

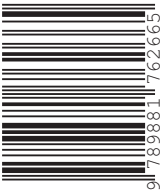


Basic Principles Of The Attitude Of The Russian Orthodox Church Toward The Other Christian Confessions

*adopted by
the Jubilee Bishops' Council
of the Russian Orthodox Church
August 14, 2000*



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Orthodox Brotherhood
Of Apostles
Saints Peter And Paul



Orthodox Fellowship
of All Saints of China







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1. The unity of the Church and the sin of human divisions

¹ Mt. 16:18

² Tim. 3:15

³ Jude 3

⁴ Eph. 5:23

⁵ St. Irenaeus
of Lyons,
*Adversus
Haereses*, 3, 18

1.1. The Orthodox Church is the true Church of Christ established by our Lord and Saviour Himself, the Church confirmed and sustained by the Holy Spirit, the Church about which the Saviour Himself has said: “*I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*”¹. She is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the keeper and provider of the Holy Sacraments throughout the world, “the pillar and ground of the truth”². She bears full responsibility for the proclamation of the truth of Christ’s Gospel, as well as full power to witness to “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”³.

1.2. The Church of Christ is one and unique (St. Cyprian of Carthage, *On the Unity of the Church*). The unity of the Church, the Body of Christ, is based on the fact that she has one Head, the Lord Jesus Christ⁴, and that working in her is one Holy Spirit Who gives life to the Body of the Church and unites all her members with Christ as her Head.

1.3. The Church is the unity of a “new humanity in Christ”. By His incarnation the Son of God “*commenced afresh the long line of human beings*”⁵, creating a new grace-bearing people, the spiritual posterity of the Second Adam. The unity of the Church is above





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every human and earthly union, for it has been given from above as a perfect and divine gift. The members of the Church are united in Christ like vines, rooted in Him and gathered in one eternal and spiritual life.

1.4. The unity of the Church overcomes all barriers and frontiers, including racial, linguistic and social differences. The message of salvation is to be proclaimed to all nations in order to bring them into one fold, to unite them by the power of faith and the grace of the Holy Spirit ⁶.

1.5. In the Church, enmity and alienation are overcome, and humanity, divided by sin, is united in love in the image of the Consubstantial Trinity.

1.6. The Church is the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace⁷, the fullness of uninterrupted grace-filled life and spiritual experience. *“Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace”*⁸. This unity of grace-filled life is the foundation of the unity and changelessness of the Church’s faith. Always and without change *“the Holy Spirit teaches through the holy fathers and doctors. The Catholic Church cannot transgress or even err or utter falsehood instead of truth: for the Holy Spirit, who always acts through the faithfully serving fathers and doctors of the Church, guards her against every mistake”*⁹.

1.7. The Church is universal, but she exists in the world in the form of various Local Churches This does not diminish the unity of the Church in any way. *“The Church, illumined with the light of the Lord, sheds forth her rays over the whole world, yet it is one light which is everywhere diffused, nor is the unity of the body*

⁶ Mt. 28:19-20;
Mk. 16:15;
Acts 1:8

⁷ Eph. 4:3

⁸ St. Irenaeus
of Lyons,
*Adversus
Haereses*, 3, 24

⁹ *The Letter
of Eastern
Patriarchs*

¹⁰ St. Cyprian
of Carthage,
*On the Unity
of the Church*





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separated. She spreads her branches, laden with fruit, over the whole world. He freely flowing streams extend to the farthest regions, and yet throughout all this her head is one, her source one, and she is one mother, rich in the abundance of her fruitfulness ¹⁰”.

¹¹ 1 Cor. 10:17

¹² 1 Cor. 12:27

¹³ St. Cyril
of Alexandria

1.8. Church unity is bound up inseparably with the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in which the faithful, partaking of the one Body of Christ, are really and truly joined in the one and catholic Body, in the mystery of Christ's love, in the transforming power of the Spirit. *“Indeed, if ‘we are all partakers of that one bread’, then we all comprise one Body ¹¹, for Christ cannot be divided. That is why the Church is called the Body of Christ, while we are ‘members in particular’, according to the understanding of the apostle Paul^{12 13}”.*

¹⁴ St. Ignatius
of Antioch,
*To the
Smyrnians*, 8

1.9. The One, Holy, Catholic Church is the Apostolic Church. Through the divinely instituted priesthood the gifts of the Holy Spirit are communicated to the faithful. The apostolic succession of the hierarchy, beginning from the holy apostles, is the basis of the communion and unity of grace-filled life. Any deviation from the lawful Church authority is a deviation from the Holy Spirit, from Christ Himself. *“See that you all follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the presbytery as you would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God. Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. <...> Wherever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude of the people also be; even as, wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church ¹⁴”.*

1.10. It is only through relationship with a particular community that each member of the Church realises his communion with the whole Church. By breaking





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canonical relations with his Local Church a Christian damages his grace-filled unity with the whole Church body, tearing himself away from it. Any sin distances a person from the Church to a greater or lesser degree, but it does not cut him off from her altogether. In the understanding of the Early Church, excommunication was exclusion from the eucharistic assembly. Those excommunicated, however, were never re-admitted to Church communion through re-baptism. Faith in the indelible nature of baptism is confessed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed: *“I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sin”*. Apostolic Canon 47 reads: *“Let a bishop or presbyter who shall baptise again one who has rightly received baptism... be deposed”*.

1.11. In this way the Church bore witness that those who have been excommunicated retain a certain “seal” of belonging to the people of God. By accepting them back the Church brings back to life those who have already been baptised by the Spirit into the one Body. Even while excommunicating one of her members, sealed by her on the day of his baptism, the Church hopes for his return. She considers excommunication itself to be a means of spiritual rebirth for such person.

1.12. Throughout centuries Christ’s commandment of unity has been repeatedly violated. Contrary to the catholic unanimity enjoined by God, differences and divisions have arisen in Christianity. The Church has always shown a strict and principled attitude towards those who have challenged the purity of her saving faith and those who have brought division and confusion into the Church: *“Why are there strifes, and tumults, and divisions, and schisms, and wars among you? Have we not [all] one God and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace poured out upon us? And*





¹⁵ St. Clement of Rome. *First Letter to the Corinthians*, 46

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have we not one calling in Christ? Why do we divide and tear to pieces the members of Christ, and raise up strife against our own body, and have reached such a height of madness as to forget that we are members one of another? ¹⁵”

1.13. Throughout Christian history, not only individual Christians but also entire Christian communities moved away from the unity with the Orthodox Church. Some of them have perished in course of history, while others have survived through the centuries. The most fundamental divisions of the first millennium, which have survived to this day, took place after the Third and Fourth Ecumenical Councils, when some Christian communities refused to accept their decisions. As a result, the Assyrian Church of the East and the non-Chalcedonian Churches, including the Coptic, Armenian, Syrian Jacobite, Ethiopian and Malabar Churches, are separated even today. In the second millennium, the separation of the Roman Church was followed by internal divisions in Western Christianity, brought about by the Reformation, which resulted in the continual formation of different Christian denominations outside of communion with the Roman see. There were also breakaways from the unity with Local Orthodox Churches, including the Russian Church.

