreed upon. That Union has been the object of so many and such varied interpretations that we do not dare to go beyond the bare facts in the space of such a short article.

On June 1, 1595, the hierarchy of the Kyivan Metropolia prepared a list of conditions entitled “*Articuli, quorum cautionem petimus a Dominis Romanis, priusquam accedamus ad unionem Romanae Ecclesiae.*”¹⁸ Those articles were addressed to the pope and to the king of Poland. There are thirty-two demands; the thirty-third article forms a conclusion. In these Articles the bishops demand as conditions that the faith of the Eastern Christians be respected, liturgical and canonical discipline be allowed to remain intact according to ancient traditions, that Orientals not be coerced into following Latin practices, and that bishops and faithful of the Eastern rite be given complete equality before ecclesiastical and political authorities. The

¹⁸ The complete text is given in the Ukrainian, Polish, and Latin languages in *De synodis archiepiscopalibus episcopatus catholici ucrainorum earumque fundamento iuridico expositiones* (Castello Gandulphi: Editiones “Litterae Nuntiae Archiepiscopi Maioris” n. 1, 1970), pp. 52–67.

acceptance and assurance of those demands by the “*Domini Romani*” will make a union with the Roman See possible and will encourage other Orientals to follow the example of the bishops of Rus’-Ukraine. We quote some of the pertinent articles:

1. While there is dispute between the Church of Rome and the people of the Greek religion concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit—which greatly hinders the Union and for no better reason but that neither of us wishes to understand the view of the other—we demand that we be not constrained to another profession (of faith) but that we follow the one which has been handed on to us in the Gospels and in the writings of the holy Fathers of the Greek religion, namely, that the Holy Spirit proceeds not from two principles nor in a double procession, but from one principle as from a source, from the Father through the Son.
2. Divine worship and all morning, evening and night prayers (services) should remain for us unchanged in keeping with the accepted custom and usage of the Eastern Church, namely, the three Liturgies... and other rites and ceremonies of our Church which we have used up to now and which are also observed in the same manner in Rome under the obedience of the Supreme Pontiff, and that we celebrate all those services in our own language.
5. As for purgatory, we raise no dispute and wish to be instructed by the Holy Church.
10. The office of metropolitan, bishop, and other spiritual offices of our rite should not be conferred on men of other nationality or religion, but only on Ruthenians¹⁹ and Greeks. Since we have it reserved in our canons that both the metropolitans and bishops as well as other such officials be chosen rather from the ranks of the clergy than from the laity, we ask his Sacred Royal Majesty that we retain the liberty to elect them;...
11. A bishop of our rite should not send to Rome for letters of confirmation ... Nevertheless, the metropolitan himself, when about to enter his office, should be obliged to send to Rome for letters of confirmation, and after those have been obtained from Rome, two or at most three of the bishops of our rite should consecrate and bless him according to our own custom.
13. When by the will of God, some day the remaining part of the people of the Eastern Church should come to the same Union with the

¹⁹ Ruthenians (Rutheni) is the name given in official Roman documents to designate inhabitants of Rus’, thus modern-day Ukrainians and Belarusians.

Western Church, it be not held against us that we have embraced it (the Union) prior to them. We have done it for the sake of the peace of the Christian state and to evade further dissensions.

15. If in the future the people of our rite out of contempt for their confession and rite would wish to embrace the Roman rite and ceremonial, they should not be admitted, since we all will be anyway already in the one Church and under the rule of one pastor.
31. We ask that when, by the grace of God, some day also the rest of the brethren of our Eastern Church should come to Union with the Western Church and then with the general assent of the entire universal Church will decree anything which pertains to the order or reform of ceremonies of the same Greek Church, we also take part in that as people of the same rite and confession.
33. Therefore we the undersigned, desiring to conclude this holy Union for the glory of God and for the peace of the Church, knowing that the above articles are necessary for us and for our Church and that they ought to be confirmed by the Supreme Pontiff and by our Most Serene King, for greater security we have consigned this Instruction to our venerable brethren (names) that they implore a confirmation of the same from the Supreme Pontiff and our Royal Majesty. Thus certain concerning our faith, sacraments and our ceremonies, so much more safely and without any prejudice to our consciences and of the flock entrusted to us, we come to this holy Union with the Roman Church so that others also, seeing that everything has been left intact to us, may themselves more willingly follow in our footsteps.²⁰

²⁰ 1. Cum inter Romanae Ecclesiae et Graecae religionis homines de processione Spiritus Sancti contentio sit, quae unionem plurimum impediat, et non aliam pene ob causam, quam quod mutuo inter nos intelligi nolimus, postulamus, ne ad aliam confessionem stringamur, sed eam sequamur, quam in evangelii et sanctorum Patrum religionis Graecae scriptis traditam habemus, nimirum Spiritum Sanctum non ex duobus principiis, nec duplici processione, sed ex uno principio velut ex fonte, ex Patre per Filium procedere.

2. Cultus divinus et orationes omnes matutinae, vespertinae et nocturnae, ut nobis integrae constant iuxta morem et consuetudinem receptam orientalis Ecclesiae, nominatim vero liturgiae tres, ... aliique ritus et caeremoniae omnes Ecclesiae nostrae, quibus hucusque uti sumus, siquidem et Romae sub obedientia Summi Pontificis idem observatur, utque haec omnia idiomate nostro peragamus.

5. De purgatorio nullam litem movemus, sed volumus doceri ab Ecclesia sancta.

10. Metropolitae, episcopatus et aliae spirituales dignitates ritus nostri, ne alterius nationis vel religionis, praeterquam Ruthenicae et Graecae hominibus conferantur. Quoniam vero canonibus nostris ita cautum habemus, ut tam metropolitae quam episcopi, aliique huiusmodi officiales prius a spiritualibus quam a saecularibus

The two bishops sent as emissaries of the Ukrainian hierarchy also carried a letter in which it was stated:

If Your Holiness deigns to preserve and to confirm, Yourself and on behalf of Your successors, the administration of the sacraments and all ceremonies of the Eastern Church integral and inviolate and in such manner as we have been using them at the time of that Union and that nothing will ever be innovated in this matter, ...²¹

and a little further:

ordinibus eligantur, petimus a Sacra Regia Maiestate, ut libera penes nos maneat eligendi eosdem potestas;...

11. Pro litteris "sacrae" Episcopi ritus nostri Romam ut non mittant,... Nihilominus ipsemet metropolita dignitatem metropoliae initurus pro litteris "sacrae" ad Pontificem Maximum mittere tenebitur, quem postea allatis Roma "sacrae" litteris episcopi ritus nostri duo, vel ad summum tres consecrabunt atque benedicent more suo.

13. Quod si aliquando, Deo ita volente, reliqua etiam pars hominum orientalis Ecclesiae ad eandem unionem cum occidentali Ecclesia accesserit, cavendum, ne nobis vitio ab eis vertatur, quod priores illis ad amplectendam eam fuerimus. Siquidem id fecimus propter bonum pacis reipublicae christianae, et ad obviandum ulterioribus dissidiis.

15. Si qui in posterum ritus nostri homines, contempta religione sua et caeremoniis, ritum et caeremonias Romanas amplecti voluerint, ne admittantur; siquidem iam omnes in una Ecclesia et sub regimine unius pastoris erimus.

31. Quod si, Deo favente, reliqui etiam aliquando fratres nostri orientalis Ecclesiae ad unionem cum Ecclesia occidentali accesserint, ac subinde communi consensu totius universalis Ecclesiae aliquid, quod ad ordinem vel reformationem caeremoniarum eiusdem Ecclesiae Graecae pertineat, decreverint, nos quoque ut eius participes simus uti homines eiusdem ritus et religionis (petimus).

33. Nos igitur infrascripti unionem hanc sanctam pro gloria Dei et pace Ecclesiae coalescere cupientes, praedictos articulos, quod pernecessarios nobis atque Ecclesiae nostrae esse scimus, confirmarique: a Summo Pontifice ac Serenissimo Rege nostro oportere, pro maiori fide tradimus hoc praesenti venerabilibus fratribus nostris (nomina) ut confirmationem eorundem a Summo Pontifice atque Maiestate Regia nostro et suo ipsorum nomine efflagitent. Quo certi de fide, sacramentis et caerimoniis nostris tanto securius et sine ullo conscientiae oviumque nobis commissarum praeiudicio ad sanctam hanc unionem cum Ecclesia Romana accedamus, utque et alii sarta tecta omnia nobis manere videntes, tanto et ipsi libentius sequantur nostra vestigia.

²¹ In *De synodis*, p. 68. ...siquidem Sanctitas Vestra administrationem Sacramentorum ritusque et caeremonias omnes Orientalis Ecclesiae integre, inviolabiliter atque eo modo quo tempore unionis illis utebamur, nobis conservare confirmareque pro se et successoribus suis nihil in hac parte innovaturis unquam, dignetur.

if we obtain all those things that we ask, and our successors who hear the word of Your Holiness and of all Your successors will forever be under the rule of Your Holiness.²²

The two envoys were received in Rome with honours. The reigning pope, Clement VIII, issued on December 23, 1595, the Constitution *Magnus Dominus et laudabilis nimis* by which he made it known that the hierarchy and people “nationis Ruthenae”

we have received as our members in Christ into the fold of the Catholic Church and into the unity of the holy Roman Church... and to show our great love towards them in our apostolic benignity we permit, concede and indulge all sacred rites and ceremonies which the Ruthenian bishops and clergy use in divine Offices and in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass and in other sacred functions according to the rules of the holy Greek Fathers, as long as such do not contradict the truth and doctrine of the Catholic Faith and do not preclude communion with the Roman Church.²³

The two emissaries and those who commissioned them were satisfied with the pope’s answer. They held a synod in Brest on 8–18 October 1596, at which they ratified the Union and issued a statement. We quote the central portion:

We have sent as emissaries the bishops honourable in Christ (names and positions) to our holy lord Clement VIII, the pope of Rome, the Pastor of the Apostolic See, that he might receive us under his obedience and protection as the supreme pastor of the holy Catholic Church and free and absolve us from the jurisdiction of the patriarchs of Constantinople; that he leave to us intact all rites, ancient ceremonies of the orthodox Churches without any change... All these things he conceded and concerning all sent documents and privileges, enjoining that our convened Synod having made a profession of holy Faith would

²² Ibid., p. 68. Quae omnia petita a nobis si obtinuerimus, Sanctitati Vestrae, omnibus successoribus suis nos et successores nostri dicto audientes, subque regimine Sanctitatis Vestrae semper esse volumus.

²³ Ibid., p. 69. Intra gremium Ecclesiae Catholicae et unitatem S.R.E. uti membra nostra in Christo recipimus ... atque ad maiorem charitatis nostrae erga ipsos significationem omnes sacros ritus et caeremonias, quibus rutheni Episcopi et clerus iuxta sanctorum Patrum Graecorum instituta in Divinis officiis et sacrosanctae Missae sacrificio caeterorumque Sacramentorum administratione aliisve sacris functionibus utuntur, dummodo veritati et doctrinae Fidei Catholicae non adversentur et communionem cum Romana Ecclesia non excludant, eisdem ruthenis Episcopis et Clero ex Apostolica benignitate permittimus, concedimus et indulgemus...

promise obedience to the Apostolic See of Rome, to the true Vicar of St. Peter, Clement VIII and to his successors.²⁴

This document was signed by only six bishops of the original eight. Two, the bishops of Lviv and Peremyshl, withdrew their agreement. Their eparchies joined the Union over a century later, the former in 1700, the latter in 1692.

Sheptytsky's evaluation of the Union of Brest

What was Sheptytsky's evaluation of that act of Union of the bishops of his Church in the sixteenth century? He certainly approved of it as such. It was the bishops' free decision to enter the Union with the Roman Apostolic See. Although they were exposed to many and various pressures, internal and external, the bishops made their decision freely, witness that two withdrew their backing without any immediate adverse consequences to themselves or their eparchies.

A charge usually raised against the signatories is that of having betrayed their flock by breaking away from Church unity—meaning from their dependence on their ecclesiastical superior the patriarch of Constantinople—and by forsaking their rite. As can be easily discerned from the “Articles” quoted above, the charge of forsaking their rite cannot be leveled against the bishops who ratified the Union of Brest. Nor can they be made responsible for what course the development of the ritual discipline of the Ukrainian Catholic Church would take in later decades and centuries. Sheptytsky also denies the validity of the accusation that the bishops broke away from ecclesiastical obedience. To the contrary, in Sheptytsky's opinion the bishops of the sixteenth century have rectified the misstep of Cerularius in 1054. To

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 70. ...[E]xpeditivimus et misimus ad S.D.N. Clementem Octavum, Papam Romanum, legatos honorandos in Christo episcopos fratres nostros (nomina et officia) eidem Pastori Sedis Apostolicae ut nos sub suam obedientiam et protectionem tanquam supremus pastor sanctae Ecclesiae Catholicae recipiat, et ab iurisdictione patriarcharum Constantinopolitanorum liberet et absolvat; omnes ritus, caeremonias antiquas orthodoxarum Ecclesiarum graecarum absque ulla immutatione ... nobis penitus intactas relinquat. Quod re ipsa praestitit et super haec omnia scripta et privilegia misit, iniungens ut congregata Synodo nostra, sanctae fidei professione facta, obedientiam sanctae Sedi Apostolicae Romanae, vero sancti Petri Vicario Clementi Octavo, eiusque successoribus reddamus.

their greatest credit Sheptytsky counts not only that they have reaffirmed the universal-catholic faith and allegiance, but that they did not seek to establish a schismatic Church, independent of any ecclesiastical authority, as was the case with other Churches that renounced obedience to the patriarch of Constantinople. While desiring to retain their internal autonomy, those Ukrainian bishops acted consistently with the decrees of the Council of Florence and turned to the pope as the supreme pastor of the Church.²⁵

Sheptytsky also appreciates the farsightedness of the sixteenth-century bishops. Constantinople was in the hands and at the mercy of the Ottoman Empire. It had ceased to exist as the great centre of religious and secular culture that it had been in the tenth century, when Rus'-Ukraine accepted Christianity. By the sixteenth century, that centre had shifted definitely to the West. The Kyivan metropolia could retain its own position in the East only while remaining in living contact with the West, by a Union that transcended the narrow political interests of her immediate neighbours.

