

Quo Vadis

The monthly newsletter of Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Catholic Church of Bayonne, N.J.
Vol. 12, Number 8: April 2025

Editor: V. Rev. W. Sophrony Royer, Ph.D.

98 West 28th Street, Bayonne, N.J. 07002

“Quo Vadis?” is a Latin phrase meaning “Where are you going?” It refers to a Christian tradition regarding St. Peter. According to the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, Peter is fleeing from likely crucifixion in Rome, and along the road outside the city, he encounters the risen Jesus. Peter asks Jesus “Quo vadis?” Jesus replies “Romam vado iterum crucifigi” (“I am going to Rome to be crucified again”). St. Peter thereby gains the fortitude to return to the city, to eventually be martyred by being crucified upside-down. The phrase also occurs a few times in the Latin *Vulgate* translation of the *Holy Bible*, notably in John 13:36 when Peter asks Jesus the same question, to which He responds, “Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me.” The Church of Domine Quo Vadis in Rome is built where, according to tradition, the meeting between St. Peter and the risen Jesus Christ took place.

This parish newsletter is called **Quo Vadis** for a reason: to ask the question of where *you* are going in life. Is your life’s journey leading you towards Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? St. Peter, at a pivotal moment in his life, when he understandably felt like running away, found the courage to go where Jesus Christ would have him go. Where are *you* going? Will *you* follow Jesus Christ?

Rector’s Message

For weeks now, Christians in every remote corner of the world have been awaiting the arrival of Easter Sunday. Around the world, Orthodox faithful have prepared for Easter with great anticipation, from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem to every local parish. But wherever you are on that day, *we all stand together* as witnesses to the glory of our Lord’s Resurrection. On Easter Sunday we all proclaim with the apostle: “*Glory to God—the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! For in His mercy, He has given us a new birth into a living hope, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead*” (1 Peter 1:3). So said the Apostle Peter—who was among the first to see, with his own eyes, the miracle of the first Easter Sunday. Who was among the first to know that history would never be the same again.

But the resurrection of Jesus Christ is not simply an event in history. It is, in the deepest sense, the meaning of history—and of everything that we know as human beings. Christ’s Resurrection is the cornerstone of our faith: the beacon of hope that illuminates life in the darkest of times. It’s the divine assurance that there is always the promise of renewal and redemption—no matter what we face in this life. When Peter spoke about “Living Hope,” he was speaking to the heart of the Easter message. Through the Resurrection, Jesus not only vanquished death; He opened the door for us to experience a relationship with God that’s marked by boundless hope and joy.

Think about it for a moment: The God who shaped the universe chose to step into our world and become human ... to become one of us, to walk in our shoes, bear our burdens, and ultimately conquer the grave. Why? Because of His boundless love for us. He saw us in our struggles, our pain, and our brokenness. He tells us “You are My creation; I love you and will never abandon you.” He told us this

not only in words, but in His deeds: through His incarnation as Jesus Christ, and His supreme act of sacrifice on the Cross. In that way, He showed us a path to something greater, something eternal.

But for Christ, that path inevitably took Him through hardship. The same is true for us: we all know—we have all seen, this very year—how hard life can be. We all face trials that will shake our faith—whether as individuals, as families, or indeed as a people. Yet against every hardship and fear stands the incredible message of Easter: that the same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is alive and at work in each of us, every day. When you're struggling with your job; when you're facing challenges in your relationships; when you're battling illness or despair—at every low and high point in life, the power of Christ's resurrection is a constant source of strength, hope, and new beginnings.

The real question every human being must face is whether or not to accept the power of the Resurrection, by accepting Christ's sacrifice. If you do choose to accept it, your perspective will radically change. You can never again have reason to feel discouraged or hopeless; for you will know that Christ is truly Risen. He has defeated evil, and overcome sin. He has annihilated Death itself! And thus, He has given you a new and everlasting life: a Living Hope. This Living Hope isn't meant to be a well-kept secret; it's meant to be shared, celebrated, and proclaimed out loud. It's a joy that radiates from within, bringing light and warmth to the coldest hearts. It's the joy of knowing that, no matter what happens in life, we have a God who loves us: relentlessly, passionately, eternally.