1.14. Delusions and heresies result from a person's desire to assert himself and set himself apart. Every division or schism implies a certain measure of falling away from the plenitude of the Church. A division, even if it happens for non-doctrinal reasons, is a violation of Orthodox teaching on the nature of the Church and leads ultimately to distortions in the faith.





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1.15. The Orthodox Church, through the mouths of the holy fathers, affirms that salvation can be attained only in the Church of Christ. At the same time however, communities which have fallen away from Orthodoxy have never been viewed as fully deprived of the grace of God. Any break from communion with the Church inevitably leads to an erosion of her grace-filled life, but not always to its complete loss in these separated communities. This is why the Orthodox Church does not receive those coming to her from non-Orthodox communities only through the Sacrament of Baptism. In spite of the rupture of unity, there remains a certain incomplete fellowship which serves as the pledge of a return to unity in the Church, to catholic fullness and oneness.

1.16. The ecclesial status of those who have separated themselves from the Church does not lend itself to simple definition. In a divided Christendom, there are still certain characteristics which make it one: the Word of God, faith in Christ as God and Saviour come in the flesh ¹⁶, and sincere devotion.

1.17. The existence of various rites of reception (through Baptism, through Chrismation, through Repentance) shows that the Orthodox Church relates to the different non-Orthodox confessions in different ways. The criterion is the degree to which the faith and order of the Church, as well as the norms of Christian spiritual life, are preserved in a particular confession. By establishing various rites of reception, however, the Orthodox Church does not assess the extent to which grace-filled life has either been preserved intact or distorted in a non-Orthodox confession, considering this to be a mystery of God's providence and judgement.

¹⁶ 1 Jn. 1:1-2;
4, 2, 9





1. The unity of the Church and the sin of human divisions

1.18. The Orthodox Church is the true Church in which the Holy Tradition and the fullness of God's saving grace are preserved intact. She has preserved the heritage of the apostles and holy fathers in its integrity and purity. She is aware that her teaching, liturgical structures and spiritual practice are the same as those of the apostolic proclamation and the Tradition of the Early Church.

1.19. Orthodoxy is not a national or cultural attribute of the Eastern Church. Orthodoxy is an inner quality of the Church. It is the preservation of the doctrinal truth, the liturgical and hierarchical order and the principles of spiritual life which, unchangingly and uninterruptedly, have been present in the Church since apostolic times. One should not yield to the temptation to idealize the past or to ignore the tragic shortcomings and failures which marked the history of the Church. Above all the great fathers of the Church themselves give an example of spiritual self-criticism. The history of the Church in the IV-VII centuries knew of not a few cases when a significant proportion of believers fell into heresy. But history also reveals that the Church struggled on principled terms with the heresies that were infecting her children and that there were cases where those who had gone astray were healed of heresy, experienced repentance and returned to the bosom of the Church. This tragic experience of misunderstanding emerging from within the Church herself and of the struggle with it during the period of the ecumenical councils has taught the children of the Orthodox Church to be vigilant. The Orthodox Church, while humbly bearing witness to her preservation of the truth, at the same time remembers all the temptations which arose during her history.





1. The unity of the Church and the sin of human divisions

1.20. Due to the violation of the commandment of unity which has led to the historical tragedy of schism, divided Christians, instead of being an example of unity in love in the image of the Most Holy Trinity, have become a source of scandal. Christian division has become an open and bleeding wound on the Body of Christ. The tragedy of divisions has become a serious visible distortion of Christian universality, an obstacle in the way of her witness to Christ before the world. For the reality of this witness of the Church of Christ depends to a considerable degree on her ability to live up to the truths preached by her in the life and practice of Christian communities.





¹ Jn. 17:21

² *Letters*, 114

2. The quest for the restoration of the unity

2.1. The essential goal of relations between the Orthodox Church and other Christian confessions is the restoration of that unity among Christians which is required of us by God ¹. Unity is part of God's design and belongs to the very essence of Christianity. It is a task of the highest priority for the Orthodox Church at every level of her life.

2.2. Indifference to this task or its rejection is a sin against God's commandment of unity. According to St. Basil the Great, "all who are really and truly serving the Lord should have this one aim – to bring back into union the Churches that have been severed from one another ²".

2.3. Nevertheless, while recognising the need to restore our broken Christian unity, the Orthodox Church asserts that genuine unity is possible only in the bosom of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. All other "models" of unity seem to us to be unacceptable.

2.4. The Orthodox Church cannot accept the assumption that despite the historical divisions, the fundamental and profound unity of Christians has not been broken and that the Church should be understood as coextensive with the entire "Christian world", that Christian





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unity exists across denominational barriers and that the disunity of the churches belongs exclusively to the imperfect level of human relations. According to this conception, the Church remains one, but this oneness is not, as it were, sufficiently manifest in visible form. In this model of unity, the task of Christians is understood not as the restoration of a lost unity but as the manifestation of an existing unity. This model repeats the teaching on “the invisible Church” which appeared during the Reformation.

2.5. The so-called “branch theory”, which is connected with the conception referred to above and asserts the normal and even providential nature of Christianity existing in the form of particular “branches”, is also totally unacceptable.

2.6. Orthodoxy cannot accept that Christian divisions are caused by the inevitable imperfections of Christian history and that they exist only on the historical surface and can be healed or overcome by compromises between denominations.

2.7. The Orthodox Church cannot recognise “the equality of the denominations”. Those who have fallen away from the Church cannot re-unite with her in their present state. The existing dogmatic differences should be overcome, not simply bypassed, and this means that the way to unity lies through repentance, conversion and renewal.

2.8. Also unacceptable is the idea that all the divisions are essentially tragic misunderstandings, that disagreements seem irreconcilable only because of a lack of mutual love and a reluctance to realise that, in spite of all the differences and dissimilarities, there is suf-





2. The quest for the restoration of the unity

ficient unity and harmony in “what is most important”. Our divisions cannot be reduced to human passions, to egoism, much less to cultural, social and political circumstances which are secondary from the Church’s point of view. Also unacceptable is the argument that the Orthodox Church differs from other Christian communities with which she does not have communion only in secondary matters. The divisions and differences cannot all be reduced to various non-theological factors.

2.9. The Orthodox Church also rejects the assumption that the unity of Christendom can only be restored through common Christian service to the world. Christian unity cannot be restored through agreement on earthly matters, in which case Christians would be united in what is secondary but still differ in what is fundamental.

2.10. It is inadmissible to introduce relativism into the realm of faith, to limit unity in faith to a narrow set of necessary truths so that beyond them “freedom in what is doubtful” may be allowed. Even a position of tolerance towards differences in faith is unacceptable. At the same time, however, one should not confuse unity of faith and the form of its expression.

2.11. The division of Christendom is a division in the experience of faith itself, not just in doctrinal formulations. Formal doctrinal unity does not exhaust what is meant by the unity of the Church, though it is one of its essential conditions.