The act of the Union called forth a strong reaction. From the very beginning it caused severe unrest and then an open split into Catholic and Orthodox factions. In spite of many such obstacles and adversities the Union made progress, and by the end of the seventeenth century about twelve million faithful had embraced it. This was due mainly to the efforts of Metropolitan Joseph Velamyn Rutsky (1614–1637) and Archbishop St. Josaphat Kuntsevych (who died as a martyr for the Union in 1623). In the years 1620–1640, several very serious attempts were made by both Catholic and Orthodox Ukrainians to heal the wound of disunity. These efforts were shattered by several factors, not the least among which was the unwillingness of Rome to let Ukrainians settle their own difficulties.²⁶

²⁵ This argument is developed at length in a pastoral letter addressed to the clergy, “Як будувати Рідну Хату” [On How to Build One’s Own Home—a cryptic title due to German censorship—on the part of the clergy in building up a healthy society) dated December 1941. In *Logos* I (1950) pp. 241–248; II (1951) pp. 81–87, 161–67, 241–46.

²⁶ E.g., *Instructio S. Congr. nis nuntio Santacrucio data Romae, 6.VII.1629*. “De synodis a metropolitae Rutskyj celebrandis” in *Monumenta Ucrainae Historica* (Romae: Editiones Universitatis Catholicae Ucrainorum S. Clementis Papae, 1971), vol. IX–X, 718–20. The Congregation did not approve of the initiative of the Ukrainian Catholic bishops to hold a common synod with the Orthodox bishops to discuss ways to unity.

The first symptoms of decline began to set in. Catholics and Orthodox began to drift apart more and more. The loss of political independence aggravated that split considerably. The Polish authorities refused to recognize the ecclesiastical and political equality of Eastern-rite Catholics, the so-called “uniates.” After the partitions of Poland toward the end of the eighteenth century, the parts of Ukraine that fell to Austria breathed a little more freely, but by then the malaise of latinisation had set in and began to corrode the Eastern fabric of the Ukrainian Church, a process that went on throughout the entire eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Those parts of Ukraine that came under the domination of the Russian Empire experienced abolition of the Union and consequent enforced incorporation into the Russian Orthodox Church. By the year 1875 the last “uniate” eparchy within the Russian Empire was officially abolished and the Union declared to be non-existent. As a result of the political shifts in Eastern Europe the Union could survive in some form only in territories under Austrian rule and in the diaspora, mainly in the New World. Numerically the Union was cut down in the relatively short period of two centuries (1700–1900) to about a third of its size at the height of its growth around 1700.

What were the results of the Union’s three-hundred-year long existence? According to Sheptytsky, the Union gave the Ukrainian Church a period of religious vitality in the face of all adversities. In spite of many retrogressions the Church in the Union was able to gather enough internal force to regenerate herself and to enjoy short periods of flowering. At the moments of persecution when the Union was being violently attacked and abolished in the Russian Empire, many “uniates” held to their faith even to the point of martyrdom.²⁷ As was intended by the fathers of the Union, that part of the Ukrainian Church which remained in the Union has kept up lively contacts with the Western world. The Union became inextricably interwoven into the fabric of the national and cultural life of the people, and this was mostly to their benefit.²⁸

But there was also the other side of the coin. The “uniates” suffered a progressive alienation from their Eastern stock. This became most

²⁷ Cf. Pastoral Letter “Про обряди”[“On Rites”] in *Logos* XXX, 149–201, specifically p. 155.

²⁸ Sheptytsky developed this point in his speech at the official opening of the National Museum on December 13, 1913. The entire text is reprinted in *Америка* (a Ukrainian newspaper appearing in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) 1963, nn. 238, 239, 240.

obvious in the liturgical rite, and less so, but not less harmfully, in the impairment of the theological and canonical traditions.

These latinisations can be attributed to several causes, explicitly or implicitly mentioned by Sheptytsky. One was that numerous “uniates” in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thought it necessary to adopt as many Latin practices as possible in order to prove their “true Catholicity.” This attitude resulted in an atrocious hybridism, where Latin prayers and rubrics were bodily transferred into the Eastern liturgy.²⁹

Another reason was the reaction of the “uniates” to the “reformers” who under the guise of purification of the rite were leading their people into real schism. The faithful adherents of the Union began to cling tenaciously to their ritual practices, even those patently latinised, in which they saw a distinguishing mark and a safeguard of their faith.³⁰

Still another reason was the fact that many, and especially the leading clergymen had been educated in Latin schools. Generally they did not lose their attachment to their native rite, but they were loosening their spiritual contact with it since they consciously or unconsciously took over a Western religious *Weltanschauung*. Sheptytsky does not say anything on this point, but his actions speak. He founded his own Theological Academy and sent only carefully chosen students abroad.

He says nothing at all in his public documents about another factor whose influence tipped the scales on many an issue, namely, the inconsistency of the Roman authorities in their policy toward the “uniate” Church, to which they had confirmed the inviolate preservation of its rights and privileges. Although the forceful endeavour of the papal legate at the Synod of Lviv of 1891 to have celibacy accepted, and similar such actions, were not unknown among the clergy and some laity, Sheptytsky never permitted himself to make any public statement on such matters. His loyalty to the Apostolic See was unquestioned throughout his life.³¹ This did not prevent him

²⁹ “Про обряди” [“On Rites”], May 1941, in *Logos* XXX, p. 154.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

³¹ Pope Pius XII in his letter to the Ukrainian bishops on the occasion of the millennium of St. Olga’s death (*L’Osservatore Romano*, May 13, 1956) said, “memoria apud vos viget, Dei famuli Andreae Szeptyckyj, qui quidem pro dissidentibus fratribus ad unum reducendis ovile tot labores, tot aerumnas tolerabat, et qui, ut iam scripsimus ‘nihil magis optabat, quam ut impensissimam suam erga Apostolicam Sedem... inartitium etiam, qui opus esset, ... libenter faceret.’”

from striving all his years in office with ever-increasing intensity to work and struggle for a re-Orientalisation of his Church, a purification from Latin influences where they had crept in surreptitiously and unjustifiably. He considered such a course of action to be the only true expression of true love for the Catholic Church and of thorough loyalty to the Apostolic Roman See.

The Orthodox view of the Union of Brest

How did the Orthodox and the Latins react to the Union? We limit ourselves here only to descriptions of their respective attitudes to the Union as given by Sheptytsky himself. It is important for us to see how he understood the situation. In question here are only his descriptions of the attitudes of contemporaries, not a review of attitudes throughout the last three hundred years. After all, we must always be conscious of the fact that Sheptytsky was first of all a pastor, not a scholar. His ecumenical interests were pragmatic in nature.

Concerning the Orthodox, the Metropolitan said in the course of his lecture entitled “Le rôle des Occidentaux dans l’oeuvre de l’Union,” delivered in Rome on February 18, 1923:³²

I believe that I am not mistaken in making this observation: in general all Russian Oriental dissidents³³ have above all else a very great fear of anything that reminds them of the Union of the Ruthenians. To become a “uniate,” as they say it, equals stepping down to a level which neither the Church as such nor individuals can ever accept. Those who incline towards Catholicism often prefer to become Latins rather than accept the idea of becoming “uniate,” on account of the condition into which they would fall. To put it more bluntly, the condition to which the Ruthenians were reduced in their own country was so painful that it has become a scarecrow for the dissidents.

They cannot imagine another type of union. There are many Eastern Catholic priests who can tell them of a new and different Union of the Churches, a union which would be more desirable; but those priests, they say, are they the true representatives of the Catholic

³² This lecture is printed in full in *Stoudion* III (1926), 153–69; IV (1927) 3–18, 49–60.

³³ Sheptytsky uses the term current in his day.

view? Do they not deceive themselves or are they not being deceived? What is their position in relation to Latin-rite priests? Allow me, in order to put their view in the fullest light, to relate the authentic words of a well-disposed dissident, notwithstanding their total coarseness and their great severity. This is how he put it about a year ago during a meeting held in Moscow in which both Catholics and Orthodox took part in order to discuss together the Union of Churches, a meeting held in a most restrained and peaceful atmosphere.

“I was born,” he said, “in Volhynia³⁴ and have lived a long time in America, and I have seen with my own eyes that all the promises of the Holy See in regard to the preservation of the Eastern rites are but a fiction and a lure. It is impossible to avoid latinisation. For me it suffices to cite the bull *Ea semper*³⁵ that latinisation is a tendency not only of the Latin clergy, especially the Polish, but of the popes themselves. The Latin look upon you Eastern Catholics as upon something of the second order and despicable, they do not want to let you go further than the vestibule. Sooner or later, in this or that manner, directly or indirectly, but without any doubt you will be made Latin and Polish. It is possible,” he added, turning to the Eastern Catholic priests, “that you are ready to carry that martyr’s cross, this is your good will and I believe so, it is your virtue. But we others, we wish nothing of that position; we do not wish to follow that road. As to the conservation of the Eastern rite and its particular religious character, those are fancies without any foundation and of this you will convince yourselves. You see: if you were priests of the Latin rite, you would be members of the Catholic Church on an equal footing with the others; you would not be oppressed and crushed as you are now.”

³⁴ Volhynia is a province of Ukraine, north of Galicia, in which the majority are Orthodox.

³⁵ “*Ea semper*”, whose full title is “*Bulla seu Litterae Apostolicae de Ruthenianis episcopo constituendo et cleri populique disciplina moderanda in USA*,” was published on June 14, 1907 (*Acta Pii X PP*, vol. V, p. 57–68). As an example of its love we cite Chapter I, Article 2, “The Bishop of the Ruthenian Rite:” “The bishop, however, has no ordinary jurisdiction, but only delegated jurisdiction from the single [Latin-rite] ordinaries in the dioceses of which the Ruthenian faithful reside;” and Chapter II, Article 14: “Ruthenian presbyters residing in America are absolutely forbidden to anoint the (newly-)baptized with Holy Chrism; if indeed they should do so, let them know that they have acted invalidly.” The bishop was given proper jurisdiction by the decree “*Cum Episcopo*” dated August 17, 1914. But the decree “*Cum data fuerit*,” on the subject of the spiritual care of Ruthenians (Ukrainians) dated March 1, 1929 (*AAS*, XXI (1929), pp. 152–159) in Article 12 states: “Moreover, as it has been many times decreed, priests of the Greek-Ruthenian Rite who intend to travel to the United States of North America and live there, need to be celibate.”

Such is the opinion of one dissident priest, which all the same conveys the mentality of an enormous majority of his compatriots.³⁶

The Orthodox quoted by Sheptytsky considered the Union a hopeless struggle against the superior force of the Latin rite. A great many

³⁶ In *Stoudion* VI (1927), 14–15. Je crois que je ne me tromperai pas en observant ceci: généralement, les dissidents de l’Orient russe ont tous et avant tout une grande peur de tout ce qui rappelle l’Union des Ruthènes. Devenir “Uniate,” comme ils disent, c’est être voué à une infériorité que ni l’Eglise comme telle ni les individus ne peuvent jamais accepter. Ceux qui sont portés vers le catholicisme préfèrent souvent devenir Latins plutôt que d’accepter l’idée de devenir “Uniate,” à cause de la condition qui deviendrait la leur. Pour m’exprimer plus clairement, la condition faite aux Ruthènes dans leur propre pays a été si pénible, qu’elle est devenue comme un épouvantail pour les dissidents.

Ils n’envisagent pas un autre type d’Union. Il y a bien des prêtres catholiques orientaux, qui savent leur parler d’une nouvelle et autre Union des Eglises, Union qui semble être bien désirable; mais ces prêtres, disent-ils, sont-ils les vrais représentants de l’idée catholique? Ne se trompent-ils pas, et ne sont-ils pas trompés eux-mêmes? Quelle est leur position vis à vis des prêtres catholiques du rite latin? Permettez-moi, pour mettre leur opinion en pleine lumière, de rapporter les paroles bien authentiques d’un dissident bien disposé, malgré leur pleine crudité et leur grande sévérité: voici comment il s’exprimait il y a de cela un an, dans une réunion tenue à Moscou, à laquelle prenaient part des catholiques et des orthodoxes, pour parler ensemble de l’Union des Eglises, réunion dans laquelle régnait un ton très modéré et très pacifique:

“Je suis né, disait-il, en Volhynie et ai vécu longtemps en Amérique, et je me suis convaincu par mes propres yeux que toutes les promesses du Saint Siège quant à la conservation des rites orientaux ne sont qu’une fiction et qu’un appât. Il n’est pas possible d’éviter la latinisation: il me suffirait de citer la bulle *Ea Semper*. Cette latinisation est la tendance, non seulement du clergé latin et spécialement polonais, mais des Papes eux-mêmes. Les Latins vous considèrent, vous, catholiques orientaux, comme quelque chose de second rang et de méprisable: ils ne vous laissent pas entrer plus loin que le vestibule. Tôt ou, d’une manière ou d’une autre, immédiatement ou médiatement, mais sans aucun doute, on vous latinisera et on vous polonisera. Il est possible,” ajoutait-il en se retournant vers les prêtres catholiques orientaux, “que vous soyez prêts à porter cette croix de martyr: c’est votre bonne volonté, et, je le crois bien, votre vertu, mais nous autres, nous ne voulons pas de cette position, nous ne sommes pas à même de suivre cette voie. Quant à la conservation du rite oriental et de son caractère religieux particulier, ce sont là des fantasmes sans aucun fondement, et vous-même vous vous en convaincrez. Voyez: si vous étiez prêtres du rite latin, vous seriez membres de l’Eglise catholique en droits aux autres, vous ne seriez pas opprimés et opprimés comme vous l’êtes.” Telle est l’opinion d’un prêtre dissident, qui exprimait tout de même la mentalité d’une énorme majorité de ses compatriotes.