So as we celebrate this Easter, let us embrace the Living Hope that has been given to us in Jesus Christ. Let us remember that the empty tomb of Easter is not something to celebrate just one day a year, but is an everlasting testament to God's victory over sin and death that transforms every day, in every year. *"Glory to God—the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who in His great mercy has given us a new birth into a living hope, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead."* May this truth fill your hearts with joy. And may the world see in us the Living Hope of Christ's Resurrection: a Hope that cannot be quenched; a Love that cannot be contained; and a Life that is truly worth living. For truly, Christ is Risen! Christos Anesti! Христосъ воскресе!

Theological Excerpt

"Faith is the power that dwells in the mind and the will of a human being. One's mind is kindled by the heavenly light and stores the truths revealed to it by the Lord. Likewise, one's will is moved by God to do everything that is true and is guided by the mind. When one's faith is powerless, one's mind can't grasp God's mysteries, while the will doesn't want to love them even before the mind comprehends them."

—St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite (1749-1809)

Lives of the Saints

St. Macarius of Corinth, Bishop – commemorated on April 17th

St. Macarius was born in Trikala, of Corinth in 1731, to devout parents descended from the famous Notaras family of Constantinople. His father's name was George and his mother's was Anastasia. In Baptism he received the name Michael. His teacher in Cephalonia was named Eustathius. Young Michael was very zealous for the solitary life, and so he left his parents' house in secret, and went to the Great Cave (Μέγα Σπήλαιον) Monastery, so named because it is the largest monastery of the Peloponnesus, and it was built in front of a cave. His father discovered where he was, however, and had Michael sent back home, where he spent much of his time studying the Divine Scriptures and other edifying books.

Since Corinth had lacked a teacher for a long time, Michael taught the young people for six years without payment. Even when he was very young, it was apparent that he did not care for the material things of this world, but only for spiritual treasures. When his father appointed him as the supervisor of an area where he could become very wealthy, he gave his money to the poor, and his father scolded him. He excelled as a teacher, and the Corinthians loved him for his exemplary way of life. After the death of His godfather Metropolitan Parthenius of Corinth in 1764, they suggested to Patriarch Samuel of Constantinople that he appoint Michael, who was then a layman, as his successor. Thus, he passed through the various degrees of ordination and was consecrated as Metropolitan of Corinth by Patriarch Samuel. The saint did not seek the hierarchal office for power, or as a means of acquiring wealth, but out of his paternal concern for the security and the salvation of his flock, for which he would have to render an account to the Lord and God of all. He rid the Church of corrupt and ineffectual priests and replaced them with priests who were virtuous and qualified. Those who were not qualified were sent to monasteries to be educated and trained how to serve.

When the Russo-Turkish War began in 1768, St. Macarius was forced to flee to Zakynthos with his family, and from there to Hydra, where he lived in a monastery. When things settled down, the Holy Synod of Constantinople chose a new Metropolitan of Corinth, believing that St. Macarius had abandoned his See.¹ He visited Hydra and from there he went to Chios. From Chios he went to Mount Athos, fulfilling his persistent and praiseworthy desire to visit the Holy Mountain and to experience its way of life. When the divine Macarius arrived on Mount Athos in 1777, he settled in the kellion² of St. Anthony, which belonged to his compatriot Elder David. There he met St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite once again. At that time, the Athonite community was divided by quarrels and controversies over memorial services and kolyva. The reason for the dispute was a disagreement about when the departed ought to be commemorated in church. The Church's Tradition is to have services for the departed on Saturdays, and that memorial services are not permitted on Sundays or Feast Days. Hence, disputes arose out of the intense quarrels and contradictions which also extended to other areas of Church life. The situation there saddened the hierarch. Because of the riots and disturbances on the Holy Mountain, he feared for his own life, and so he returned to Chios. After remaining there for a brief time, he departed for Patmos.

During his stay in Patmos, the Saint sought a permanent residence, and since he was attracted by the location, he founded the Sacred Kathisma³ of All Saints (Ιερό Κάθισμα των Αγίων Πάντων) in 1782. After his father reposed, his two brothers wanted him to act as executor of his will. St. Macarius gave everything to his brothers without keeping anything for himself. Then he returned to Chios to obtain some letters of recommendation and went to Smyrna to meet with Prince John Maurogordatos of Moldovo-Vlachia.⁴ The Prince knew St. Macarius by reputation, and therefore he received him with reverence and respect for him as a man of God. Not only was he happy to show him hospitality in his home, but Maurogordatos also contributed money for the publication of "The Philokalia,"⁵ and for the publication of the "Holy Catechism" of Metropolitan Platon of Moscow.