2.12. The unity of the Church is first of all a unity and communion in the Sacraments. True communion in the Sacraments, however, does not have anything to





2. The quest for the restoration of the unity

do with the practice of so-called “inter-communion”. Unity can be realized only in an identical grace-filled experience and life, in the faith of the Church, in the fullness of sacramental life in the Holy Spirit.

2.13. The restoration of Christian unity in faith and love can come only from above as a gift of Almighty God. The source of unity is in God, and therefore merely human efforts to restore it will be in vain, for “except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it”³. Only our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has commanded us to be one, can give us the power to fulfill his commandment, for He is “the way, the truth, and the life”⁴. The task of Orthodox Christians is to be co-workers with God in the task of salvation in Christ. As the holy fathers have said: God saves us, but not *without* us.

³ Ps. 126
(127):1

⁴ Jn. 14:6





3. Orthodox witness before the non-Orthodox world

3.1. The Orthodox Church is the guardian of the Tradition and the grace-filled gifts of the Early Church. Her primary task, therefore, in her relations with non-Orthodox confessions is to bear continuous and persistent witness which will lead to the truth expressed in this Tradition becoming understandable and acceptable. According to the Third Pre-Conciliar Panorthodox Conference (1986): *“The Orthodox Church, in her profound conviction and ecclesiastical consciousness of being the bearer of and the witness to the faith and tradition of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, firmly believes that she occupies a central place in matters relating to the promotion of Christian unity within the contemporary world...It is the mission and duty of the Orthodox Church to transmit, in all its fullness, the truth contained in the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition, the truth which gives to the Church her universal character. The responsibility of the Orthodox Church, as well as her ecumenical mission regarding Church unity, were expressed by the Ecumenical Councils. These, in particular, stressed the indissoluble link existing between true faith and sacramental communion. The Orthodox Church has always sought to draw the different Christian Churches and confessions into a joint search for the lost unity of Christians, so that all might reach the unity of faith...”*





3. Orthodox witness before the non-Orthodox world

3.2. The task of the Orthodox witness is entrusted to every member of the Church. Orthodox Christians should clearly realise that the faith they preserve and confess has a global and universal character. The Church is not only called to teach her children, but also to witness to the truth before those who have left her. “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹”. The duty of Orthodox Christians is to bear witness to the truth that has been entrusted to the Church for ever, since, according to St. Paul, “we are labourers together with God ²”.

¹ Rom. 10:14

² 1 Cor. 3:9





4. Dialogue with the non-Orthodox

4.1. The Russian Orthodox Church has carried on theological dialogue with non-Orthodox Christians for over two centuries. This dialogue has been characterised by the combination of a principled dogmatic approach and a fraternal love. This principle was formulated in the “Response to the Letter of the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate” [?] (1903) as a method of theological dialogue with the Anglicans and the Old Catholics. With regard to non-Orthodox confessions, it was said, *“there must be fraternal readiness to help them by explanations, normal consideration for their best wishes, all possible forbearance towards their natural perplexities, given the age-old division, but at the same time the firm confession of the truth of our Universal Church as a sole guardian of Christ’s heritage and a sole saving ark of divine grace... Our task with regard to them should be... without putting before them unnecessary obstacle for union by being inappropriately intolerant and suspicious... to interpret for them our faith and unchangeable conviction that it is only our Eastern Orthodox Church, which has preserved intact the entire pledge of Christ, that is at present the Universal Church, and thus to show them in fact what they should consider and decide upon if they really believe that salvation is bound up with life in the Church and sincerely wish to be united with her...”*





4. Dialogue with the non-Orthodox

4.2. Characteristic of the dialogues conducted by the Russian Orthodox Church with other Christian confessions is their theological nature. The task of theological dialogue is to explain to her partners in dialogue the ecclesial consciousness of the Orthodox Church, the foundations of her doctrine, canonical order and spiritual tradition, and to dispel perplexities and existing stereotypes.

4.3. Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church conduct dialogues with non-Orthodox confessions on the basis of faithfulness to the apostolic and patristic Tradition of the Orthodox Church and the teaching of the Ecumenical and Local Councils. Any dogmatic concessions or compromises in the faith are excluded. No document or paper adopted in theological dialogues and talks is obligatory for any of the Orthodox Churches until it is adopted by the Orthodox Church as a whole.

4.4. From an Orthodox perspective, the way to reunification for the non-Orthodox lies through the transformation and healing of their dogmatic consciousness and experience. Along this path, the issues discussed in the era of the Ecumenical Councils should be thought through once more. An important part of the dialogue with the non-Orthodox confessions is the study of the spiritual and theological heritage of the holy fathers, the mouthpieces of the faith of the Church.

4.5. Witness cannot be a monologue, since it assumes the existence of listeners and therefore of communication. Dialogue implies two sides, a mutual openness to communication, a willingness to understand, not only an “open mouth”, but also a “heart enlarged”¹. That is why the problem of theological language, compre-

¹ cf. 2 Cor. 6:11





4. Dialogue with the non-Orthodox

hension and interpretation should become one of the most important issues in the dialogue of the Orthodox theology with other confessions.

4.6. It is gratifying and inspiring that non-Orthodox theological thought, as expressed by its best representatives, has shown a sincere and profound interest in studying the patristic heritage and the faith and order of the Early Church. At the same time, it must be admitted that between Orthodox and non-Orthodox theology there are still many unsolved problems and differences of opinion. Moreover, even the formal similarities existing in many aspects of the faith do not point to authentic unity, since the doctrinal elements are given different interpretations in the different theological traditions.

4.7. Dialogue with non-Orthodox confessions has revived the understanding that the one catholic truth and norm can be expressed and embodied in a variety of cultural and linguistic contexts. In the course of dialogue it is essential for Orthodox theologians to be able to distinguish between a specific context and an actual deviation from catholic plenitude. It is also necessary to investigate the question of the limits of diversity in the one catholic tradition.

4.8. Joint study centres, groups and programs should be established within the theological dialogues. It is important that joint theological conferences, seminars and scholarly meetings, exchange of delegations, exchange of publications and information as well as joint publishing projects should be held on a regular basis. The exchange of experts, teachers and theologians is also of great significance.





4. Dialogue with the non-Orthodox

4.9. It is especially important for the Russian Orthodox Church to send her theologians to the major centres of non-Orthodox theological scholarship. It is also necessary to invite non-Orthodox theologians to the theological schools and other educational institutions of the Russian Orthodox Church to study Orthodox theology. The theological schools of the Russian Orthodox Church should pay more attention in their curricula to study of the progress and results of theological dialogues and to the non-Orthodox confessions.

4.10. Along with theological themes proper, dialogue should also be conducted on a wide range of problems involved in the relationship between the Church and the world. Among the important areas in the development of relations with the non-Orthodox confessions is joint work in the service of society. In situations where it does not come into conflict with Orthodox faith and spiritual practice, joint programs of religious education and catechism should be developed.