Orthodox simply did not know of any efforts to keep the Eastern Catholic Churches truly Eastern. Their ignorance and consequent negative attitude were no doubt due to a one-sided education, but that education was not all false. Too many instances of disregard for the true character of the Eastern rites gave that education a good deal of verisimilitude.

In the introduction to a collection of letters which Sheptytsky had exchanged with Ukrainian Orthodox hierarchs and intellectuals as part of an ecumenical dialogue initiated by him in 1941–1942, and which he later published for the information of his clergy in the official archeparchial organ,³⁷ he explains:

Our brethren, the Orthodox Ukrainians, know us primarily from Russian sources, from pamphlets written with the overt intention to evoke the greatest possible hatred against the Roman Church and the “uniates” who have fallen away from Orthodoxy. All those who completed their education in Russian schools know about the “Unions” only what has been said in school, but it was an impossibility that a teacher of religion should report objectively about the Roman Church, about the “Union,” about us.

In 1914, when the Russian army occupied Galicia, each one of us had the opportunity to speak with (Orthodox) clergymen and laymen, who were greatly amazed to hear sermons preached in Ukrainian and liturgical services celebrated in the Old Slavonic language with Ukrainian pronunciation. They were openly admitting what they had thought about us: they had been convinced that we preached in Polish and that our rite was half Latin...

After twenty years of Bolshevik rule the Orthodox youth from the eastern parts of Ukraine know nothing about us. If we truly consider it our duty to do all that our conscience allows us in order to contribute to even the slightest mutual understanding between the various faiths held by Ukrainians, we must give the Orthodox Ukrainians an opportunity to get to know us, our traditions, our history.³⁸

In order to keep the record straight, in the nineteenth century, when most of the Russian textbooks on religion and history were written, priests of the Ukrainian Catholic Church were preaching in Polish

³⁷ “On Mutual Understanding,” originally in *Львівські єпархіальні вісті* [“News of the Archeparchy of Lviv”], reprinted in *Logos* XXX, pp. 333–59, 401–408.

³⁸ *Logos* XXX, p. 335.

and were following Latin rubrics that were transferred without any refinement or adaptation into the Eastern liturgy. Those text-books did not record the gradual awakening which began and spread in the course of the nineteenth century and came to a flowering in the twentieth century. In the paragraph quoted above, Sheptytsky is simply stating the fact that the contemporary Orthodox have failed to realise that the Catholic Church has progressed a long way from what it was in the not too distant past.

Among the letters contained in the collection “On Mutual Understanding” we find also one of a group of Ukrainian Orthodox intellectuals which reiterates the “traditional” stand. Not all the Orthodox would subscribe to the views expressed in that letter, but Sheptytsky must have held it to be representative enough to include in the collection. We quote from the opening paragraphs of that letter:

In keeping with your letter issued in March of this year³⁹ that Ukrainian intellectuals ought to say their word on the matter of the Union of Ukrainian Churches, we take it upon ourselves to express some views on the part of that Orthodox intelligentsia which is well informed on matters of faith and to whom it is not all one and the same in which form our Orthodox Church should be reborn.

The matter of the Church Union (of Brest) is still too well remembered by all classes of our people as a relatively recent and quite important period of our history. One must state openly that that period is one of the saddest in our past and in the amount of tears shed and evils brought about by it is comparable perhaps to the centuries of serfdom. ... Moreover, according to the unionistic propaganda, the Union is not to be a union of two Ukrainian Churches, the Catholic and the Orthodox, in such manner that both will go halfway to meet the other, but on the contrary, it is to be a submission of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the Universal Church as it is openly said in your letter. Your Excellency, that means a submission to the Roman Catholic Church whose representative in Eastern Europe has always been Polish Catholicism.⁴⁰

We shall discuss a little further what union precisely Sheptytsky had in mind when he addressed the Orthodox. Now we turn our

³⁹ Sheptytsky’s letter addressed “To the Believing Ukrainian Intelligentsia” was dated March 3, 1942: *Logos* XXX, pp. 340–42.

⁴⁰ *Logos* XXX, pp. 345–46.

attention to a point which is hinted at in the letter of the Orthodox intellectuals and which Sheptytsky considered to be a big problem in any dialogue with the Orthodox, namely, the understanding of the universality of the Church of Christ.

As the Orthodox see it—not without *fundamentum* at least as insofar as the history of Eastern Europe goes—the Catholic Church is fully identifiable only with the Roman Church, the Latin rite, and one of the nations of the West. In his pastoral letter “On the Unity of the Church,” issued in 1938,⁴¹ Sheptytsky presents the teaching which in his opinion should remove the principal source of misunderstanding. The Church, he says, is one in all that is divine in her; in what is of human origin, she is many. Nothing which is of merely human origin can support the claim of any Christian to superiority over his fellow-Christians. The bishop of Rome is the father and pastor of all inasmuch as they are Christians, and in no other respect. The Roman Church is not the universal Church, but the centre around which the family of particular Churches gathers. Particular Churches which are in full communion with the Roman Church together form the catholic-universal Church. In his writings and sermons Sheptytsky preferably, we can say even prevalently, uses the term “universal” Church where a Latin rite writer would simply say “Catholic” Church. We have seen an example of this usage in the very first paragraph of this article. By this usage Sheptytsky wished to avoid the connotation of a particular rite, nationality, or culture which the Orthodox habitually see in the term “Catholic.”

Our question is now: Was the correctly understood universality of the Church of Christ manifested in the so-called uniate Churches, Churches which should fully preserve their Eastern heritage and character and at the same time be in full communion with the Roman Apostolic See? In question are not individuals or small groups, but entire Churches or at least very large groups. As we have seen in the quotations above, the Orthodox were not able to perceive that trait in the “uniate” Churches and certainly were not convinced by their example. A further question suggests itself: Were they to blame? Sheptytsky’s

⁴¹ Published in *Львівські єпархіальні вісті* [“News of the Archeparchy of Lviv”] LI (January 1938), pp. 2–16.

entire line of initiatives to restore or at least to bring to the fore the Eastern character of his Church would suggest that he did not place all the blame on the Orthodox.

How did the Latins judge the ecumenical value of the Eastern Churches united for centuries with the Apostolic See?

The Latin view of the Union of Brest

On April 13, 1931, Metropolitan Sheptytsky issued a pastoral letter entitled “Concerning the Rite.”⁴² The occasion for that letter was twofold: first, the appointment of Bishop Charnetsky as Apostolic Visitor for all Eastern-rite Catholics in Poland who were not included in the ecclesiastical province of Galicia; and second, in Sheptytsky’s own words:

The second occasion, and one of importance for us, is that news from authoritative sources has reached us that Rome has seen fit to preserve the Eastern rite in its integrity outside the boundaries of Galicia and has adjudged our ritual forms as too narrow and unsuitable for work among the Orthodox.⁴³

We find a commentary on this statement in Sheptytsky’s inaugural speech at the Union Congress held in Lviv in 1936:

... at the present state of development, Western theologians wish to see us truly Oriental. The first question for them is how much we are capable of working for the Union. To be able to work for the Union means to observe the Eastern rite in such manner as not to give any scandal to the Orthodox. ... Since our rite in many small things—but in the East even the small things can be very important—has not been faithful to the Eastern tradition and in many instances has followed the tendency to assimilate itself to the Latin rite, ever more often in the theological literature of the Western Church our illegitimate ritual adaptations are being pointed out as obstacles to unionistic work. Of course, there are persons who openly wishing to push us aside from unionistic work make our rite, or more precisely

⁴² Published in *Діло*, 1931, no. 85, April 21st. *Діло* was a highly regarded and widely read daily. It is not quite clear why the Metropolitan chose a secular newspaper for the publication of a pastoral letter. It may be that he wished to give it the widest possible diffusion.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, page unknown.

its latinisations, sufficient cause for such removal. A strange situation has arisen: those who judged our Catholicity by rosaries, scapulars and ritual assimilations are the very same persons today who consider those changes as a sign that we are unsuitable to work for Union.⁴⁴

Those unacquainted with the history of the Union most likely would fail to sense the irony of the situation. But the two hundred priests assembled for the Union Congress would very well know from the records of their predecessors and from their own experience the bitter truth of their Metropolitan's words. Many Polish Latin-rite Catholics would, out of malice or in pious naiveté, consider Eastern-rite Catholics as not quite Catholic because they did not follow Latin devotional practices. Behind such an attitude was the conviction that the truly Catholic rite is the rite of the Roman Church. To convince the Latins of their sincerity as regards Catholicism, many Eastern-rite Catholics would accept Latin liturgical and devotional practices. This weakness of the Orientals was now being exploited to make them seem unsuitable for Union work. The irony of the situation was that the Orientals have lost twice.

Sheptytsky did not live to take part in the Second Vatican Council or to witness the lively ecumenical activity following it. The latter, however, bears out the truth of his estimate of the Latins' attitude to Unions of the type concluded in Brest in the sixteenth century. The Latins did not take the "uniates" as partners into the post-Vatican II ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox, nor have they ever with pride pointed to the "uniate" Churches as examples of the Church's universality.

Both the Orthodox and the Latins seem to have given up on the "uniate" experiment. This fact forces us to reconsider the position of Sheptytsky. Was he a realist or a dreamer when he spoke of the ecumenical mission of his Eastern-rite Church? Was the Union of Brest such a complete failure because of some intrinsic flaw, or was it perhaps essentially correct and only accidentally flawed by political, social, cultural misfortunes?

⁴⁴ The full text is published in V. Kuchabskyj, "Унійний з'їзд у Львові" ["Unionistic Congress in Lviv"] (Lviv: Publications of the Ukrainian Theological Society, vol. XI–XII) 17–22. Our quotation is from pp. 17–18.

Sheptytsky did not think that he had all the answers about the Union of Brest of 1596 and its later history. He sought to inform himself as well as he could. He researched that period and even wrote a biography of Joseph Velamyn Rutsky, who was the metropolitan of Kyiv in the decades following the act of Union (1614–1637). Sheptytsky also made the study of the Union of Brest a primary objective of the Theological Academy which he founded in Lviv. In his address at the opening of the Academy (which was modelled on a university) on October 6, 1929, he had said:

Scholars of the Western Church ask whether the method of the Church in accepting into ecclesiastical union entire provinces and insisting only on a profession of the Catholic faith, but leaving intact all the customs, rights, traditions and rites, was the right one or not. Has the Union fulfilled her purpose? Has it become the liaison between the East and the West, is it the suitable means for further work for Union? Should not that labour be based on completely contrary principles? Such questions are being asked by scholars and by men who have a decisive voice in the administration of the Church.

It is the task of “uniate” theologians to provide answers to these questions and to give an account of that system under which we have lived for over three hundred years. ... We must first of all study the Union of Brest to its very core, learn its good aspects as well as the mistakes which may have been committed. That assignment, carried out by theologians with that absolute calm which only truly scholarly research and presentation can provide, will be the best apology of the Union in the past and a guiding light for its future.⁴⁵

The last sentence quoted above, and Sheptytsky’s delicate presentation of the whole topic, might give rise to the impression that he judged the Union very positively. Such a conclusion would be too hastily drawn. In our opinion, Sheptytsky’s judgment of the Union of Brest was very sober, not falling into either extreme of unconditional praise or blame. He was genuinely interested in making the best of the difficult situation in which his own Church found herself and of protecting future generations from repeating the mistakes of the past.

⁴⁵ The full text is found in *Греко-Католицька Богословська Академія у Львові в першім трьохлітті свого існування (1928–31)* [“The Greek-Catholic Theological Academy in the First Three Years of Its Existence (1928–1931)”], (Lviv: Sumptibus Academiae, 1932.), pp. 13–16. Our quotation is from p. 16. See also *Богословія* (1930/1) pp. 1–4.

What did Sheptytsky the student of Union history, the keen observer and vigilant pastor, think of the future of the Union? That is the question we must ask in order to learn from his experience. There are presuppositions which we can and ought to affirm about Sheptytsky without fear of contradiction. Fundamental among them is that he sincerely and without any ulterior motives desired and laboured for the perfect realisation of the Church's unity in the Slavic East. In this respect, and for all the spiritual benefits it brought the Ukrainian people, Sheptytsky accepted the Union of Brest as a definite good. It pained him, no doubt, that this Union did not live up to all expectations and even had become a stumbling block to future work for unity. What then would be a useful program for the future? Under what circumstances could a Church with the tradition of the Union and with the animosity or disdain of the Orthodox and the Latins be of positive ecumenical value? We could easily expand the question to all "uniate" Churches, since each of them had its own "Union of Brest" and its sorry aftermath. Metropolitan Sheptytsky considered that the Eastern Catholic Churches—once certain conditions about them had been observed and fulfilled—did have value for Christian unity, and even more—an ecumenical mission. What were those conditions? We could consider them in two groups, negative—what the Union should not be or become, and positive—what it could and should be.