¹ Some have suggested that St. Macarius was replaced because the Turks thought that he encouraged the Greeks in their desire to revolt. In any case, he retained his rank and was permitted to serve unhindered anywhere he wished.

² A kellion is a monk's cell, or a monastic establishment consisting of a building with a chapel in it, and some surrounding land. Usually it is occupied by three monks.

³ In an Orthodox context, a Kathisma refers to a division of the Psalter, a chair or seat, or (as in this case) a monastic establishment, perhaps a type of hermitage.

⁴ Now part of modern Romania.

⁵ The *Philokalia* (meaning "love of the beautiful," from φιλία [philia] "love" and κάλλος [kallos] "beauty") is a collection of texts written between the 4th and 15th centuries by spiritual masters of the hesychast tradition of the Orthodox Church. They were originally written for the guidance and instruction of monks in the practice of the contemplative life.

From Smyrna the saint returned to Chios. He chose his place of residence at the church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in the north-northwestern edges of Vrontados at the foot of Aippus. He found spiritual peace with St. Athanasius Parius (who wrote his *Vita*), Ss. Nicephorus and Niphon of Chios, Gregory of Nisyros, and Athanasius of Armenia, all of whom had left the Holy Mountain several years earlier, because of the disturbances over memorial services. St. Macarius remained in his hermitage on Chios for the rest of his life (1790-1805), engaging in severe ascetical struggles, practicing interior prayer, writing books, confessing and counseling people, instructing them in the Faith, inspiring them to virtue, and helping those in need. He also prepared several individuals who had denied Christ to go back to the place where they had done this, and confess that they only worshiped Christ, the true God. Of course, the Turks put these New Martyrs to death when they heard such talk, so he encouraged the martyrs by his words, and strengthened them by prayer and fasting, so that they would not lose their courage and deny Christ again. St. Macarius reposed on April 17, 1805. His honorable body was buried in the courtyard of the church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul on the south side. The recovery of his relics took place in 1808.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why didn't the Orthodox Church in America's accession to autocephaly in 1970 bring administrative unity to Orthodoxy in America?

This is a difficult question, and the opinions given here may not represent the official positions of the Orthodox Church in America, but will attempt to offer a forthright and balanced answer. The issue, unfortunately, is complicated by the facts that there are differences in the ecclesiological views of the local Orthodox Churches concerning how the accession to autocephaly happens and the reality of church politics. Moreover, in this particular case, some background information is necessary.

Prior to 1970, the canonical status of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America (or "Metropolia," as it was commonly called) had been somewhat ambiguous since 1924. In April 1924, the Fourth All-American Sobor, held in Detroit, Michigan, declared the Metropolia "temporarily autonomous." Although this fell short of a proclamation of autocephaly, evidenced by the fact that its official name remained unchanged, nevertheless from this point onwards the Metropolia assumed all the characteristics of an autocephalous Church. It took this historic action because directives received from Russia could not be accepted as authentic, i.e., they might be forgeries or, at very least, have been coerced.⁶ Moscow was slow to react, but eventually patriarchal exarch, Archbishop Benjamin, was sent to New York in 1930. Three years later, in 1933, the Moscow Patriarchate, then headed by the Acting *Locum Tenens*, Metropolitan Sergius,⁷ placed the Metropolia's hierarchs under interdict.

The *Philokalia* was compiled in the 18th century by Ss. Nicodemus the Hagiorite and Macarius of Corinth based on the codices from the library of the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos.

⁶ The specific occasion that led to this action by the Fourth All-American Council was a directive, issued in Patriarch Tikhon's name, and published in the Russian-language press, dismissing Metropolitan Platon from his position as the Metropolia's Primate while at the same time commanding him to remain in his position until his replacement arrived in America. It was strongly suspected that this was a forgery, designed to undermine Metropolitan Platon's authority at a time when the Metropolia was facing multiple lawsuits over control of church property from the representative of the schismatic "Living Church," Rev. John Kedrovsky. The fact that no replacement was sent reinforced the likelihood that it was a forgery and, several years later, it was definitively proven that the directive was in fact a forgery.