4.11. The bilateral dialogues conducted by the Russian Orthodox Church differ from her multilateral relations and participation in inter-Christian organisations in that they are structured in size and form as she thinks most suitable at the time. The yard-stick and criterion here is the success of a dialogue itself and the readiness of the partner in dialogue to consider the position taken by the Russian Orthodox Church on a broad (not only theological) range of ecclesiastical and social problems.





5. Multilateral dialogue and participation in the work of inter-Christian organisations

5.1. The Russian Orthodox Church conducts dialogues with non-Orthodox confessions not only on a bilateral but also on a multilateral level, while also participating in pan-Orthodox delegations and in the work of inter-Christian organisations.

5.2. With regard to her membership in various Christian organisations, she adheres to the following criteria. The Russian Orthodox Church cannot participate in international, regional or national Christian organisations in which (a) the constitution or rules require the renunciation of the doctrine or traditions of the Orthodox Church; (b) the Orthodox Church has no opportunity to bear witness to herself as the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; (c) the decision-making process does not take into account the ecclesiological consciousness of the Orthodox Church; and (d) the rules and procedures make a “majority opinion” obligatory upon the members.

5.3. The level and forms of the Russian Orthodox Church’s participation in an international Christian organisation should take into account its internal dynamics, agenda, priorities and general nature.





5. Multilateral dialogue and participation in the work of inter-Christian organisations

5.4. The scope and extent of the Russian Orthodox Church's participation in an international Christian organisation is determined by the Church authorities on the basis of its usefulness for the Church.

5.5. While stressing the great importance of theological dialogue and discussion concerning the norms of faith, Church order and the principles of the spiritual life, the Russian Orthodox Church, like the other Local Orthodox Churches, considers it possible and beneficial to participate in the work of various international organisations in such spheres of service to the world as diakonia, social service and peacemaking. The Russian Orthodox Church maintains co-operation with various Christian denominations and international Christian organisations in the task of common witness before secular society.

5.6. The Russian Orthodox Church maintains working relations on the level of membership or co-operation with a wide variety of international Christian organisations, as well as with regional and national Councils of Churches and Christian agencies specialising in diakonia, youth work and peacemaking.





6. Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church with the non-Orthodox on her canonical territory

6.1. The relations of the Russian Orthodox Church with non-Orthodox Christian communities in the CIS and Baltic states should be carried out in the same spirit of fraternal co-operation in which the Orthodox Church works with other traditional confessions in order to co-ordinate social work, promote social harmony and put an end to proselytism on the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Church.

6.2. The Russian Orthodox Church maintains that the mission of the traditional confessions is possible only if it is carried out without proselytism and not at the expense of “stealing” the faithful, especially with the aid of material benefits. The Christian communities in the CIS and Baltic countries are called to unite their efforts for reconciliation and the moral revival of society and to raise their voice in the defence of human life and human dignity.

6.3. The Orthodox Church draws a clear distinction between the non-Orthodox confessions which declare their faith in the Holy Trinity and the divine-human nature of Jesus Christ, on the one hand, and the sects which





6. Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church with the non-Orthodox on her canonical territory

reject fundamental Christian doctrines on the other. While recognising the right of non-Orthodox Christians to witness to their faith and conduct religious education among the population groups that traditionally belong to them, the Orthodox Church is against any destructive missionary activity on the part of sects.





7. Internal tasks in relation to dialogue with non-Orthodox confessions

7.1. While rejecting views which are erroneous from the point of view of the Orthodox doctrine, the Orthodox are called to treat with Christian love those who confess these views. In their relations with the non-Orthodox, the Orthodox should bear witness to the holiness of Orthodoxy and to the oneness of the Church. In bearing witness to the Truth, however, the Orthodox should be worthy of their witness: causing offence to non-Orthodox Christians is inadmissible.

7.2. It is essential to give the members of the Church competent and trustworthy information about the progress, tasks and prospects of the contacts and dialogue of the Russian Orthodox Church with non-Orthodox confessions.

7.3. The Church condemns those who, by using inauthentic information, deliberately distort the task of the Orthodox Church in her witness before the non-Orthodox world and consciously slander the Church authorities, accusing them of the “betrayal” of Orthodoxy. These people, who sow seeds of temptation among ordinary believers, should be subject to canonical sanctions. In this regard, guidance is given by the decisions





7. Internal tasks in relation to dialogue with non-Orthodox confessions

of the pan-Orthodox meeting in Thessaloniki in 1998: *“The delegates unanimously denounced those groups of schismatics, as well as certain extremist groups within the local Orthodox Churches themselves, that are using the theme of ecumenism in order to criticise the Church leadership and undermine its authority, thus attempting to create divisions and schisms within the Church. They also use non-factual material and misinformation in order to support their unjust criticism. The delegates also emphasised that the Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement has always been based on Orthodox tradition, on the decisions of the Holy Synods of the local Orthodox Churches, and on Pan-Orthodox meetings... The participants are unanimous in their understanding of the necessity for continuing their participation in various forms of inter-Christian activity. We have no right to withdraw from the mission laid upon us by our Lord Jesus Christ, the mission of witnessing the Truth before the non-Orthodox world. We must not interrupt relations with Christians of other confessions who are prepared to work together with us... During Orthodox participation of many decades in the ecumenical movement, Orthodoxy has never been betrayed by any representative of a Local Orthodox Church. On the contrary, these representatives have always been completely faithful and obedient to their respective Church authorities, and acted in complete agreement with the canonical rules, the Teaching of the Ecumenical Councils, the Church Fathers and the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church”*. A threat to the Church is also presented by those who participate in inter-Christian contacts, speaking on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church without the blessing of the Church authorities, as well as by those who bring temptation into the midst of Orthodoxy by entering into canonically inadmissible sacramental communion with non-Orthodox communities.





Conclusion

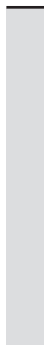
The twentieth century now drawing to a close has been marked by the tragedy of divisions, enmity and alienation, but in it divided Christians have shown a desire to achieve unity in the Church of Christ. The Russian Orthodox Church has responded to this desire with a readiness to conduct a dialogue of truth and love with non-Orthodox Christians, inspired by the call of Christ and by the goal of Christian unity as ordained by God. And today, on the threshold of the third millennium after the Nativity according to the Flesh of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Orthodox Church again lovingly and persistently calls all those for whom the name of Jesus Christ is above all other names under heaven¹ to seek blessed unity in the Church: “Our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged²”.