What the Union should not be

Ecumenical work belongs to the entire Church. The Union does not and should not constitute a claim for exclusive rights on the part of the Orientals. As there is no room for false messianism among the Western Christians, there should not be room for it among the Easterners. At the same time neither should be wantonly excluded, because this would hurt the overall effort. Sheptytsky makes his attitude on such matters clear in his lecture, referred to above, "*Le rôle des Occidentaux dans l'oeuvre de l'Union des Eglises:*"

But the Westerners have a much more important task in that work of which we speak. It seems that to accomplish it the cooperation of the entire Catholic world is necessary. No nation could claim any monopoly in this undertaking. All workers of good will should be admitted to work in that section of the Lord's vineyard.

The Eastern Catholics would be the first to say that they have no pretensions to be the only ones or the first, but it can happen that they can on occasion give good counsel to those, who better qualified in many respects, do not know as well the nations which ought to be attracted and to which the Orientals belong. If anyone wishes to comprehend the mentality of Oriental dissidents, it is from those who, while becoming Catholics, have not become strangers to their own nation, that one could best learn. They have indeed retained the same qualities and even the same faults. They have preserved the general mentality of their people, and it is by virtue of this that we can claim the first rank for the Eastern Catholics.⁴⁶

Several important ideas are contained in the above two paragraphs. At the time the lecture was delivered in Rome (1923) the Latin world had adopted one of two attitudes toward ecumenical endeavour in the Slavic East: complete lack of active interest, or exaggerated interest to the point of claiming an exclusive right to such work. To the first group would belong roughly the peoples of Western Europe; to the latter, the Polish Catholics. To the former Sheptytsky pointed out that the great task cannot be accomplished by only a small part of Christendom. Ecumenical, or as it was then known, unionistic work is open to all and should engage workers from all over Christendom. In the early twenties Sheptytsky was using his forced presence in the West trying to awaken interest among Latin Catholics for work in the East.

On the other hand, he took a stand against those who did not wish to admit the Eastern-rite Catholics as partners in unionistic work, who

⁴⁶ *Stoudion* IV (1927), p. 56. Mais les Occidentaux ont encore une tâche beaucoup plus grande dans l'oeuvre dont nous parlons. Il semble que, pour l'accomplir, le concours de tout le monde catholique soit nécessaire. Aucune nation ne peut, dans cette entreprise, s'attribuer un monopole quelconque. Tous les ouvriers de bonne volonté doivent être admis au travail dans cette partie de la vigne du Seigneur. Les Orientaux catholiques seront les premiers à dire qu'ils n'ont aucune prétention à être les seuls ou les premiers, mais il peut se faire qu'ils puissent quelquefois donner de bons conseils à ceux qui, tout en ayant des qualités supérieures à plus d'un égard, ne connaissent pas aussi bien qu'eux les nations qu'il faut attirer et qui sont les leurs.

Si quelqu'un veut comprendre la mentalité des Orientaux dissidents c'est chez ceux qui, tout en devenant catholiques, se sont néanmoins éloignés le moins possible de leur propre nation qu'il pourra le mieux l'étudier. Ils ont conservé en effet les mêmes qualités et même, si on veut, les mêmes défauts; ils ont gardé la mentalité générale de leur nation, et c'est à ce titre là que nous pouvons revendiquer le premier rang pour les catholiques orientaux.

for various reasons considered the Orientals, the “uniates,” unsuitable inconvenient partners in that task. If they are sincere about their work, Sheptytsky asks them not to disdain the help of the Easterners. Many an ambitious project shattered miserably because the workers did not understand the peoples of the East and yet did not wish to be instructed by the Easterners on matters in which they were better informed, so to say, by birthright.

Against all those who would consider the Eastern-rite Catholics, the so-called “uniates,” as unsuitable for unionistic work, Sheptytsky took a stand not by words but by action. In the years 1941–1942 he initiated and engaged in an open ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox clergy and intellectuals of the Ukrainian Church. This unheard-of initiative on the part of an Eastern particular Church called forth a lively response from the Orthodox. Orthodox bishops, clergymen, and laymen answered Sheptytsky’s call. They stated very frankly their views, their fears and suspicions. It is difficult to say today which way this bold ecumenical initiative would have led. It was violently interrupted by the wartime events. As was already referred to above, Sheptytsky published a part of the correspondence in the official organ of his archeparchy.

As a further condition of successful unionistic work Sheptytsky considers the absence of any desire to lord it over the Orthodox who might decide to embrace the Union. With touching humility he states in his letter to Orthodox intellectuals, which forms a part of the ecumenical dialogue of 1941–1942:

The metropolitan of Kyiv⁴⁷ must be chosen from among the Orthodox or autocephalous bishops or priests. If he would unite with the Universal Church, all Greek-Catholics would be his subjects, and I would gladly be the first to submit to his supreme authority.⁴⁸

If ecclesiastical ambition has no place in ecumenism, so much the less do worldly political motives. Imperialistic or chauvinistic politics has been the scourge of Christianity in Eastern Europe for centuries. It has

⁴⁷ Kyiv is the titular see of the metropolitans of the Ukrainian Church. In the case of the Ukrainian Church the metropolitan of Kyiv is the head of the Church; in recent terminology his designation would be major archbishop. The Constitution of the Ukrainian National Republic of 1919 applies to him the title of patriarch. So also does Sheptytsky (cf. *Logos* XXX, 350).

⁴⁸ *Logos* XXX, p. 341.

also been one of the weightiest obstacles to the Union. Sheptytsky excludes it unconditionally. In the same collection of documents relating to the dialogue with the Orthodox he writes in his general Introduction:

The most important thing, however, without which not only any agreement, but not even a mutual understanding, is possible, is the condition that religion must be taken on its own merit and not as a political tool for the achievement of other goals. It is in that latter sense that religion is understood by those for whom it makes no difference to which confession they belong and who are ready at the drop of a hat to change their religion for the sake of any human considerations.⁴⁹

By far the most important condition for any Union is that it must avoid any implication of submission at the cost of giving up proper ecclesiastical traditions, customs, and rites. As we have already seen above, the Orthodox consider the Union of Brest as precisely such an arrangement, a selling out of one's own proper spiritual treasures. Unionistic activity in the East has rarely been free of *dushekhvatstvo* (proselytism, literally "soul-snatching"). Apart from its method—the "conversion of schismatics" one by one—it was very negative in its fundamental principle. Simply stated it says, "Come to us, we have the truth," implying more or less openly that you have little or none of it. The history of unionistic labors in the East is a long series of pulling people to one's own side, be it by persuasion, be it by force. The Orthodox intellectuals state it plainly:

According to the idea of agents of the Union, it is not meant to be a joining together (underlined in the original) of two Ukrainian Churches, Catholic and Orthodox, in such fashion that both come out halfway, but on the contrary, it is to be a joining of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the Universal Church as, Your Excellency, it is openly stated in your letter. That means joining to the Roman Catholic Church, whose chief representative in Eastern Europe has been Polish Catholicism.⁵⁰

The Orthodox intellectuals stated clearly where their fears lay. "Joining to" is nothing else but an outright submission, not merely in the sense of submitting to the supreme authority of the universal pastor of the Church, but in the sense of giving up all that they hold

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 338.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 346.

dear in the Church. Their fear was not an empty fear; most regretfully it had a basis in the history of the Union.

Sheptytsky understood correctly the attitude of the Orthodox. In the already mentioned “Introduction” to the collection of letters exchanged between the Metropolitan and the Orthodox he states with sorrow that the Orthodox, when they hear of a Union, immediately think of that of Brest and close their minds and hearts to any new idea:

My invitation was understood by all as a call to complete fusion with us Catholics and then only as an acceptance by all Orthodox of our type of Union with the Roman Apostolic See.

Yet one could have considered various possibilities of agreement without fusion into one faith. One could have also thought of a union of the Orthodox confession with the Catholic in which out of the two would arise a new one, one which would not be either the old Orthodox or the old Catholic Church. No one, however, thought about such various possibilities. My proposition was taken broadly as simply a call to the Union (of Brest).⁵¹

Sheptytsky did not have in mind an outright submission, a joining-to pure and simple. He even anticipates what post-Vatican II times know as the concept of “sister-Churches.” We do not wish to enter here into a long historical elaboration of whether or not the tragedy of the Union of Brest originates precisely in this area, namely, the different understanding of relations between particular Churches and the Roman Church. In 1595–1596 the Orientals seem to have operated on the principle of equality, the Latins on the principle of superior-inferior. Sheptytsky in his reaction to the statements of the Orthodox seeks to calm their fears, and in doing so he clarifies for us what sort of Union he would have in mind.

What the Union could and should be

To your open letter I answer plainly: Gentlemen, you take as your starting point the thought that I could have had in mind only such a joining of the Ukrainian Church to the Catholic Church that would be equal to a total submission. That is not so. Particular Churches, while being in Union with all other Churches of the West, preserve

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 333–34.

far-reaching autonomy, which can even be called autocephaly because it is a complete freedom of that dependence which ties single eparchies to the authority of a patriarch. In our Ukrainian Catholic Church the metropolitan appoints the bishops, and no disciplinary law of the Latin Church is obligatory for us.⁵²

This answer of Sheptytsky makes one thing very clear. Union with the Universal-Catholic Church does not mean submission to the pope as to the patriarch of the West, but an acceptance of his supreme authority as father and pastor of the Universal Church over and above any concept of a western patriarchate. The difference is fundamental: the pope as pope is not Latin but Catholic.

Thus, from considering what in the vision of Sheptytsky the Union of the Orthodox and the Catholics should not be, we have come to the very positive statement of what it must be: an assurance that any Church which is in perfect communion with the Universal Church by its profession of the universal faith and acceptance of the bishop of Rome as the supreme pastor of the entire Church can and should preserve and observe its own proper tradition. The safeguard of this self-identity is ecclesiastical autonomy or, as Sheptytsky even ventures to describe it, an autocephaly. In more acceptable terminology we would say: a Church in communion with the Roman Apostolic See remains a particular Church in the full theological and canonical sense of the term, in any case solidly within Eastern tradition insofar as theory and practice are concerned. No Orthodox could quarrel with such a concept of the Union. For Sheptytsky the “uniate” Churches should be a living proof that such a Union is a reality and in this fact, according to Sheptytsky, lies the ecumenical mission of the Eastern Catholic Churches.

All this could be understood superficially as simply a device to appease the Orthodox. As Sheptytsky understood the matter, a guarantee in theory and in practice of proper particularity to each Church, Eastern or Western, was not a tactical device of questionable value but a postulate of the Church’s catholicity. Here, according to the Metropolitan, is the heart of the matter.

For Sheptytsky the word “catholic” must be stripped of all its historical connotations and returned to its pristine meaning. Precisely

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 349.

because in the East the term “catholic” has such a burdened connotation, Sheptytsky prefers to use “universal.” By this he means the Church in her divine aspect, or more precisely, what is divinely willed in her, that is, in all those qualities which are absolutely common to all men of all times. Under this aspect no individual or group or culture or nation has any prerogatives over any other. That Church as Christ instituted her exists at a particular time in a definable place for the concrete community of men. In that respect the Church becomes particular to a culture or people. How sensitive Sheptytsky was to that theological reality we can learn from the frequency with which he discusses it. We take only two explicit examples from his writings.

Already in 1900, while still the bishop of Stanyslaviv, in a pastoral letter “On the True Faith” he proposes the dual characteristic of “Church for all nations” and “Church in a nation” as a distinctive mark of the Church founded by Christ.⁵³ In the eparchy of Stanyslaviv, especially its southern portions, there lived many Orthodox Christians. Writing for his own faithful, Sheptytsky certainly had also in mind the Orthodox brethren who might be asking questions of the Catholics about the Church. By insisting on the dual character of the Church Sheptytsky answers two possible objections: of a false internationalism of the Catholics—which would mean that in the Catholic Church all national values must be submerged or given up—and of an exaggerated nationalism, which would particularise the Church to the point of making communion between local Churches meaningless if not impossible. He returns to the same subject—he must have felt this necessary—in a pastoral letter written in 1938 on the anniversary of the coronation of Pope Pius XI.⁵⁴ There he stresses that although the Church is a visible community, the bonds which tie it into a unity are not material or earthly, but spiritual. The Church does not have one common language, one rite or culture, ties which are of capital

⁵³ “Пастирське послання вірним Станіславської єпархії на Буковині” [“Pastoral Letter to the Faithful in Bukovyna in the Eparchy of Stanyslaviv,” dated November 21, 1900, in *Твори Слуги Божого Андрея Шептицького* [“Works of the Servant of God Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky,” vol. I. Pastoral Letters. (Toronto: Opera Theologicae Societatis Scientificaе Ucrainorum, vol. XV, 1965), p. 50–77.

⁵⁴ Cf. note 41 above.

importance in any purely human society. The Catholic Church admits all languages and all rites on equal basis.

In the pastoral letter “On Ritual Matters” of 1931, to which we have referred above, Sheptytsky applies the doctrine of the universality of the Church in a unionistic context:

Catholic doctrine, being the teaching of Christ’s Gospel and of the universal Church, is worldwide, given to all peoples for all times. Preachers of that doctrine perhaps more so in the East than in any other part of the world, must be on guard not to limit Christ’s teaching by any national or ritual principles. We say “more in the East than anywhere else” because precisely the Eastern peoples and Eastern Churches... lack this understanding of the universality of Christ’s message. They think that only their form is the genuine form of Christianity and that Catholicism in its essence is identical with the Latin rite and with the West.⁵⁵

It might be good to note here that the Orthodox mentality has an understanding of the universality of the Church not dissimilar to that of the Catholics. In their own concept of the Church the Orthodox are usually inclined to give paramount importance to the national principle. While they accuse the West of identifying the Catholic Church with the Latin rite and one particular nation, they themselves tend to identify Orthodoxy with the Eastern rite and also with certain nations.

A proper understanding of the universality of the Church as growing out of the will of her Divine Founder would be a corrective useful to both sides.