⁷ On April 12, 1925, five days after the death of Patriarch Tikhon, Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa became the patriarchal *locum tenens* (i.e., "guardian of the patriarchal throne"). But on December 10, 1925, Metropolitan Peter was arrested, and Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhny-Novgorod assumed leadership of the Church with the title of acting *locum tenens*. On July 29, 1927, together with members of his newly formed Provisional Patriarchal Synod, he issued his infamous declaration of the absolute loyalty of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Soviet Union and its government, whereupon most of the

Nevertheless, all of the other local autocephalous Churches still considered its hierarchs “canonical” and remained in intercommunion with them. But the severance in relations between the Metropolia and its “Mother Church” raised a cloud of ambiguity, which caused Metropolitan Platon’s successors unease,⁸ particularly after the Second World War, when the Patriarchal throne, left vacant since Patriarch Tikhon’s death on April 7, 1925, was filled by the election of Patriarch Alexis I. Now there was a considerable minority among the clergy and laity who favored a reconciliation with Moscow.

The Seventh All-American Sobor, held in Cleveland, Ohio in November 1946, severed the relationship of “coordination” (some would say “subordination”) of the Metropolia with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia that had been in place since the agreement, brokered by Patriarch Varnava of Serbia, that normalized relations between the two in 1935. This was done to clear a path to begin negotiations with the Moscow Patriarchate. Over the next twenty years the periodic efforts to negotiate a reconciliation failed every time due to the intractable positions taken by each side. The Metropolia was only willing to accept the Patriarch of Moscow as its “spiritual head,” insisting that it would remain completely independent in its administration and internal church life, including the election of its Primate. Moscow’s position was that this amounted to *de facto* autocephaly, which it was not prepared to grant.

In 1965, under a new primate, Metropolitan Ireney, the Metropolia’s Synod was determined to resolve its canonical ambiguity once and for all. Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople was approached about receiving the Metropolia under his canonical protection on the same terms that the Paris-based Russian Orthodox Archdiocese of Western Europe⁹ had with Constantinople. The Metropolia was rebuffed and told by the Patriarch that it needed to work out a resolution with its Mother Church—the Orthodox Church of Russia. However, this abortive approach to Constantinople entirely changed how the situation was viewed in Moscow. Since 1945 the Moscow Patriarchate had been attempting to usurp the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s position of global leadership over Orthodoxy. One mechanism it used was its assumption of the power to grant autocephaly, which it had exercised in 1948 when it compelled the Polish Orthodox Church into renouncing the autocephaly it had

bishops inside the Soviet Union (which then became a pretext for their arrest), and all of those abroad, broke communion with Sergius. On September 8, 1943, at the Council of Bishops, Metropolitan Sergius was elected Patriarch of Moscow (he was the only candidate). He died in Moscow on May 15, 1944.

⁸ Metropolitan Theophilus (1934-1950) dealt with the canonical ambiguity by entering into a relationship with the Yugoslavia-based Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in 1935. The arrangement was ratified by the Sixth All-American Sobor, held in New York City in October 1937, which affirmed that while the Metropolia remained autonomous, it would report to ROCOR in matters of faith. I think, judging from Metropolitan Theophilus’ actions after the relationship was severed, that he would have preferred to continue the relationship with ROCOR rather than negotiate normalization with Moscow. Metropolitan Leonty (1950-1965) affirmed the necessity of the Metropolia’s continued autonomy, in view of the failed attempt at reconciliation with the Moscow Patriarchate due to the impossibility of accepting dictates from the Russian Church while it was controlled by a totalitarian regime. While acknowledging the spiritual ties that bind the American Church to Her Mother Russian Church and Her “Grandmother” Greek Church, he stressed that Divine Providence had rooted the Church in America and Her mission is to be a united, self-governing Church for all Orthodox Christians in North America. In spite of the agonizing break with ROCOR four years earlier, Metropolitan Leonty welcomed ROCOR’s administration, which had just moved its headquarters to New York from Europe, to its new home in America, and called for brotherly collaboration in building up Church unity and ministering together to the American flock. In the following years, he would personally maintain ongoing fraternal contact with Metropolitan Anastasy, First Hierarch of ROCOR.