¹ cf. Acts 4:12

² 2 Cor. 6:12









结论

二十世纪已经结束，这一世纪以可悲的分裂、敌对、疏远为标志，但在这个世纪内，分裂的基督徒们却表达了想要在基督的教会内达致合一的愿望。作为对此愿望的回应，在基督的召叫与上帝所命令的基督徒合一的目标感召下，俄罗斯正教会已作好准备与非正教基督徒在真理与爱内进行对话。在这我们的主、救主耶稣基督诞生的第三个千年伊始之际，正教会再次亲切而又坚持不懈地召叫所有为他们而言耶稣基督的名号超越天下一切名号的人¹，共同寻求达致在教会内蒙福的合一：「我们的口向你们张开了，我们的心也敞开了」²。

¹ 参阅使徒行传
/ 徒 / 宗 4:12
² 致科林托人书
一 / 林后 / 格后
6:12





以及在各地方正教会自身内的某些极端团体，他们利用普世主义这个主题批评教会的领导并诋毁教会的权威，试图在教会内制造分歧与分裂。他们还利用毫无事实根据的材料与错误的消息来支持他们对教会不公正的批评。代表们还强调正教之参与普世运动总是建基于正教传统、各地方正教会神圣主教会议与泛正教会会议的决议的……与会者一致认为需要不断地参加不同形式的各教派间基督徒的活动。我们没有权利不履行由我们的主耶稣基督交给我们的使命——在非正教世界面前为真理作见证的使命。我们不能中断与那些准备与我们共同工作的信奉其它基督教派的基督徒的关系……在参加普世运动以来的这几十年间，从未有任何地方正教会的代表出卖过正教。相反，这些代表总是对他们所代表的教会当局表示完全的忠信与服从，他们的所作所为完全符合教会法典规章、正教会的历次普世大公会议以及教父与传统的训导。那些与参加各教派基督徒之间接触的人也给教会带来一种威胁，他们自称代表俄罗斯正教会，却没有获得教当局的祝福，他们也将试探诱惑带进正教，因为他们与非正教徒同领圣事，这是教会法所不容许的。



七、与非正教基督教派对话相关的内在任务

1. 正教反对那些在正教信理观而言是错误的观点，但正教也蒙召对那些宣认这些观点的教派持有基督徒的爱德。在与非正教基督教派相处时，正教应为正教的神圣性与教会的唯一性作见证。但是，在为真理作见证时，正教应经得起他们的见证：不允许冒犯非正教基督徒。

2. 让教会成员能够获得适当而可信的有关俄罗斯正教会与非正教基督教派之间进行接触与对话的进展、任务及前景的信息，这是十分必要的。

3. 有些人利用不真实的信息，故意歪曲正教会在非正教世界前作见证的责任，蓄意诽谤教会的当局，指责教会当局「出卖」正教。对于这种人教会予以谴责。这些人在普通信徒中散播诱惑的种子，他们应受到教会法的制裁。1998年在德撒洛尼基召开的泛正教会议通过的决议对此做出了指引：「与会代表一致谴责那些裂教团体，





六、俄罗斯正教会与在其圣统区域内的 的非正教基督教派的关系

「俄罗斯正教会与其它传统的基督教派合作，共同开展社会工作，促进社会和谐，并在俄罗斯正教会圣统区域内消除劝人改宗的现象。在与独联体及波罗的海各国的非正教基督徒团体之间的关系中应实践出同样的兄弟般的合作精神。」

「俄罗斯正教会坚称各传统基督教派不应劝人改宗，也不应该「偷盗」信徒，尤其是透过援助物质而「偷盗」信徒。惟有如此，俄罗斯正教会才支持其在俄罗斯的传教活动。在独联体和波罗的海各国内的基督徒团体都被召一起致力于社会各阶层重新修和与社会道德的复兴，呼吁社会保卫人类的生命与尊严。」

「正教会清楚地区分那些宣认至圣圣三与耶稣基督的神人本性的非正教基督教派与那些不接受基督徒的基本信理的教派之间差别。正教会承认前者（非正教基督徒）具有见证他们的信仰，以及在传统上属于他们的信众团体中进行宗教教育的权力。正教会反对后者进行任何具有破坏性的传教行动。」





➤ 俄罗斯正教会的教会当局根据参加一国际基督徒组织对教会所具有之利益来决定加入该组织的范围与程度。

5. 俄罗斯正教会在强调对信仰的规范，教会的组织以及灵修生活的原则进行神学对话与研讨的同时，对于参加不同国际组织在诸如服务社会、谋求世界和平等服务世界的领域内的工作，俄罗斯正教会也与其它的正教地方教会一样，认为这是可行而有益的。俄罗斯正教会保持与不同的基督宗派和国际基督徒组织在世俗社会前共同做见证的合作。

6. 俄罗斯正教会广泛地与各个国际基督徒组织以成员的身份保持工作关系或合作关系，同时，也和各地区与国家的教会公会议与基督徒机构共同在服务世界、从事青年事工及谋求世界和平方面进行深入研究。





五、多边对话与参加基督教派之间的超宗派组织的工作

17 俄罗斯正教会与非正基督教派的对话并不限于双边对话，也包括在多边的层面上进行交流，同时也加入泛正教代表组织，参加基督教派之间的超宗派组织的工作。

18 关于俄罗斯正教会在不同基督徒组织中的成员身份，她坚持下列原则。俄罗斯正教会不会参加这样的国际、地区或国家的基督徒的组织；¹⁹ 其宪章或规则要求放弃正教会的信理或传统；²⁰ 正教会在此组织内没有为其作为唯一、神圣、大公、传自使徒的教会作见证的机会；²¹ 该组织的决策过程并不考虑正教会的教会意识；²² 该组织的规章及程序将「多数意见」强加于其成员。

19 俄罗斯正教会以何种形式参加一国际基督徒组织应当考虑到该组织的内部动态、议程、优先权及其一般性质。





内进行交流。在与非正教基督教派相互关系的发展过程中，彼此共同服务社会亦是极为重要的。在与正教信仰与灵修实践不发生冲突的前提下，可以开展共同进行宗教教育与教理讲授的计划。

二、俄罗斯正教会所举行的与其它基督教派一对一的双边对话不同于她与其它基督教派的多边关系，亦不同于她参加基督教派之间的超宗派组织。俄罗斯正教会认为，在目前，双边对话在其所具之规模与形式上是最为合适的。对话加以衡量的准绳在于对话本身所取得的成功，以及对话对方愿意认真思考俄罗斯正教会在广泛的教会和社会问题（不仅只在神学问题）上所持之态度。



似的信仰观点亦不能达致真正的合一，因为在不同的神学传统中，对于信理有着不同的解释。

9. 公教会的一个真理与规范可以在不同的文化与语言环境中表达体现出来，与非正教基督教派的对话可以重新激起教会对此的认识。在对话的过程中，对正教神学家而言，重要的是分辨出何为特定背景下的特有表述，何为对圆满的大公信仰的背离。教会还有必要研究应如何对在同一大公传统中之差异加以限制这一问题。

10. 在神学对话中双方应设立研究中心，组织建立研究团体，并确定研究项目。应定期召开神学会议、研讨会及学术会议，双方代表团定期互相交流，彼此交换出版物与信息，共同出版书籍刊物，这些都是十分重要的。互相交换专家、教师与神学家也是非常重要的。

11. 对俄罗斯正教会而言，特别重要的是选派神学家前往非正教基督教派的神学学术中心进行交流。还有必要邀请非正教基督教派的神学家在俄罗斯正教会的神学院校及其它教育机构内学习正教神学。俄罗斯正教会的各神学院校必须精心设计课程，使学生对神学对话的进展与结果以及其它非正教基督教派有所认识。