The conclusion follows that were the Eastern rite, the “uniate” Churches, what they were intended to be, they would serve as object lessons *par excellence* of the true universality of the Church of Christ. Instead of becoming a *petra comparationis*, a major hindrance to the Union of all Christians in the East, they would be the ideal link. “Actions speak louder than words” is a practical axiom that finds particular application in this case. Eastern-rite Catholic Churches are a great ecumenical asset, one can say, an indispensable one, not so much by participation in dialogues, by speaking, as by being what they should be. Then the principal obstacle, and a host of secondary objections, would fall of themselves.

⁵⁵ Cf. note 42 above.

In Sheptytsky's opinion the Union of Brest did not achieve its intended goal of bringing all Christians of the Kyivan Metropolia (which in the sixteenth century comprised the lands of present-day Ukraine and Belarus) into communion with the Universal Church because it failed to live up to its intended goal: to be truly Catholic and truly Eastern. We bypass now all the external factors—social, political, cultural, national—which impeded the normal development of the Union. In doing so we do not wish to deny or minimize their influence, which in many instances was indeed crushing, as the perusal of any objective history-book will demonstrate. But the internal factors were more insidious, because they have persisted even when the external circumstances have become quite favorable or at least neutral.

Sheptytsky lays the guilt at the feet of both partners to the Union of Brest: the Westerners and the Easterners. The former were at fault for encouraging and applauding latinisations. It was the West which invented the designation of *praeeminens ritus securior* for their own rite and then extended that mentality into liturgy, canon law, and theology. But the latter, the Easterners, were no less guilty. It was not merely a lack of strength to oppose the incursions of the superior force of the Western rite, which in many cases was supported by the political and administrative authorities, but a mentality of subservience, a lack of appreciation of the fundamental reality beyond the particularity of the rite. Sheptytsky describes their attitude in his pastoral letter "On Ritual Matters" of 1931:

When those who have acknowledged the supreme authority of the universal bishop⁵⁶ and accepted the universal faith, that is, Catholics who are also called "uniates," hold the opinion that to the essence of their Union with Rome belong also certain ritual forms taken over from the Latin rite (just so as according to the inconsistent opinion of the Orthodox, the Eastern rite is inextricably interwoven with Orthodoxy), then their conception that the Latin rite belongs, as it were, to the essence of the Catholic faith, corresponds neither to the attitude of the Catholic Church towards the Orientals nor to the Catholic spirit of the Orientals themselves. That mistake is, so it seems, the most fundamental one of all "uniates." Not having the right understanding of the nature of the Catholic Church nor of the spirit of Catholicism, often enough they give in to the influence of the Latin rite or of national ideals or customs of some Western peoples and slowly come to consider certain customs or practices which have

⁵⁶ A title of the pope used in the Byzantine-Slavic liturgy.

nothing at all in common with Catholic doctrine as matters essentially belonging to it... Obviously, by holding such opinions they make a caricature of Catholic doctrine and suffuse their work with their mistaken opinions... Such narrowness of views makes them completely unsuited for unionistic work and often brings them to cause harm in such work, and therefore they should not be admitted to it. How can those who do not have the spirit of liberty of the Catholic Church bring others to it?⁵⁷

How deeply such attitudes of which Sheptytsky speaks here have sunk into the minds of the “uniates” can be seen from the fact that many, even among the well-educated, will invariably mean Western theology when speaking of “Catholic theology.”

In what concerns the Christian East, any dialogue of ecumenical confrontation stands or falls with the actual status of Eastern Catholics within the Church. In Sheptytsky’s view it is of the essence of the true universality of the Church of Christ that the “uniates”—no matter what their origin or historical reality—be what they are supposed to be: objective and living witnesses to the universality of the Church, truly and completely Catholic and Eastern. On that point he entertained not the slightest doubt. His words and deeds throughout his long ministry as bishop and metropolitan (1899–1944) are the best proof of that.

⁵⁷ Cf. note 42 above.

The Unique People of God
Discourse of His Beatitude Lubomyr Husar,
Metropolitan of Kyiv-Halych,
Head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church,
on the occasion of the beginning of
the return of the Metropolitan See to Kyiv

“Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground” (Ex 3:5). The Lord spoke these words to Moses when he led his flock of sheep to God’s mountain, Horeb. Moses, therefore, covered his face, realising that he was in the Lord’s presence. According to the “Tale of Bygone Years,” St. Andrew witnessed to the holiness of the ground we stand on today, blessing the land of Kyiv and proclaiming, “on these hills the glory of God will shine.” We too with profound respect bow our heads down to this holy ground, aware of our particular responsibility before the Lord and the people.

Without doubt, the past grandeur and glory of Kyiv was associated with its Church. The city built on the winding banks of the Dnipro River was able to become “the mother of the cities of Rus” and the “New Jerusalem” of the Slavs because its Church became the mother of all Christians in Eastern Europe. However, the history of the incarnation of the Word of God, of its Good News among our people, is not only marked with achievements and successes. It is also full of pain and suffering. Remembering with sincere grief this tragic experience, we do not wish to be hostages of days past. Rather, we are called to build a new future on the foundations of a thousand-year patrimony of faith in Christ, a faith that was given to our forefathers. Indeed, the pilgrim from Rome, Pope John Paul II, spoke well when, having visited the capital of Ukraine, he said, “But the Apostle’s vision does not concern only your past; its light shines also on the future of your country.” This future we, Ukrainian Christians, are called to see with our “eyes of the heart” and to cultivate with our own good hands.

In Ukraine today among those who identify themselves as sharers in the ancient Kyivan tradition, there is a growing realisation that “on our land, finally, our own land”, the new brightness of God’s glory can and indeed should shine from a unified Kyivan Church. Much persistent work and fervent prayers will be required in order to achieve a consensus regarding the ecclesial-theological, canonical-juridical, social-political, and spiritual-cultural foundations of a unified Kyivan Church. However, the fact that today the primate of one of the heirs of the early Kyivan Metropolia—the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church — is returning to his see on the banks of Kyiv, is for us an opportune occasion to delineate the underlying principles which could lay the foundation for a common future vision of that unified Church.

I. The past, which we leave to God

Our common ancestral tradition reaches to the moment of the Baptism of Rus’-Ukraine in 988. This tradition was characterized by its openness to the still-undivided centres of Christianity—Rome and Constantinople. Its subsequent thousand-year history has many complex and glorious pages. The discussion of which of these pages should be positively assessed, and which should not, has yet to be completed in professional historical circles. Taking this into account, we as representatives of one of the churches of the Kyivan tradition would not wish to propose our own denominational viewpoint in this presentation. We therefore leave the past to God in the hope that in the future, Ukrainian Christians may reach a common view of their ecclesial history. Today, however, we would like to identify the most important of its conclusions, without entering into details.

1. History records a whole series of cases when the Kyivan Church clearly demonstrated an awareness of the undivided nature of the Body of Christ. We believe that this awareness exists to this day, and serves as a source of hope.
2. The consciousness of ecclesial communion with the Church of Rome in the general memory of the Kyivan Church may have undergone periods of temporary fading (especially when it was purposely being passed over in silence); however, it never disappeared

- completely. Today we express in our ecclesial memory only that which is preserved in it up to our day.
3. In the “exclusivist” ages of the past, association of the denominational branches of the Kyivan Church with different Christian centres resulted in considerable losses in regard to the spiritual and institutional expressions of Kyivan religiosity.
 4. In times of suppressed nationhood, the social life of the Ukrainian churches underwent considerable distortion under the influence of foreign interests.
 5. In the Church’s memory, an awareness of the deep unity of the ancient Church of Kyiv was never extinguished.

II. The present, which is our time for action

1. From jurisdictional dependence to ecclesial particularity

Thanks to the grace of God and because of its unity with Rome, our Church was able not only to survive in adverse historical circumstances, but indeed was able to enrich its ecclesial thought through constant dialogue with the Churches of the West. Naturally, the difficulties which the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church experienced in its relations with the Roman-rite Church, especially through various forms of jurisdictional subjugation, were reflected on the body of our Church in tangible hurts. However, it must be acknowledged that in periods of administrative weakness of the UGCC, this subjugation played an important role in strengthening and even protecting the Church. Additionally, the aforesaid hurt was balanced by an awareness of the special mission of the Eastern Catholic Churches: to serve as a living reminder of those rudiments of exclusivism which swirled and in part continue to swirl in the life of the Latin Church, but also were visible signs of an undivided Christianity.

Today, when the UGCC has re-established and developed its pastoral ministry, its ecclesial structures and its ever more intensive theological life, she senses that she is ready, according to Eastern Christian tradition, to see her structure raised to the rank of patriarchate. A decision to work towards the patriarchate was unanimously accepted at the Third Session of the Sobor of the UGCC in 2002, and also that same year was blessed by the Synod of Bishops. Thus our Church,

responding to the call of the Holy Father to work together on a contemporary understanding of the principle of papal primacy, proposes to the Latin Church to adopt a communion model of relations between the churches. This is important not only because this model was characteristic of the aforementioned relations at the time of the establishment of the Kyivan Church. The communion principle of unity has every chance of becoming the new proposal of the Roman Pontiff for the Orthodox churches, not only providing an opportunity to respect the ecclesial nature of the Eastern Churches, but at the same time to remove from Church life historical antagonisms and prejudices which prevent Catholic-Orthodox understanding.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, the Orthodox churches of Ukraine also underwent the important experience of developing their own particularity. It is not the calling of the UGCC to evaluate which of the ways of achieving particularity are correct and best correspond to current Orthodox ecclesiology. Both attempted paths, that is, the path of following proper canonical procedures, adopted not long ago by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), but also the path of a unilateral declaration of autocephalous status, adopted by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyivan Patriarchate) and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (and other autocephalous churches of the Orthodox world), are based on valid ecclesial and historical arguments, which cannot be simply ignored. Without engaging in such an evaluation, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is in solidarity with those efforts on the part of the Orthodox Churches which are directed towards the confirmation of their own particularity. The UGCC understands these efforts as signs of a valid process which is characteristic of all branches of the Kyivan Church active on the territory of Ukraine.

2. *From equalizing exclusivism to communion-based complementarity*

In the times of the division of the Kyivan Church, its denominational branches found themselves under various forms of dependence on important centres of Christianity—Rome, Constantinople, and Moscow. Complex relations between these centres led to the weakening and, finally, the loss of unity of the Kyivan Church. The age of ecclesial exclusivism did not allow the Kyivan Church to attain that

which she had always sought, that is, unity and harmonious relations with the Christian world.

In today's qualitatively different age, when inter-Church relations are undergoing radical changes, that which earlier was a weakness of Ukrainian Church life may prove to be its strength. Those denominational branches of the Kyivan Church that are historically close to one of the above-mentioned Christian centres do not need to lose their denominational ties, sanctified by time. Today we can state convincingly that the demands that this or that relationship be severed, as was often expressed throughout history, have proved to be inadequate. As was mentioned above, the change of jurisdictional subordination to sisterly communion could not only grant the possibility of retaining valuable aspects of existing relations, but could enrich the common heritage of the Kyivan Church.

Thus, by returning the see of the Kyivan-Halych Metropolitanate to Kyiv, the UGCC brings with it the unique experience of communion with the Christian West and of openness to Christian Europe. On the basis of this experience, the UGCC is firmly convinced that communion with the Church of Rome, as with the "rule of faith" (St. Ignatius of Antioch), can today become an expression of "Ecumenical Orthodoxy" of undivided Christianity, as it existed in the first millennium, as well as greatly benefit the common treasury of the Ukrainian Church.

In addition, our Church is bringing back to Kyiv the treasure of direct succession of the Kyivan-Halych metropolitan see. The uninterrupted ministry of metropolitans since the eleventh century is the fundamental historical-canonical foundation of the particular character of the Kyivan Church.

Ukrainian Orthodox Churches are the bearers of a Kyivan tradition shared in common with the UGCC, and they have indeed better preserved some of its elements. Therefore, all those better things which they have preserved of our common heritage should not be lost. On the contrary, it is the responsibility of each Church to ensure that the portion of our common treasure which it has preserved remains the patrimony of the Ukrainian people.

For the future Church of Kyiv, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church which is in communion with the Moscow Patriarchate has an important role to play. Having been for centuries a part of the Church of Moscow, as the Kyivan Metropolitanate, she contributed greatly

towards the rise and development of the Moscow Patriarchate. At the same time, in being a part of a larger ecclesial context, she was the recipient of various spiritual and theological stimuli. In the formation of the future of the Kyivan Church, it will be important to retain everything that is positive in the experience of the UOC (MP), including the ability to build sisterly relations with the Church of Moscow.

The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate in various ways embody the idea of the autocephaly of the Kyivan Church, which is important for all. The attainment of that idea will make it possible for all the denominational branches of the Kyivan Church to lose all remnants of “uniatistic” thinking, which finds expression in the affirmation that the Kyivan Church necessarily must be subject to other particular Churches—be it of the East or of the West. For all, the experience gained by the UAOC with regard to its conciliar rule of government is important as well.

Therefore, to think about the unity of the Kyivan Church does not mean to renounce the treasure of communion with various Christian centres, but on the contrary—it means that the shared spiritual patrimony of the Kyivan Church can be enriched by the gains of that communion. Not only would the denominational branches of the Kyivan Church be enriched by this, but her sisters, the particular churches of the East and West, would benefit as well. In addition, this would make possible the elimination of divisions, so detrimental to the Church, and allow for the embodiment of the contemporary ecclesial principle of “unity in diversity.”