⁹ The Russian Orthodox Archdiocese of Western Europe (commonly called “the Paris Jurisdiction”) was an exarchate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople formed in 1931, as Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris was unwilling to subordinate his archdiocese to Moscow for the same reasons the North American Metropolia would not, but was also unwilling to recognize the authority of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. On November 27, 2018 the exarchate was abolished and its parishes were instructed to join the relevant dioceses of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, although its existence continued until its Primate, Archbishop John, was received into the Patriarchate of Moscow on September 14, 2019.

received from Constantinople in 1924 in favor of receiving autocephaly from Moscow, and again, in 1951, by granting autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Czechoslovakia, notwithstanding the fact that in the interwar period its “Mother Church” was the Serbian Orthodox Church.¹⁰ Moscow could not risk the possibility that Patriarch Athenagoras might change his mind and thereby “lose” the Metropolia to Constantinople, which would constitute a humiliating setback to its ambitions. In 1968, the Metropolia began informal communications with the Patriarch of Moscow, which led to official negotiations in 1969. On April 10, 1970, Patriarch Alexis I and fourteen bishops of the Patriarchal Synod signed the official *Tomos* of Autocephaly, which made the newly renamed Orthodox Church in America the fifteenth autocephalous Orthodox Church. The name change, as well as the granting of autocephaly, was officially accepted at the 14th All-American Sobor (which is also the Autocephalous Church’s 1st All-American Council), held at St. Tikhon’s Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania, in October 1970. This development certainly dispelled the Metropolia’s canonical ambiguity—it was universally accepted as a canonical Church—not because its autocephaly was universally recognized (it was not), but because its relationship with its “Mother Church” was normalized and canonical communion restored.

Now we’re ready for the original question. The granting of autocephaly by the Moscow Patriarchate was strongly condemned by the Patriarchate of Constantinople as an act that exceeded the former’s authority and violated the canons. Constantinople’s position is that it has sole authority to grant autocephaly to a new local Church, with the consent of its “Mother Church.” Furthermore, Constantinople considers itself as holding jurisdiction over all the “barbarian lands,” i.e., over all lands outside the territories of the existing local autocephalous Churches, which would include the entire Western Hemisphere.¹¹ The Moscow Patriarchate’s position is that the granting of autocephaly is an internal matter for the Mother Church to decide, which does not require Constantinople’s approval. There is a third point of view, sometimes referenced by OCA apologists: since the fifteenth century most of the local autocephalous Churches, including the Russian Church, were not recognized as such for many years, albeit their autocephaly was eventually granted by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.¹²

¹⁰ The Polish Orthodox Church, weakened by the loss of 80% of its membership due to the postwar change in Poland’s boundaries, and with the Soviet Union having political control of Poland by 1948, left its remaining hierarchs dependent on the Moscow Patriarchate, hence its acceding to a grant of autocephaly from Moscow despite its autocephaly having already been granted by Constantinople in 1924. The Russian Church’s grant of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Czechoslovakia on December 9, 1951 was not recognized by Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, who made claims to jurisdiction over Czechoslovak Church as being autonomous under its authority. The Patriarch of Constantinople later issued a *Tomos*, or official proclamation, of autocephaly in 1998.

¹¹ The question arises as to exactly which “barbarian lands”? “Barbarian lands” presumably meant all lands outside of the boundaries of the Roman Empire. However, lands to the East, such as Persia and India, were already within the territory of the Patriarchate of Antioch; lands to the south of Egypt, such as Cush and Ethiopia, were already within the territory of the Patriarchate of Alexandria; and those to the North, such as the British Isles and Germany, were evangelized by Rome, followed by Poland and Scandinavia. So it seems the “barbarian lands” in question would have been those lands occupied by “barbarian” Bulgars and Southern Slavs in the Balkans, within the territory of the Byzantine Empire and therefore subject to Constantinople’s jurisdiction, as well as lands to the North that were within Byzantium’s cultural order, i.e., those of the Eastern Slavs. It is patently absurd to imagine that jurisdiction over the “barbarian lands” was intended to entail an extension of extraterritorial jurisdiction on a global scale, especially to lands whose existence were not yet even known, i.e., the Western Hemisphere.