12. 除了对相应的神学主题进行对话外，还应在涉及教会与世界的关系的广泛领域





3. 在忠于正教会的使徒及教父传统与历次普世及地方大公会议的训导的基础上，俄罗斯正教会与非正教基督教会进行对话。任何对信仰教义上的让步与妥协都不为教会接受。在未得到全体正教会一致认可之前，任何正教会（的地方教会）都不得单独在神学对话中与这些非正教基督教会签署任何协定或文献。

4. 就正教的观点而言，对于非正教基督教会，重新合一的途径在于转变并治疗他们的信理意识与经验。由此，七次普世大公会议时代所讨论的议题应被再次加以认真思考。与非正教基督教派的对话的一个重要内容即是学习诸圣教父所留下的灵修及神学遗产，因为教父是教会信仰的代言人。

5. 作见证不能是一个人的独白，因为它预设了听众的存在，因此彼此之间存在着交流。对话意味着双方相互敞开心扉进行交流，并愿意彼此了解。对话不仅是一张开口，还要「敞开心」。为此，有关神学所用的语言、对神学的理解及阐释的问题必须成为正教神学与其它基督教会交谈最为重要的主题之一。

6. 令人感到欢喜鼓舞的是，正如由非正教基督教会最优秀的代表所表达的那样，在研究教父的遗产与初期教会的信仰与组织上，非正教基督教派的神学思想对此表现出一种真诚而深刻的兴趣。与此同时，必须承认在正教与非正教基督教派的神学之间仍有许多尚未解决的问题与意见上的分歧。而且，即使是那些表达形式上极为相

「参阅致科林托人书二/林后/格后 6:11





四、与非正教基督徒的对话

「俄罗斯正教会与非正教基督徒之间的对话历时已超过二个世纪之久。这一对话既有极具原则性的信理取向的特征，又是怀着兄弟之爱的。1903年的《对普世牧首区神圣主教会议的书函所作的回应》表述了这一原则，以作为与安立甘宗与老天主教之间进行神学对话的方式。它在论及非正教基督教派时这样写道：「应以兄弟之爱做好准备通过解释说明来帮助他们，应考虑他们最美好的愿望，尽可能容忍他们自身因历史上的分裂所产生的混乱。但是，与此同时，必须坚定不移地宣认我们普世教会的真理，教会是基督在世上的遗产的唯一保管者，是唯一拥有上帝恩宠的救世方舟……我们对他们的任务应该是……和他们之间没有由于不适当的不能包容和猜忌而产生的不必要的障碍……向他们解释我们的信仰和坚定的信念，只有我们东方正教会保存着最完整的基督誓言，是现在的普世教会，因此要向他们表明如果他们真的相信救恩是和教会中的生命密切相关的并真心希望和她合一，就应该考虑这些并作出决定……」

俄罗斯正教会与其它基督教派所进行的对话的特征在于其神学性质。神学对话的任务在于向与她进行对话的伙伴解释正教会的教会意识，她的信理根基，圣统及灵修传统，以消除误解与偏见。





也向那些离开她的人见证真理。「人若不信他，又怎能呼号他呢？从未听到他，又怎能信他呢？没有宣讲者又怎能听到呢？」¹「正基督徒的责任就是为那从永远就委托给教会的真理作见证，因为按圣帕弗罗的说法，「我们原是上帝的助手」²。

¹ 致罗马人书

10: 14

² 致科林托人书

1 / 林前 / 格前

3:9





三、正教在非正教世界前的见证

「正教会是初期教会的传统与满有恩宠的赐予的保护者与见证者。因此，在她与非正教基督教派关系中，她的首要任务是肩负起为此作见证的使命，引人进入在此传统中所表达的真理，使世人理解并接受这一真理。按照1986年所举行的第三次泛正教会议的筹备会议的决议：「正教会深信并且意识到她是唯一、神圣、大公、传自使徒的教会的信仰与传统的持有者与见证者，她坚定不移地相信自己在当今世界促进基督徒合一的事务上占有重要的地位……正教会的使命与职责就是：在其本身之圆满无缺之中，传扬圣经与圣传中所含有之真理，将上帝赐予教会的真理传给她们的全体子女。历次普世大公议所表达的就是正教会的这一职责，以及她在教会合一上的普世使命。这尤其强调了存在于真信仰与圣事共融之间的不可分割的联系。正教会一直谋求与不同基督徒的教会与教派共同探究已经失落的基督徒之间的合一，以使大家能达致信仰上的合一……」

正教会在世所作见证的职责被托负于教会的每个成员。正教基督徒应清楚地意识到他们持守并宣认的信仰具有全球性与普世性的特征。教会不仅蒙召教导她的子女，





12. 教会的合一首先是在圣事上的合一与共融。但是，真正在圣事上的共融并不是推行所谓的「各教派间彼此互领圣体圣血」。惟有在共同的满有恩宠的经验与生命中，在教会的信仰中，在圣灵内圆满的圣事生活中才能实现合一。

13. 基督徒重建在信德与爱德内的合一，这是全能上帝从上所赐的恩惠。因此，单凭人的努力重建合一必将徒劳无功。因为「若非上帝兴工建屋，建筑的人徒然劳碌」³。我们的主耶稣基督命令我们彼此合而为一，只有祂才能赐给我们满全祂的诫命的能，因为祂是「道路、真理、生命」⁴。正教基督徒的职责就是在基督内与上帝合作，共同完成救赎大业。正如诸圣教父所说的：上帝拯救我们，但却不能没有我们的合作。

³ 圣咏 126:1 /
诗篇 127:1

⁴ 约安福音 / 约
/ 若 14:6



在「最重要的问题」上却有着充分的合一共融。这样的观点也是不能接受的。我们之间的分裂不能简单地归咎于人类的偏情、自我主义，或是各种文化、社会及政治的环境不同，在教会看来，这些都是次要因素。若以为虽然正教会与其它基督徒团体之间存在着差异，但她与这些教派只是在一些次要的问题上没有共融，这样的观点也是不能被接受的。（教会的）分裂与差异不能都被归结为是出于各种非神学因素。

9. 正教会亦不同意这样的假设，即认为只有藉着基督徒共同服务于世界才能重建基督徒的合一。不可能通过彼此在属世事务上的协议来重建基督徒的合一。这只能使基督徒在次要的问题上联合，但在根本问题上却仍是不同的。

10. 我们也不同意在信仰领域内引入相对主义，将在信仰上的合一限定在一小部份必要的真理上，在此之外，则允许「对有疑问的问题自由处理」。即便「彼此容忍信仰上的差异」这一立场也是不可接受的。但是，与此同时，不应混淆信仰上的合一与其外在表达方式上的统一。