3. From subjection to the state to social ministry

The fact that Ukrainian territories, and consequently the different branches of the Kyivan Church, found themselves within various political-state entities proved to be no less detrimental to the fate of the Kyivan Church. Each subsequent foreign power sought to remake the religious-ecclesial landscape of Ukraine according to its own notions. The different groups of the People of God in Ukraine were thus encouraged in their ecclesial thinking to conform to the political interests of the respective political power. At the same time, while avoiding negative leanings, the Ukrainian Churches gained the important

experience of supporting the struggle for national liberation of the Ukrainian people. The existence of an independent Ukrainian state today offers a unique occasion for its Churches to reflect on their stance in regard to not only the phenomenon of Ukrainian statehood, but also the historical forms of state subjugation in the past.

Also, all branches of the Kyivan Church in one manner or another suffered immeasurable evil due to the meddling in their internal affairs by authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, and even paid for their faithfulness to the commandments of Christ with the great martyrdom of their servants and children. In striving to protect their own internal freedom, the Ukrainian Churches accumulated an important store of both positive and negative experiences in seeking acceptable relations between Church and State. These relationships were fostered by the Kyivan Church already in the times of the first Kyivan state, in the tenth to thirteenth centuries. The loss of statehood led to the transfer of certain attributes to the Church—she became a symbol of statehood in an age of inter-statehood.

The fact of the renewal of Ukrainian statehood in 1991 has not been adequately assimilated into Ukrainian ecclesial consciousness, and therefore it has become necessary to once again delineate both the differences, as well as the spheres of cooperation (of “symphony”), between Church and state in serving the People of God in Ukraine. In particular, due attention needs to be given to the tradition of internal freedom of the Church from influences and pressures on the part of state structures, a tradition established throughout the centuries in some of the branches of the Church of Kyiv. Subsequently, the reorientation of the Church to labouring for the people needs to be emphasised as well.

The coordinated efforts of the Churches in these areas would help achieve important goals. Thus, first of all, the normalisation of relations amongst the historical branches of the Kyivan Church and the establishment of civilised relations between Church and state would help prevent the unnecessary waste of resources on rivalries between the individual Churches, and between the Churches and the state. In this manner the Churches would also help consolidate the Ukrainian nation and facilitate the resolution of regional and ideological conflicts.

Second, the above-mentioned normalisation of inter-church relations would prevent Ukraine from becoming an object of contest

between influential powers, as has occurred so many times before. Each of the Churches, in renouncing the tradition of subjugation to the political interests of foreign powers, could direct well-established, mutually beneficial relations with other peoples towards the good of its own nation. By introducing the peace of the Gospel and harmony into their relations, the Ukrainian Churches would not only fulfil their Christian responsibility, but also respond to their typically European calling, intrinsic to this continent in its contemporary stage of development. Thus they would not only contribute towards the confirmation of Ukrainian statehood, but also would provide the ecclesial foundation for the understanding of Ukraine's due place in the European home.

4. *From an "ecumenism of ultimatums" to dialogue in partnership*

Recently, the efforts of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to acquire the recognition of its patriarchal status by the Holy Father shook the entire corpus of Catholic-Orthodox relations. The Vatican received protests from the Orthodox Churches which were, unfortunately, formulated in terms of an ultimatum: the recognition by Rome of a UGCC patriarchate, in the view of these Churches, would cause a break in relations between the Catholic Church and all of Orthodoxy.

Earlier, the efforts of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate to acquire recognition of autocephaly from the patriarch of Constantinople had caused serious tensions in relations between the Churches of Constantinople and Moscow. The latter issued ultimatums that recognition of the canonical status of these Churches would result in the breaking of Eucharistic communion between the two Orthodox Churches.

Thus has been drawn what would seem to be the critical lines of demarcation in contemporary inter-church relations, the crossing of which could undermine the achievements of the ecumenical dialogue reached thus far. The possibility of the failure of ecumenical efforts in the area of re-establishing unity between the East and the West will have an impact, and indeed already has an impact, on the Ukrainian churches, given that their relations between one another to a great extent depend on the relations between the recognized centres of

Christianity. The normalization of inter-church relations is therefore an imperative of the present historical moment.

These relations are marked by an inertia associated with schemes and models of the past, which delineated “spheres of influence.” Today, when the map of Europe has drastically changed, the schemes of the past are no longer effective. For one thing, they did not anticipate the existence of an independent Ukrainian state, or the possibility of one Ukrainian (Kyivan) Church. This would seem to be the root of the language of ultimatum in inter-church relations, with the ecumenical dialogue losing its most important and necessary component—an openness of the Churches to each other’s needs.

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church proposes to its particular sister Churches that they consider the superiority of a different manner of overcoming existing conflicts. First, the particular circumstances of the Ukrainian ecclesial situation today should be seen not as a violation of the only possible inter-church order, but as processes determined by the natural development of the Ukrainian Churches. Given that the principles of sisterhood between the Churches and of authentic ecumenism exclude a division of Churches into important and unimportant, serious attention should be given to the internal needs of the mentioned Churches, and their proposals should be given serious study.

Second, a stable Christian peace in Ukraine—a prerequisite for continued ecumenical dialogue—can be ensured only by taking into account the concerns of each of the interested parties. The benefit of such an approach is expressed not only by the basic culture of the Gospel, which can comprehend strength in weakness, but by the experience of contemporary civilisation in the area of conflict resolution.

Third, instead of monopolistic efforts to resolve the problem of one particular Church in Ukraine to the exclusive advantage of one particular confession, there ought to be a united effort of the entire Christian community. A civilised solution regarding the destiny of the Kyivan Church could become a true “laboratory of ecumenism” (John Paul II), free of ultimatums and realised through a spirit of collaboration and partnership. Harmonious, all-embracing forms of unification of the Kyivan Church (e.g., in the structure of a single common patriarchate—a continuous aspiration of Ukrainians at least since the seventeenth century), by means of a unique openness

to communion, could become an opportunity for Christian centres to meet on its territory to finally arrive at new ecumenical models of understanding. In this case, the possibility of such an agreement will be realised not in opposition to the important vital needs of the Ukrainian Churches, but in accordance with the degree of readiness of Rome, Constantinople, and Moscow to develop communion with Kyiv and in accordance with the degree to which Kyiv is ready to advance communion with them.

5. From mutual denominational conflict to a primacy of love

No one has yet measured the depth of trauma to Christian sensitivities brought on by polemical forms of theologising and by proselytising methods of pastoral ministry. The thousand-year-old practice of educating the faithful in the spirit of post-Schism Greek-Latin opposition, as well as the four hundred-year-old practice of a similar education in the spirit of post-Brest confrontation in Ukraine, has substantially obscured the icon of Gospel religiosity in the souls of Ukrainian Christians. The losses and defeats suffered by the Ukrainian Churches on the road towards unity travelled up to the present demonstrate that it is impossible to resolve the future fate of the Kyivan Church with such baggage in tow.

Today none of the Ukrainian Churches can consider itself to be freed from responsibility for these spiritual losses. By returning the see of the Kyivan-Halych Metropolitanate of the UGCC to Kyiv, we repeat the words of apology expressed in 2001 in Lviv: "In your presence, Holy Father, in the name of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church we wish to ask forgiveness from the Lord, Creator and Father of us all, as also from those whom we, sons and daughters of this Church, may have wronged in any way. So that the horrible past may not hang over us and poison our life, we readily forgive those who in any way may have wronged us as well."

We call on our brothers of the other Christian denominations to work together on the development of a Gospel culture in our relations, which will eliminate mutual animosity. Our dialogue will not be easy, but it is up to us to ensure that it be directed "towards peace, and not war." (Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky) This would allow us to substitute the present practice of exchanging insults with a sincere

exchange of spiritual gifts. We will not achieve success immediately; however, the experience of many Christian communities in Europe and the world demonstrates that it is possible.

III. The future in which we would like to believe

This is the view of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church regarding the most important and basic principles on which it could be possible to build a future vision of the Kyivan Church. Naturally, the listing and overview of these principles provided here cannot be considered exhaustive, and therefore we call on the faithful of our Church, as well as on people of good will of other Churches and communities, to work on the further elaboration of this great goal. People today have a tendency to lose faith. We propose to change that to a renewed faith in God and in the holiness of the choice which our forefathers made in that distant year of 988. In our opinion, the road to renewal of this faith lies, in particular, through the renewal of the one Kyivan Church in a united Patriarchate. Inspired by the example of the holy passion-bearers Borys and Hlib, she will purify her memory of the pain of historical wrongs and heal the deep wounds of divisions. The promise that this high calling is possible and attainable in the land on the Kyivan hills can be found in the words of the Almighty, spoken in similar circumstances to the prophet Ezekiel, “I will make them one nation upon the land, in the mountains of Israel... never again shall they be two nations, and never again shall they be divided into two kingdoms... they will be my people and I their God” (37:21–23).

The blessing of the Lord be upon you!

† LUBOMYR

Kyiv, Bright Tuesday,

April 13, 2004

The Patriarchate of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

Pastoral message

1. Introduction

On 3 June of this year of grace 2004, the Permanent Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, presided over by the head of the Church and accompanied by the metropolitans, visited His Holiness Pope John Paul II. The main subject of the conversation was the establishment of the patriarchate of the UGCC. This is how the Holy Father expressed his position on the issue:

“[...] I share your aspiration to have a full juridical and ecclesial structure, which aspiration is rooted also in the prescriptions of canons and councils. I share it both in prayer and in patience, in anticipation of the day set by God on which I, being the successor of St. Peter the Apostle, will be able to confirm the mature fruit of your ecclesial development.”

Some people misunderstood these words as the failure of the whole cause of achieving the patriarchate. In reality, the Ecumenical Pontiff confirmed the legitimacy of this need. He elevated the idea of the patriarchate over purely human expectations and reminded us that the cause of the UGCC patriarchate is not determined by earthly politics, even though it influences them.

We would like to explain by this letter what “the patriarchate of the Church” means, in order for us all to understand its essence better and more deeply, and to think and act according to the provisions of the patriarchal system of the Church once we have understood it.

2. Historical aspects

The last century was for us a terrible page of history. It is difficult to cover in one glance everything that our nation and our Church

went through during that time. Let us just mention the two world wars which rolled through our land, a sequence of occupations, persecution of the faithful of our Church, the man-made famine which took nearly one-fourth of the population of our land, and numerous Bolshevik repressions, which destroyed the national intelligentsia.

At the same time, in the twentieth century we were close to fulfillment of our two great dreams. The first was the nation-wide dream of an independent state. Attempts were made to establish an independent state in the 1920s and then in the 1940s. However, by God's grace the aspiration for which so many people had suffered and even laid down their lives became a reality only at the end of the century: since 1991 we have had our own independent Ukrainian state. So the dream of statehood for our nation has been fulfilled.

The second dream was the ecclesial dream of the full flourishing of our Church through the establishment of a patriarchate. This dream developed simultaneously in the two branches of the Kyivan tradition of our Church: amongst the Orthodox and amongst the Greek-Catholics. Both thought about it, desired it, and looked forward to an opportunity for its fulfillment.

In the Orthodox Church, such attempts were made in the 1920s. However, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—Kyivan Patriarchate proclaimed the patriarchal status of their structure only in the 1990s. Despite the fact that it is not completed yet because of the lack of international recognition by other Churches, the very idea of the patriarchate has already been implemented in a way. However, we are not in a position to consider the situation in the Ukrainian Orthodox world in detail.

In parallel, this was spoken about very clearly, though in limited circles, in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in the 1930s and 1940s. But after the release in 1963 of Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj of blessed memory, and after his address to the whole Church, the idea of the patriarchate became something very important and real for our Church community.

This idea started in a somewhat disorderly way and went through different stages of development for forty years. Metropolitan Josyf of blessed memory proclaimed this aspiration of our nation at the Second Vatican Council. However, it was not possible to get it approved formally then, because there was no developed procedure

for establishing patriarchates at that time. However, the patriarchal thought and aspiration were growing, and became increasingly clear and crystallized. There was a time when some people thought that the patriarchate was, in a way, a surrogate for an independent Ukrainian state (our nation was then part of the Soviet Union); others considered it to be the solution to all church problems. But in the course of time, these thoughts became clearer, what was unimportant dropped away, and the ecclesial position itself improved.

Therefore, as compared to forty years ago, when this idea was understood in different ways even by the bishops themselves, at the beginning of this century we have reached a common understanding and unanimous wish to establish the patriarchal system of our Church. In 2002, representatives of the whole Church from all countries where Ukrainians live unanimously declared that the nation, which they represented at the Patriarchal Sobor [Assembly], desires the final fulfillment of this task. This thought was also confirmed by all the bishops of our Church present at the Synod and handed to the Holy Father in the form of a synodal decision. In the beginning of June, this year of grace, the Holy Father accepted our wish and, as we quoted earlier, acknowledged its appropriateness. However, there is still no final recognition of the patriarchate in the full sense of the word. But now, it is just a question of time: the day will come when the second dream of our nation is fulfilled as well.

3. What is a patriarchate?

Jesus Christ established one Church and gave it all the means necessary for salvation by sending it the Holy Spirit, establishing the Holy Sacraments, leaving it His teaching and commissioning the apostles to preach in the world (see Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:27), as well as by forming the Church into a constitutive structure of the Christian community headed by bishops. By Christ's will, this structure of the Church has existed since its beginning in the form of eparchies and will exist until the end of the world (see *Lumen gentium*, [LG], 3).

By the will of its Founder, a single Church of Christ exists on Earth in many local eparchy-churches. However, according to Providence, as the Second Vatican Council (LG 23) teaches, the Church also knows a third, intermediary form, that of so-called particular Churches. These

are groups of eparchies united on the basis of common territory, language, culture or state structure. In the course of time, on a historical basis, and confirmed by competent church authority, the particular Churches have developed their theological, spiritual, and liturgical traditions, their own canonical discipline and, most importantly, their hierarchical structure: the assembly of bishops with one head, called the patriarch or metropolitan.