¹² The Russian Church became autocephalous with the election of Metropolitan Jonah in 1439 (following the expulsion of Metropolitan Isidore, who accepted the Union of Florence), recognized by Constantinople in 1589 upon the election of its first Patriarch, Job. The Church of Greece proclaimed its autocephaly in 1830, recognized by Constantinople in 1833. The Bulgarian Church proclaimed its autocephaly in 1872, recognized by Constantinople in 1945. The Romanian Church proclaimed its autocephaly 1865, recognized by Constantinople in 1885. The Albanian Church proclaimed its autocephaly in 1922, recognized by Constantinople in 1937. The Macedonian Orthodox Church—Ohrid Archdiocese proclaimed its autocephaly in 1967, recognized by the Serbian Church in 2022. Recognition of full autocephaly by Constantinople is still

The fact that autocephaly was self-proclaimed almost regularly shows that arguably most Orthodox hierarchs believed this was something within their power. Theologically, this may be explained as a theory that at a certain point in a local Church's maturation, when it is ready for autocephaly, that its accession to autocephaly is an "organic reality" that only requires recognition; i.e., autocephaly is something "discovered," rather than "granted." The recognition of autocephalous status by the other local autocephalous Church starts with the Patriarch of Constantinople's issuance of a *Tomos* and adding the name of the new autocephalous Church's primate to the Diptychs.¹³

So, is the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) an autocephalous Church? At very least, its *de facto* autocephaly is undeniable. If we apply the American maxim "If it looks like a duck, and walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it's a duck," then the OCA certainly looks, speaks, and acts like an autocephalous Church, although that has been true since 1924. However, only some of the other local autocephalous Churches recognize its *de jure* autocephaly, and this fact, in part, explains why the OCA's accession to autocephaly failed to bring out church unity in America. Constantinople will never recognize an autocephaly that it did not grant for the reasons stated in the last paragraph. With over half of America's Orthodox belonging to Constantinople's direct jurisdiction, there is no path to Orthodox church unity in America without Constantinople's consent and leadership. Moreover, there are other "Mother Churches" in play here as well, and a future unified Orthodox Church of America would also require their consent. This raises the specter of the unconventional nature of the OCA's autocephaly—the Moscow Patriarchate did not grant autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in a given territory (the USA and Canada),¹⁴ but rather to the specific jurisdiction in that territory over which Moscow claimed authority as its "Mother Church," resulting in something unprecedented, an autocephalous Church holding the allegiance of only a segment of the Orthodox Christians living within its territorial boundaries. So, bringing about church unity depended on the other jurisdictions joining the newly founded autocephalous Church, and only two did so—the Albanian Archdiocese of America, which had been left "orphaned" by the suppression of its Mother Church along with all religion in Albania in 1967, and a Bulgarian Diocese estranged from its Mother Church because of the latter's subjection to a totalitarian government, for whom joining the OCA in 1976 brought about the normalization of its relations with the Orthodox Church of Bulgaria (which officially recognized the OCA's autocephaly).¹⁵

pending the acceptance of its final condition, the dropping of "Macedonian" from the MOC-OA's name, but it has been in canonical communion with Constantinople since May 9, 2022 (Constantinople challenged the validity of the *Tomos* of autocephaly granted by the Serbian Church and accused it of having a "pro-Russian orientation," and in fact the MOC-OA's own position is it would only recognize an autocephaly granted from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, in accordance with canon law. The formal statement from the MOC-OA released on May 25, 2022 explained that it viewed the *Tomos* it received from the Serbian Church as a mere "recommendation of autocephaly."

¹³ The diptychs is a list of names used by a local autocephalous Church to commemorate the Primate of all the world's autocephalous churches. The names in the diptychs are read liturgically by the deacon (and repeated by the choir) only at a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy celebrated by a Patriarch or autocephalous Primate. The diptychs kept by Ecumenical Patriarchate could be viewed as "normative," i.e., the definitive list kept by the see that is first in primacy, Constantinople. For example, the absence of the Pope of Rome's name from the diptychs of Constantinople signifies the break in communion with him, even though the anathemas of 1054 were mutually lifted in 1965.