11. 基督徒的分裂是其本身信仰经验的分裂，并非只是信理表达上的分裂。尽管相同的信理表达是教会合一的基本条件之一，但教会所说的合一并不仅仅只是信理表达的统一。





越了各宗派之间的藩篱，教会的分裂只属于人们彼此关系不完美的层面。按照这种观点，教会一直保持着合一，只是这种合一似乎并未以有形可见的形式彰显出来。在这种合一的模式下，基督徒的任务被认为是将早已存在着的合一彰显出来，而非重建已失去的合一。这一模式只是重复了宗教改革时期所出现的「不可见教会」的理论。

5. 与上述观点相关的所谓「（教会的）分枝理论」认为，基督信仰存在于不同形式的特定「（教会）分枝」内，这是基督宗教的正常性质，甚至是出于上帝圣意的性质。这种理论是完全不能接受的。

6. 正教不能接受这样的观点，即认为基督徒的分裂出于基督徒历史上无法避免的不圆满性，分裂只存在于历史的层面上，通过各宗派之间的妥协能够治愈或克服分裂。

7. 正教会不认同「各教派之间是平等的」这一观点。那些脱离教会的人在其目前所处之状态下是不能重新与教会合一的。在信理上所存在的分歧必须获得解决，不可以简单地将其搁置一旁。这就意味着悔改、皈依与更新是走向合一的途径。

8. 有人以为所有的分裂基本上都是由于双方不幸的误解所导致，那些看起来互相对立的分歧是由于彼此缺乏爱德，或是由于不愿承认虽然存在着差异与分歧，但彼此



二、寻求重建合一

「正教会与其它基督教派关系的基本目标是在基督徒中间重建合一，这合一上帝命令我们必须达致的」。合一上帝计划的一部份，是基督信仰的本质。它是正教会在其生活的各个领域内最先要完成的任务。

2. 对这一任务漠视不顾或予以拒绝是相反上帝合一的诫命的罪。按照大圣瓦西里的说法，「所有真正侍奉主的人都应以此为唯一的目标：在教会内重建共融，彼此互相服侍」²。

3. 然而，正教会在意识到需要和与我们分离的基督徒重建合一同时，也断言真正的合一只有在唯一、神圣、大公、传自使徒的教会内才有可能实现。其它所有「模式的合一在我们看来都是不可接受的」。

4. 正教会不能接受下面这种假设，即认为历史上的分裂并没有破坏基督徒之间根本而深刻的合一，教会应被理解为是整个「基督徒世界」的共同体，基督徒的合一超

「约安福音 / 约
/ 若 17:21

2
书信 114





19. 正教并非只属于东方国家和文化的教会。正教是教会的内在本质。她保存着教义真理、礼规、神品以及灵修生活的原理，这一切从使徒时代起就毫未变更、从不断地存在于教会之中。但是，人不可陷入一种诱惑之中，试图将过去的历史理想化，或是忽略教会在历史上所犯的过失与失败。教会的诸圣教父本身就树立了灵性的自我批评的榜样。在教会第四至第七世纪的历史上，相当数量的信徒陷入异端的事并不罕见。但是历史也显示了教会在基本的信仰原则上与异端抗争，这些异端在那时正感染着她的子女；历史也告诉我们那些误入歧途的人的异端思想是可以被治愈的，他们经历了悔改而重回教会的怀抱。这一由教会本身所显露出来的错误经验，这一在历次普世大公会议期间与异端抗争的经验，教导正教会的子女应该时刻警醒。正教会怀着谦卑之情见证在她内保存着真理，与此同时，她也记得在历史上她所受的所有诱惑。

20. 由于违背了合一的命令，导致了历史上分裂的悲剧，彼此分裂的基督徒没有成为在至圣圣三的肖像内爱的共融的榜样，却成了受人诋毁的根源。基督徒的分裂成了基督奥体上溃烂流血的伤口。分裂的悲剧以有形可见的方式严重歪曲了基督徒共同体的形象，成了教会在世上为基督作见证的障碍。在现实生活中，基督的教会所做的这一见证，在相当程度上取决于她在基督徒团体的生活与实践中遵循她所教导的真理的能力。





正教会。尽管教会的合一受到破坏，但在这些教派与教会之间仍存在着某种不完全的联系，以确保其回归教会的合一共融，重获大公教会的圆满性与独一性。

16. 并不能简单地由那些与教会分离的教派的状态得出其与正教会毫不相关的结论。在分裂的基督徒世界里，仍有着某种使其合而为一的特征：上帝的圣言，对作为上帝和救主、降生成人的基督的信仰¹⁵，真诚为将自己奉献给主。

17. 教会以不同的礼规接纳非正教基督徒加入教会（藉着浸礼、傅圣膏、忏悔等方式），这表明正教会以不同的方式与不同的非正教基督教派之间有着联系。评判的标准依照某一特定教派保存信仰、教会的体制以及基督徒灵性生命的规范的程度而定。尽管正教会制定了不同的收纳非正教基督徒加入正教会的礼规，却并不评判在非正教基督教派内保存或歪曲那满有恩宠的生命的程度如何，而是将它视之为上帝的上智眷顾与明察判断的奥秘。

18. 正教会是真教会，圣传与上帝救赎恩宠的圆满被完好地保存于其内。教会完整地保存着使徒与诸圣教父的传统，丝毫不受玷污。她深知她的训导、礼仪规程以及灵修实践与使徒的宣讲和初期教会的传统完全一致。

¹⁵ 约安福音/
约 / 若 1:1-
2:4, 2, 9





13. 在基督徒的历史中，不仅个别的基督徒脱离了正教会，甚至整个基督徒的团体也从正教会分裂出去。他们中的一些随着历史的发展而湮没无闻，但另一些经过许多世纪仍继续存在着。第一个千年内最主要的分裂发生在第三、第四两次普世大公会议期间，一些基督徒拒不接收公会议的决议，这一分裂延续至今。结果东方的亚述教会与非加尔西顿教会（包括科普特教会、亚美尼亚教会、叙利亚的雅科弗教会、埃塞俄比亚教会与马拉巴尔教会）至今与正教会仍处在分裂状态之中。在第二个千年内，罗马教会从正教会中分裂出去，之后由于宗教改革，西方基督教内部发生分裂，结果导致不断地有人脱离罗马教廷，形成许多不同的基督徒宗派。而正教的各地方教会的合一亦受到破坏，这其中也包括俄罗斯教会。

14. 错误的见解与异端源于人企图高抬自己，自以为是。每一次的分裂或裂教从某种程度上来说，都意味着背离了教会的圆满性。每一次分裂，即使它并非出于教义上的分歧，都违背了正教有关教会性质的训导，最终使信仰受到歪曲。

15. 正教会经由诸圣教父的口断言：人惟有在基督的教会内才能获得救恩。但是，与此同时，正教从来不认为那些脱离了正教的团体完全没有上帝的恩宠。任何团体脱离教会，都不可避免地使其满有恩宠的生命受到伤害，但却并不完全丧失这一生命。为此缘故，正教会并不总是只以圣浸圣事接纳那些非正教基督教派的信徒加入