Beginning in the earliest times, such Churches bearing the name of patriarchates and having patriarchal structures have appeared throughout the Christian world, in East and West. This form of church grouping did not spread in the West, where only one authentic patriarchate, that of Rome, remained, except for a few purely honorary ones. In the East, on the other hand, it became the usual structural form for many particular Churches, which accepted the patriarchal system under various circumstances and at different times up through the last century.

In view of the fact that this form is typical of the Christian East, the Second Vatican Council directed that particular Eastern Catholic Churches should be granted it. This wish of the participants of the Second Vatican Council was recently repeated by the pope in a post-synodal homily on the bishop's authority, *Pastores Gregis*. In view of the importance of the above and the ignorance of the faithful of our Church of this document, both in Ukraine and the diaspora, we are citing a longer passage:

“Among the institutions characteristic of the Eastern Catholic Churches are the Patriarchal Churches. These belong to those groupings of Churches which, as the Second Vatican Council states, by God's Providence were organically constituted with the passage of time and enjoy both proper discipline and liturgical usages, and a common theological and spiritual heritage, even as they continue to preserve the unity of faith and the one divine constitution of the universal Church. Their particular dignity comes from the fact that they, somewhat like mothers of faith, have given birth to other Churches which are in some sense their daughters, and have remained linked to them by a close bond of charity in the sacramental life and in mutual respect for rights and duties.” [Let us add our own example, that the patriarchal Church of Constantinople, the New Rome, had the Church of Kyiv as its daughter, and the latter became the mother-Church to the Church of Moscow.—† Lubomyr]

“In the Church the institution of the Patriarchate is truly ancient. Already attested to at the first Ecumenical Council of Nicaea,

it was recognized by the first ecumenical Councils and remains the traditional form of governance in the Eastern Churches. In its origin and particular structure, however, it is of ecclesiastical institution. For this reason the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council expresses the desire that: 'Where there is a need, new patriarchates [are] to be set up. This is reserved to an ecumenical council or to the Roman Pontiff'" (*Pastores Gregis*, 61).

4. Who establishes patriarchates?

For centuries, patriarchates appeared under various circumstances and in various ways, yet always as a church structure in a certain territory or a certain state. In the second millennium, patriarchates usually arose by a decision of the respective local Church, which decision was canonically recognised by other patriarchal Churches very often supported by state authorities. Such recognition sometimes had to be awaited for a long time.

Historically, Catholic patriarchates were recognized by the pope of Rome. Today, in accordance with the effective norms proclaimed by the Second Vatican Council, new patriarchates for Churches of the Eastern tradition are established by an Ecumenical Council and the pope of Rome. According to the Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches, alterations may not be made to the systems of those Churches "except to obtain for themselves an organic improvement" (par. 6).

5. Government of a patriarchal Church

The patriarchal structure very clearly incarnates the internal unity of a particular Church of the Eastern tradition, because it has one person as its head, which person becomes the centre of all believers of the particular Church and through whom communion becomes visible, communion being unity with the successor of St. Peter the Apostle, whom Jesus Christ appointed to be the visible sign of the oneness and unity of His Church.

The word "patriarch" derives from a Greek word, the root of which means "father." All the bishops of a particular Church gather around the patriarch and, together with him and under his leadership, constitute the synod, which cares jointly for the whole Church.

6. Some of the criteria of the patriarchal system

As was already mentioned, a particular Church is a community of faithful united by their liturgical, theological and spiritual traditions, canonical discipline, and common hierarchy. A particular Church also has its own separate history and established Christian culture. To use ecclesial terminology, it is a Church *sui juris* [self-governing]. Therefore, not every particular Church necessarily meets the criteria of a patriarchal Church.

In addition to all the theological and canonical elements, a particular Church should also have a maturity of awareness on the part of its faithful, expressed through the holiness of its spiritual children and through support of patriarchal life by the faithful. The maturity of church life also includes readiness to help people outside the native Church in their religious life and to contribute to the life of the Universal Church.

The patriarchate as a normal form of existence and activity of particular Churches expresses and ensures the fullness of means necessary for the well-rounded ministry of the Church.

7. Does the UGCC meet the mentioned criteria?

The UGCC has all the above-mentioned characteristics to become a patriarchal Church.

First, as part of the Eastern tradition, our Church considers the patriarchate to be the natural form of its existence, which fully accords with the Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Eastern Catholic Churches, which says that "the patriarchal office in the Eastern Church is a traditional form of government". (11)

Second, the establishment of the patriarchate is determined by the needs of development of the UGCC, which was unanimously declared by the delegates of the Patriarchal Sobor of 2002. Our Church is becoming mature in terms of particularity today, which we see as a clear work of the Holy Spirit.

Third, our Church is convinced that, according to the requirement of the Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism, the patriarchal system "is better suited to the character of our faithful and more for the good of their souls" (comp. 16). In other words, we consider the

patriarchate to be a better means for more perfect Church life. As a believer, one should view the patriarchate as a religious-ecclesial reality, where its every element has appropriate rights and duties. In the life of the Eastern Church at all its levels, the patriarchal system develops a sense of greater responsibility for one's actions. The Church's well-being becomes the business of each of its faithful to a greater extent than before.

Fourth, the transfer to the patriarchal system is the Church's response to the establishment of the state independence of Ukraine. The patriarchal system here is understood as a means of reorganisation and normalisation of the faithful's spiritual life for the sake of their common good and the good of the Church.

Fifth, our Church is not limited to its existence on the territory of the native state but, in view of historical circumstances, is spread wide throughout different countries and has local hierarchical structures there. The UGCC in Ukraine and the diaspora constitutes a community considerable in size. But its power and importance are not in numbers, but in the unity and consolidation of its spiritual forces. The patriarchal system of the Church will allow this goal to be achieved to the fullest extent. It was confirmed by the delegates of the Third Session of the Patriarchal Sobor of the UGCC in their address, which says that the establishment of the patriarchate would strengthen "the cooperation between the mother-Church and the daughter-Churches in the settlements."

Patriarch Josyf once suggested that the great martyrdom showed by UGCC faithful in the twentieth century is a strong reason for the establishment of its patriarchate. While completely agreeing with the idea of our famous confessor of the faith, we would like, however, to warn the faithful against an incorrect interpretation of this argument. The fact of their heroic martyrdom is a vivid indication of the maturity of the members of our Church. It is a spiritual treasure from which the next generations of faithful draw richly. However, the patriarchal status of the UGCC is not to be its faithful's reward for martyrdom. Such an interpretation of the above-mentioned Christian virtue can distort its great spiritual meaning. The reward for martyrs is in heaven, and here on earth martyrdom becomes a foundation for the Church to grow on. The fundamental elements of this foundation are the love of God and one's neighbour, faithfulness to the truth, the

ability to forgive offenders, a sense of solidarity with those in need, and so on. A patriarchate built on such a foundation will be established forever, because the Lord Himself recognises it.

8. Ecumenical circumstances

The project of establishing the UGCC patriarchate by the incumbent pope of Rome triggered protests based on the following challenges:

- The patriarchate of the UGCC will weaken communion with the successor of St. Peter the Apostle and, therefore, the connection with the whole Catholic Church.
- The patriarchate will mean the establishment of a Church of a nationalistic colouring, which will sow hatred against all others.
- The UGCC patriarchate would become a great obstacle in the way of the unification of Christians in Ukraine.
- The establishment of the UGCC patriarchate would mean defiance of the rights of the Moscow Patriarchate, which considers Ukraine its canonical territory.
- The patriarchal status of the UGCC would lead to the preservation of “uniatism,” which in our times has been condemned as an inappropriate way to achieve unity among all Christians.

Of course, every challenge evokes our emotional response, but it is possible and necessary to see challenges in a different light by using them for a better understanding of our situation, on the one hand, and for visualisation of the appropriate and necessary steps we should take on the other. For we do not want the establishment of the patriarchate to cause others to suffer. In our complicated situation, we should protect our rights calmly and with careful consideration and respect the just rights of others.

We are not going to answer each of the points in particular, but rather will express our general attitude towards them. In the present historical moment, the argument which is the most urgent of all is the ecumenical argument, specifically, the fear that the recognition of the UGCC patriarchate by the pope may lead to a disruption of the ecumenical dialogue and freezing of the relations between the Catholic Church and the fullness of Orthodoxy. This is not our intention. We believe that our patriarchate will be an important factor for the im-

provement of relations between Christians and will not cause disunity. For the patriarchate of the UGCC is needed not only by our Church, but also by all particular Churches. Therefore, we are sure that the day will come when the whole Christian community realises this.

We were grieved by the reaction of the Orthodox Churches, which took a clearly non-peaceful position and made it known to the Holy Father through the Moscow Patriarchate without learning about our history and our current situation or our spiritual needs. However, the establishment of our patriarchate is by no means designed to be a threat or intrigue against the Orthodox Churches and does not infringe their rights in anything. The UGCC (whether as a patriarchate or not) has no claims against the Orthodox. In the same way, the Orthodox cannot have claims against Greek-Catholics regarding territory or system and way of life. When ecclesial values are at issue, there should be no room for secular categories, because ecclesial values cannot become the subjects of discussions.

At the end of the sixteenth century, the Kyivan Church chose its own special way to ensure unity in the Universal Church. Part of our nation rejected that way at that time and thereby caused the division of the Kyivan Church. However, the part which is today called the Greek-Catholic Church became enriched and benefited from taking that way, because it was able to preserve its faith and originality in critical moments of its existence. Of course, there are both bright and dark pages in the history of our Church. However, we Greek-Catholics have no wish to impose our solutions upon anyone as the only possible and right ones. Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky confirmed this in his dialogue-by-correspondence with his Orthodox brethren in the early 1940s. But the goal spoken of by Metropolitans Peter Mohyla and Michael Rohoza (who sought the way to unity in a common patriarchate) was the same, namely, to restore the initial unity of the time of Volodymyr the Great. Today, in the twenty-first century, our patriarchate is designed not to be an obstacle, but to be the path to a situation in which Ukraine has a single patriarch at St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv.

Would the establishment of the Greek-Catholic Patriarchate mean an increase of hatred for non-Ukrainians, as some maintain? No, because a patriarchate, where Christian virtues are fostered, cannot indulge in chauvinism. Christian patriotism, however, is a virtue. It is

normal to wish one's nation well; it is seeking such well-being at the expense of other nations that is a violation of the Christian norm. We sincerely expect that life under the patriarchal system, if treated with respect by all neighbours, can only lead to establishment of agreement in our part of the world.

But probably the most paradoxical of the challenges issued by those opposing our patriarchate is the statement that its establishment is designed to be "an escape from Rome." Such a challenge is a complete negation of our faith. There is no doubt that, when our Church achieves the patriarchate, the character of relations with certain Roman institutions will change, as the laws require. But these changes will concern only the secondary, administrative sphere. The main feature of each particular Catholic Church is communion with the successor of St. Peter the Apostle, the bishop of Rome, and we will never disown that.

9. Different views on the UGCC patriarchate

In the discussions of the patriarchal issue, great importance is sometimes assumed by the very atmosphere of such discussions in the Church. Efforts towards the establishment of the patriarchate at times take the shape of a struggle for the patriarchate, accompanied by excessively strong passions and unjustified accusations. Similar passions and accusations at times accompany the struggle against the patriarchate. In both situations, the faithful of the Church would be expected to show due humility and love for each other.

Yes, on the one hand, the Church respects the zeal of activists of the patriarchal movement and their commitment to the idea. The hierarchy of the Church blesses the establishment of the patriarchate in the life and consciousness of its faithful. In particular, it does this by encouraging the lay movement. However, in showing support for the idea of the patriarchate, we should remember that unchurchly methods in such a struggle, and the tense psychological atmosphere created by them, only harm the establishment of the patriarchate. They weaken the Church and, among other things, sow doubts as to whether the establishment of the UGCC patriarchate is advisable and timely.

On the other hand, the Church's task is to respect doubts as to the necessity of the patriarchate and to give a reasoned response thereto at the same time. Sincere people's doubts in themselves only serve to deepen and crystallize the new maturing vision in the Church. However, these doubts should not assume the form of disobedience or schism, because the spirit of peace and love, which envelops the Church, suffers from it.

Despite the fact that we speak about the patriarchate in the categories of an ecclesial system, it is not just a structure. The patriarchate is a state of soul, the best expression of the Church's essence and calling. Therefore, our nation's aspiration for the establishment of the patriarchate in the past and now should be viewed in terms of the Church and God and not as an end in itself. For the patriarchate is a way. But the aim of the Church is the salvation of people through serving God and one's neighbours.

10. The future tasks of the people of God of the UGCC

According to Christian custom, as far as the duties and tasks of the people of God are concerned, the bishops of the UGCC would like to start with themselves. Even Patriarch Josyf once stressed, "The episcopacy should be an example of unanimity in governing the Church and an example of unity in all areas of church and national life!" Today, the UGCC hierarchy confirms its common intention to build up our Church's patriarchate using all possible ecclesial means. We also ask our Lord Jesus Christ to bless our efforts and we ask our brothers and sisters in Christ to help us at all times in trust and accord.

Of extreme importance for the process of establishing the patriarchal system of the UGCC is the position of communities of consecrated life. This was also mentioned by Patriarch Josyf in his testament: "It was the Servant of God Andrei's wish and the plea of me, the heir of his testament, that all our monastic orders and associations ... should compete with each other in growth in personal holiness and in zealous and honest service to Christ and their native Ukrainian Church." The prayer of those betrothed to God on behalf of the patriarch and the patriarchate of the UGCC will surely be heard by Him. The forgiveness of sins committed by the children of the Church along their pilgrim way will be obtained by the prayer of the righteous.