¹⁴ This was something the Moscow Patriarchate could not do, precisely because of the anomalous ecclesiastical situation in North America and the rest of the so-called diaspora—it could not include in its grant of autocephaly "jurisdictions" over which it had no claim to authority.

¹⁵ The OCA's large Romanian Orthodox Episcopate was already part of the Metropolia before 1970. In 1950, it had severed its relations with the Romanian Patriarchate for much the same reasons as the Metropolia's severance of relations with Moscow, and joined the Metropolia ten years later, in 1960, in order to regularize its canonical status, which had been subject to doubt due to Archbishop Valerian having been originally consecrated by a Ukrainian hierarchy widely considered non-canonical. It is noteworthy that the Romanian Episcopate's current archbishop, Nathaniel, has long been one of the foremost proponents of an administratively unified Orthodox Church of America.

What is required to bring about a canonically correct, visible (i.e., administrative) unity to Orthodoxy in America? First, the willingness and leadership of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Given the Ecumenical Patriarchate's recent actions of bringing an end to canonical disorders elsewhere in the world, perhaps there is hope that doing so in America might occur in the not too distant future. It will also require all of the "Mother Churches," without exception, to admit that there is no such thing as extraterritorial jurisdiction in Orthodox ecclesiology, and the existence of parallel "jurisdictions" within the same territory, with multiple bishops occupying the same sees, is expressly against the canons. All must renounce their claims to jurisdiction outside their own home territories. There is no justification for the current situation, as it is a hindrance to Orthodox missionary activity, and acting, or even worse, defending, it as though it was something "normal" is hardly less than an ecclesiological heresy. This will, of course, require a show of global Orthodox unity that has been sadly lacking over the last century, and for the clergy and faithful here to avoid using fears of "Greek domination" as an excuse to perpetuate the canonical disorder we now have that is sapping our limited resources.

Recipe of the Month

Vegan Cabbage Soup

Normally the recipe I would include in "Quo Vadis" in the month that Easter Sunday falls would be some kind of traditional paschal dish. However, this time I decided on another Lenten recipe, as I recently came across a simply marvelous vegan cabbage soup recipe. I was initially attracted by how pretty the picture of it was, but when I made it, with a few modifications to suit my preferences, I was impressed by the flavorful results. So, I decided that I must share it with you! I'll include an "Easter recipe" in next month's newsletter, since May will still be the Paschal season.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 3 stalk of celery
- 3 large carrots
- 4-6 mini sweet peppers (depending on size)
- 1 medium head (or ½ large head) of cabbage
- 15 oz. can of Giorgio mushrooms (do not drain)
- 2 15-oz. cans of whole potatoes (do not drain)
- 1 15 oz. can of diced tomatoes (do not drain)
- 4-5 cups of vegetable stock
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon of Italian seasoning
- A "pinch" of red pepper flakes (optional)
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Olive oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash all vegetables before preparation.
2. Chop the onion and mince the garlic cloves. Coat a large pot with olive oil and put on medium heat. Add chopped onion and minced garlic and sauté about 2-3 minutes. Turn down to low heat.

3. Slice the celery stalks horizontally in narrow strips or chop (chop the celery leaves if there are any). Remove the stems from the mini peppers and clean out seeds, then slice horizontally into narrow rings (2 bell peppers, any color, chopped, may be substituted). Peel carrots and slice horizontally. Add to pot and sauté.
4. Shred the cabbage and add to pot, adding oil olive if necessary, and sauté, stirring frequently.
5. After the cabbage has softened and reduced, add can of diced tomatoes (including liquid), can of mushrooms (including liquid), vegetable stock, and lemon juice. Add spices. Bring to boil, then reduce to low heat, cover and simmer.
6. Remove whole potatoes from cans, but save the liquid. Dice the whole potatoes and add to pot together with liquid. Cover and continue simmering until vegetables are tender.
7. Serve hot. Cooked orzo, rice, or noodles may be added to the soup, if desired.

Parish News

Parish Confessions

All parishioners ought to go to confession during Great Lent. Confessions may be heard after any Friday or Saturday evening service. Those who legitimately cannot attend services on Friday or Saturday evenings may call the Rectory to make your arrangements for confession at another time.