教会却不再次为被绝罚者施行浸礼的方式接纳他重回教会。教会相信浸礼具有永久而不可磨灭的特性，尼西亚·君士坦丁堡信经上这样宣认：「我确认赦罪的圣浸，只有一个。」使徒法典第28条写道：「若有主教或司祭为已真正受过浸礼的人再次施浸，……应处以停职之罚。」

二. 教会以此方式表明那些受绝罚者仍保留着属于上帝子民的某种「印记」。教会在再次接纳他们回归时，将他们重新引入生命之中，他们曾受圣灵的浸礼加入（基督）唯一的身体。教会即使对她的一个成员处以绝罚——在他受浸的那一天，教会已在他身上盖上了印记——仍希望他将来能回归教会。教会将绝罚本身视为这种人获得灵性新生的方法。

12. 许多世纪以来，基督要求基督徒之间合一的命令屡遭破坏。与上帝所命令的大公教会内彼此意见一致相反，在基督信仰的团体内产生了差异与分裂。对于那些挑战教会得救之信仰的纯洁性，以及那些带给教会分裂与混乱的人，教会一贯表现出严厉而又极具原则性的态度：「为何在你们中会有冲突、混乱、分歧、分裂与斗争？难道我们不都敬拜同一个上帝，同一个基督吗？难道将恩宠倾注于我们身上的不是同一个圣灵吗？难道我们在基督内不是同蒙一个召叫吗？为何我们要彼此分裂，将基督的肢体撕得粉碎，挑起冲突反对自己的团体呢？我们为何要达到如此疯狂的程度，以致竟忘记了我们彼此互为肢体呢？」¹⁶

¹⁶ 罗马的圣克利
密斯，《致科林
托人书一》，46





8. 教会的合一与圣体血圣事紧密相联，不可分割。在这件圣事内，信友共同领受同一基督的圣体，真实确实地加入了唯一大公（教会）的身体，进入基督爱的奥迹，得享圣灵的转化能力。」的确，如果『我们众人都分享这一个饼』，那么我们众人就组成一个身体¹²，因为基督是不可分的。为此缘故，按照使徒圣帕弗罗的理解，教会被称为基督的身体，而我们则被称为『各个肢体』¹³ ¹⁴。

9. 唯一、神圣、大公的教会是传自使徒的教会。经由上帝所建立的司祭职，圣灵的恩赐被通传于信友。神职人员的圣统始于圣使徒，是满有恩宠之生命的共融与合一的基础。任何人与合法的教会权威分离就是与圣灵及基督本人分离。「看到你们众人都服从主教，如同基督服从父一样，众人都服从長老，仿佛你们是使徒；尊敬辅祭，因为这是上帝所建立的品级。但愿没有人离开主教擅自履行任何教会事务。……无论天主教出现在哪里，愿众人也在那里；就如无论基督在哪里，公教会就在那里一样。」¹⁵

10. 教会的每个成员惟有藉着与特定团体的联系，才能意识到他与整个教会的共融。一个基督徒若是破坏了他与他所在之地方教会在教会法层次上的联系，他就破坏了他与整个教会团体满有恩宠的合一共融，使自己脱离了教会。任何罪恶都或多或少地使人远离教会，但这却并不完全使他从教会身上割离下来。按照初期教会的理解，绝罚（亦即通常所说的开除教籍）是指被排除在感恩聚会（即圣体血圣事）之外。但是，

¹² 致科林托人书

一 / 林前 / 格前

10:17

¹³ 致科林托人书

一 / 林前 / 格前

12:27

¹⁴ 亚历山大利亚

的圣基里尔

¹⁵ 安提约希亚

的圣伊格纳提，
《致斯密尔纳人

书》，8



4. 教会的合一超越一切障碍与界限，包括种族、语言与社会的差异。救恩的信息被宣示于万国，为带领众人进入同一羊栈，藉着信仰的大能与圣灵的恩宠将他们合而为一⁷。

5. 在教会内，人与人彼此之间没有敌意与疏离，因罪而分裂的人类在爱内合一于同一本元的圣三的肖像内。

6. 教会是以和平的联系在圣灵内的合一⁸，是连续不断、满有恩宠的生命与属灵经验的满全。「哪里有教会，哪里就有上帝的圣灵；哪里有上帝的圣灵，哪里就有教会及各种恩宠。」⁹。教会信仰的一贯性与不变性的根基就是这满有恩宠的生命。圣灵始终如一地「藉着诸圣教父与圣师施行教导。公教会不会违背真理，更不会走入歧途或彻底迷误而相反真理：因为圣灵总是藉着那些服务于教会的忠信的教父与圣师工作，引导她不犯任何错误。」¹⁰

7. 教会是普世的，但她却以不同地方教会的形式存在于世上。尽管如此，教会的合一却并未受到任何削弱。「主的荣光照着教会，她（教会）亦向整个世界放射光芒，但是那普照各处的光是同一道光，彼此分离的团体却仍合而为一。她的枝条硕果累累，伸展到世界各地。她仿佛一道溪流，川流不息，无远弗届。然而在她所到的各地，她只有一个头，一个源泉，她是一个子女众多的母亲。」¹¹

⁷ 玛特泰福音

28:19-21；玛尔

克福音 16:15；

使徒行实 1:8

⁸ 致艾弗所书

4:3

⁹ 里昂的圣伊里

奈奥，《驳斥异

端》，第3卷第

24章

¹⁰ 《东方教会牧

首书信》

¹¹ 迦太基的圣基

普里安，《论教

会的合一》





一、教会的合一与世人分裂之罪

「正教会是基督的真教会，她是由我们的主、救主亲自建立的，圣灵坚定并保护着她。救主自己这样论及教会说：「我要建立我的教会，阴间的门决不能战胜她。」她是唯一、神圣、大公、传自使徒的教会，是世界各地所举行之圣事的保管者与分施者，是「真理的柱石和基础」。²她肩负着宣扬基督福音真理的全部责任，也具有见证那「一次而永远传与圣徒的信仰」³的能力。

「基督的教会是独一的」⁴。基督的奥体——教会的合一，是建基于下述事实之上：即，她只有一个头——主耶稣基督⁵，在她内工作的也只有一个圣灵，这圣灵赋予教会的身体生命，并将她的所有成员与她的头基督结合为一。

「教会是「新人类在基督内」的合一。上帝之子以祂的降生成人「再次开创了人类长久的（新）时代」⁶，创造了一个全新的满是恩宠的民族，第二阿达穆灵性的子孙。教会的合一超越任何一个属人或属世的联盟，是一份由上所赐的圆满而神圣的礼物。教会的全体成员就像藤一样在基督内合一，根源于他并聚拢于一个永恒的灵性生活中。」

¹ 玛特泰福音 /

太 / 玛 16:18

² 致提摩泰书 1

3:15

³ 儒达书信 3

⁴ 迦太基的圣基

普里安，《论教

会的合一》

⁵ 至艾弗所人书

5:23

⁶ 里昂的圣伊里

奈奥，《驳斥异

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俄罗斯正教会对待其它 基督教派信徒的基 本原则

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