It is hard to overestimate the importance of the role to be played by the UGCC clergy in the establishment of its patriarchate. From the pastoral point of view, one can say that the key to the hearts of all the faithful of our Church is exactly in their hands. An important guidepost for us here will again be Patriarch Josyf's directions: "To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow-elder... Be shepherds of God's flock which is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be, not greedy for money, but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away" (see 1 Peter 5:1–4). It is important that pastors strengthen their parishioners in the faith in every way for the benefit of the patriarchate, and engage their efforts in the development of the patriarchal structure. However, it is no less an important responsibility of the pastors to make sure at all times that these efforts assume appropriate ecclesial forms and are for the good of the Church and the people.

Finally, one should mention the tasks for those in whose hearts the main fruit of the patriarchate will grow, that is, the tasks for the laity. Here again the words of Patriarch Josyf are prophetic for us: "Completing [individual particular Eastern] Churches with the patriarchal crown has always been the fruit of mature Christian consciousness in the people of God in all its parts, in the consciousness of clergy and pastors, where the consciousness of the laity, the spiritual flock entrusted to their pastoral care, has played a considerable role. For only the mature consciousness of their own Church and national treasures, their own cultural and historical achievements and values, their own works and sacrifices, which were included in the treasury of the whole Universal Church of Christ, have provided a firm foundation for a patriarchate!" The establishment of the patriarchal system will finally depend exactly on the good will, judicious activity and, at the same time, the due humility of the laity!

A new current of dynamism should run through all the structures of the Church. Patriarchal and synodal committees should begin to work more efficiently, because they are the main bodies where the pastoral and administrative life of the Church is formed. The activity of Church structures at the eparchial, deanery, and parish levels should be filled with fresh energy. Reasonable autonomy, based on the

main principles of episcopal ministry and the principle of subsidiarity, should be supplemented here by a sense of mutual responsibility, common goals, and church-wide solidarity.

Especially, much should be done to explain the goals and objectives of the patriarchate to the faithful of other particular Churches. For, using the words of John Paul II's encyclical "The Light of the East" (*Oriente Lumen*, OL), "one important way to grow in mutual understanding and unity consists precisely in improving our knowledge of one another". (24)

We have already mentioned that the patriarchal status of a Church is not just a decree of the Synod of Bishops, approved by the recognition of the Holy Father. It is first of all the transformed life of the people of God, who understand their new duties and responsibilities. It is the task of the whole Church to work relentlessly on such a transformation. (OL, 19) The following words of John Paul II will be an important signpost for us along this path: "May the Lord open our hearts, convert our minds and inspire in us concrete, courageous steps, capable if necessary of breaking through clichés, easy resignation, or stalemate" (OL, 19).

11. The importance of the blessing

The fact that our Church awaits the blessing of its patriarchate by the Holy Father is sometimes received by the faithful with impatient misunderstanding. Let us try to consider this issue using the example of a well-known fact from the life of the Servant of God Metropolitan Andrei.

We know how passionately Roman Sheptytsky desired to become a Basilian monk and Catholic priest even from his childhood. We know what pain was inflicted on his heart by his father's reluctance to give his blessing. As an adult, having the formal right to fulfill his dream, Roman still was able to say humbly, "Let Your will be done!" And the son's humility worked a miracle: Count Sheptytsky not only gave his permission, but completely believed in this calling of his son.

The conclusion for us is obvious. Yes, we share Patriarch Josyf's conviction that the completion of our Church with the patriarchal crown is the "fruit of mature consciousness" in its people of God. And we will continue to establish appropriate patriarchal structures and consciousness in the life of our Church. However, without the

blessing of the Holy Father and without our due humility, our patriarchate could become a wound in the body of the Universal Church, and this is what makes us cautious. We are sure that we will live to see the fatherly blessing as Roman Sheptytsky did: the Holy Father will surely bless the Kyiv-Halych Patriarchate. The moment when it happens also must become a “ripe fruit,” grown in the people’s souls under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the problem here is not in the pope’s personal agreement or disagreement, but, as he himself confirmed, in the mystery of God’s blessing. And that is exactly why, after it has been blessed by His grace, the patriarchate can become what we want it to, and that is to become a celebration for the whole Christian community.

May the Lord’s blessing be upon you!

† LUBOMYR

Lviv,
September 6, 2004

**Address of the Synod of Bishops
of the Kyiv-Halych Metropolitanate
to the clergy, religious, and laity
of the Ukranian Greek Catholic Church
and to all people of good will on the occasion of the 60th
anniversary of the Lviv Pseudo-sobor of 1946**

*For the peace of the whole world,
for the well-being of God's holy churches
and for the unity of all
let us pray to the Lord!*

Beloved in Christ! Until now we considered the events which took place in the past, in particular, the circumstances and consequences of the official liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church at the Pseudo-sobor in Lviv in 1946, the sorrowful anniversary of which has occasioned the present reflection. The great life-giving lesson of our past consists of a Church's ability to survive, a Church which emerged because of its openness to others and a sincere desire for unity, despite prohibitions and liquidations, providing the world with real martyrs for the faith. However, the heroic resistance of the UGCC to persecution cannot deter us from seeing the bitter reality of separation and the mutual struggle that continues to this day, for which we too carry guilt and responsibility. Having acquired so many different historical experiences, we must decide on the principles of our work today and our progress in the future in order to achieve genuine unity in Christ or, more precisely, to restore its original character not only as a historical reality but as the foundation of Christian life.

All who experienced the times of communist persecution for the faith came to know these special sentiments of community and solidarity, which brought people together; sentiments praised so much by the Saviour: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). It was this kind of unity, manifested

through love for neighbour, that formed the rock which the powers of evil could not overcome. In difficult circumstances of underground life people shared with one another their mutual support and infinite confidence, lived the pains of their neighbours, and easily sacrificed the dearest things for their sake. Our Church must continue fostering this gathering together through God's love.

Beyond the barbed wires of concentration camps, in the impenetrable woods and snows of Siberia, in the piercing winds of the Kazakh steppes, we experienced another miracle of unity—the bonding of people belonging to different Churches and denominations. Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants lived together as genuine brothers and sisters. They were united into one Body by the cross of Christ; their solidarity came from their common suffering. Moreover, in the unequal duel with the Godless regime, all those who had the inspired Word of the Creator as their only weapon, found themselves side by side with one another. This “ecumenism of the Gulag” should become a spiritual treasury for everyone, not just for ethnic Ukrainians but also for Russians, Poles, Jews and Crimean Tatars; believers and unbelievers. Our task is not simply to preserve the memory of this spiritual bonding, but also to make it the foundation of our contemporary reality, developing it more and more. And then Ukraine, our common home, will become a blessed country where law is interwoven closely with grace, major civil rights and freedoms are guaranteed, and peace and harmony prevail.

However, we must clearly affirm that it is impossible to achieve genuine unity by relying solely on human solidarity, deprived of a spiritual foundation or conditioned by the presence of a common enemy. Indeed, how can one otherwise explain the deplorable and even disgraceful fact that once the open enemy was removed, again we plunged into a whirl of dissension and discord and became imbued with the spirit of rivalry and opposition? We are so possessed by this spirit that we do not even notice how we create enemies for ourselves, become vulnerable to external intrigues, become weakened before the numerous challenges of this world. All these are bitter fruits of our bringing to God and to His Church that, which should be remain in the earthly realm of Caesar, namely political interests, human ambitions and the spirit of rivalry mentioned above. We loudly name our earthly and petty misunderstandings “inter-denominational conflicts” as if trying

to justify ourselves in the eyes of God and hoping to coax out of Him legitimization of our wicked deeds from on high. Certainly, not all is well with the way we believe, if we live and act in this way contrary to the clear commandment of our Lord: "So that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you" (John 17:21).

In order not to be caught in despair and be lost in hopelessness, we must once again turn to the example of our martyrs for the faith, which allows us to feel more closely the mystery of our Saviour's passion and death. He knew what awaited Him; He knew who would persecute Him and who would hand Him over to agony, who would "wash his hands" and who would deny Him because of fear. And knowing all this, anticipating all the spiritual and physical suffering He would have to endure, and even, in his full humanity, begging that he be spared this cup, He voluntarily takes up the cross since this is the will of the Father, since this is the only way to redeem the sins of humanity with His innocent blood. He does not curse or reproach His torturers; He prays for them sincerely. Thus, genuine faith is obedience to God's will and readiness to drink the full cup of suffering, even when it is possible to avoid it; it is a deep conviction that the Lord will not abandon you during horrible trials: "If we have died with Him we shall also live with Him" (2 Timothy 2:11).

This faith envisages not only an infinite hope for His mercy and might, to which first of all our Church owes its rescue, but also a readiness to live, suffer and even die with Christ. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16). In this way our Church also paid with the blood of its best sons and daughters for the redemption of possibly the worst sin, that of human pride which is the source of all separation. For this sin not only alienates us from one another. What is much more frightful, it distances us from the Redeemer of humanity. No passing political or pragmatic reasons, important and useful though they may seem to us, cannot justify this fundamental separation. Therefore, being in unity among ourselves requires an unconditional being in unity with God. The Lord said: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit" (John 15:5). This is the main conclusion and key to the search for answers to those questions, which we seek to address, reflecting on the pages of our recent past.

History has justified the sacrificial faithfulness to the cause of ecclesial unity of our ancestors, for, believing strongly and firmly keeping their vows, the martyrs and confessors of our Church were united with the Lord. However, our state of unity with God isn't preordained nor can it be taken for granted. It must be achieved by a righteous life. The Apostle Saint Paul reminds us: "Do not become haughty, but stand in awe... God's kindness to you, provided you remain in His kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off" (Romans 11:20–22). Thus, unification with the Lord must not always result in the sacrifice of martyrdom. Nevertheless, to find the path leading to the House of the Father, we must necessarily make the first step, that of acknowledging our own weaknesses and transgressions. Therefore, let us transfigure our hearts and encourage our neighbours to do the same, so that together we may fulfill the paschal act of mutual penance and forgiveness: "Let us embrace each other. Let us call: Brother, even those who hate us, and forgive all by the resurrection." Only then the insidious power of wrong-doing in the past will stop poisoning our thoughts, and the souls of the martyrs and their offenders will finally find rest in the incomprehensible judgments of the Lord.

**On behalf of the Synod of Bishops of the
Kyiv-Halych Major Archbishopric
+ Lubomyr**

Kyiv,
March 7, 2006

APPENDIX

Biography of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky*

Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky was born Count Roman Alexander Maria Szeptycki in 1865 in the Ukrainian village of Prylbychi. The son of a polonized (and therefore latinized) Ukrainian aristocrat, Jan Szeptycki, and Sophia Fredro (daughter of the Polish writer Aleksander Fredro), he was conscious of the fact that his ancestors included some notable bishops and metropolitans of the Greek-Catholic Church of Kyiv. After many obstacles created by his father, the young Count Szeptycki was able to enter the Ukrainian monastery of the Order of Saint Basil the Great in 1891, and accepted the monastic name Andrei. In 1900 he was made Bishop of Stanyslaviv and shortly afterwards, at the age of 36, became the metropolitan, i.e., the ranking hierarch of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. He remained at this post until his death on November 1, 1944.

His life was an example of heroic virtue. An extremely active pastor, who used his personal wealth to fund thousands of philanthropic projects, he was also a man of deep prayer. A gifted preacher and prolific writer, he reached out to his people constantly, teaching uneducated peasants the basics of hygiene and agricultural techniques, and dialoguing with the intelligentsia among his own people and the cultured classes of all Europe. He traveled widely, visiting his flock in Western Europe, North and South America, and seeing to it that they had bishops of their own to take care of them. Never in good health, he passed his last fifteen years in a constant agony of pain and paralysis. Even so, he valiantly led his Church through extremely difficult and oppressive times.

His two great passions in life were the restoration of authentic Eastern Christian monasticism in his Church (which he achieved

* Courtesy of the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, Saint Paul University in Ottawa, Canada.

through the creation of monasteries following the Studite Typicon), and the union of Churches. He specifically laboured at Orthodox-Catholic reconciliation, decades before this became fashionable. For this he was often looked upon as dangerous and insufficiently loyal to Rome. He was, however, a firm believer in a strong papacy, which caused many Orthodox to mistrust this saintly man as well, even though he loved them dearly and stood up for them when they were persecuted. He valued education (having the equivalent of three doctorates himself) and founded the L'viv Theological Academy in 1929, naming Fr. Josyf Slipyj as its rector. This same man would later be Metropolitan Andrei's coadjutor and successor, and a direct heir to many of Metropolitan Andrei's great dreams and aspirations.

Metropolitan Andrei led his flock of some five million faithful through two world wars. He was arrested by the tsarist forces in World War I. In later years, Polish and Nazi German authorities would keep him under house arrest. He courageously saved many Jews from the Nazis during World War II. Metropolitan Andrei died as the Red Army occupied his city of L'viv once again in 1944. Before his death, he predicted the annihilation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, and its eventual resurrection. Both his predictions came true. In 1946 the Soviet secret police, with the assistance of the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church, staged a pseudo-council of the Ukrainian Church, during which a small group of frightened clergy voted to liquidate their Church and join the Moscow Patriarchate. No Ukrainian Greek-Catholic bishop ever agreed to this. For almost half a century, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was the world's largest outlawed religious body. As the Soviet Union crumbled, this Church came out of the catacombs with over five million faithful, thousands of priests, and over three thousand parishes. Many believe this survival of the Church in Ukraine to have been a miracle worked by Metropolitan Andrei. The cause for his beatification and canonisation is underway.

Metropolitan Andrei believed in the necessity of the union of Churches, to be achieved through mutual understanding and sacrificial love, as well as a return to the sources of the faith. He enjoined all people to pray for God's Wisdom.