Blessing of Easter Food Baskets

Easter food baskets will be blessed in the church hall at 4:00 PM on Saturday, April 19, 2025. Baskets may also be blessed in the Carpathian Club Hall after Divine Liturgy on Easter Sunday.

Paschal Repast

A Paschal repast is being held at the Carpathian Club Hall after Divine Liturgy on Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025. All parishioners and visitors are welcome!

Blessing of Graves

Graves at Bay View Cemetery in Jersey City shall be blessed on Bright Saturday (April 26, 2025), starting at 10:00 AM, followed by Evergreen and Rosedale cemeteries. Please call the Rectory at (201) 436-3244 to schedule appointments for grave blessings at Graceland and other cemeteries.

Parish Council Meeting

The Parish Council is meeting in the church hall on Sunday, April 27, 2025 after Divine Liturgy.

2025 Young Adult Retreat

St. Andrews Camp & Retreat Center's 2025 Young Adult Retreat is Friday, May 16th through Sunday, May 18th. Young adults ages 18-35 are invited to come for fellowship, prayer, and fun activities at the beautiful lakefront campus on Oneida Lake in Jewell, New York. Fr. Paul Fedoroff will be leading discussion groups on topics pertinent to Orthodox life for young adults, as well as serving Matins, Vespers and Divine Liturgy. For further information, please contact LonnBologna@gmail.com or text 203-258-5324.

"God Loves a Cheerful Giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7)

The metallic cover of the bilingual English-Slavonic Gospel Book was refurbished in yellow and white gold by the generous donation of Reader Philip Benda given in memory of Benedict & Eva Benda.

Schedule of Services

April 3-6, 2025

5:00 PM (Thursday) – Great Canon of Repentance
6:00 PM (Friday) – Akathistos of the Virgin Mary
9:30 AM (Saturday) – Divine Liturgy
5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

April 11-13, 2025

6:00 PM (Friday) – Canon of St. Lazarus
9:30 AM (Saturday) – Divine Liturgy
5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers w. Lity

April 17-21, 2025

9:00 AM (Thursday) – Vespers & Divine Liturgy
6:00 PM (Thursday) – Matins w. 12 Passion Gospels
4:00 PM (Friday) – Vespers & Matins w. Lamentations
9:00 AM (Saturday) – Vespers & Divine Liturgy
11:30 PM (Saturday) – Nocturns & Paschal Matins
9:20 AM (Sunday) – Paschal Hours & Divine Liturgy
9:30 AM (Monday) – Divine Liturgy

April 26-27, 2025

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

Remember to support the parish every time you shop!



ShopRite, Stop & Shop, and Acme gifts cards available for purchase in the church vestibule.

April 6, 2025

Triple Candelabra offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Evelyn Zaleckis.

Daily Bible Readings

1. Isa. 40:18-31; Gen. 15:1-15; Prov. 15:7-19
2. Isa. 41:4-14; Gen. 17:1-9; Prov. 15:20-16:9
3. Isa. 42:5-16; Gen. 18:20-33; Prov.16:17-17:17
4. Isa. 45:11-17; Gen. 22:1-18; Prov. 17:17-18:5
5. Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 8:27-31
6. Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 10:32-45
7. Isa. 48:17-49:4; Gen. 27:1-41; Prov. 19:16-25
8. Isa. 49:6-10; Gen. 31:3-16; Prov. 21:3-21
9. Isa. 58:1-11; Gen. 45:1-16; Prov. 21:23-22:4
10. Isa. 65:8-16; Gen. 46:1-7; Prov. 23:15-24:5
11. Isa. 66:10-24; Gen. 49:33-50:26; Prov. 31:8-31
12. Hebrews 12:28-13:8; John 11:1-45
13. Philippians 4:4-9; John 12:1-18
14. Ezek. 1:1-20; Exod. 1:1-20; Job 1:1-12
15. Ezek. 1:21-28; Exod. 2:5-10; Job 1:13-22
16. Ezek. 2:3-3:3; Exod. 2:11-22; Job 2:1-10
17. 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; Composite Gospel
18. 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2; Composite Gospel
19. Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-20
20. Acts 1:1-8; John 1:1-17
21. Acts 1:12-17, 21-26; John 1:18-28
22. Acts 2:14-21; Luke 24:12-35
23. Acts 2:22-36; John 1:35-51
24. Acts 2:38-43; John 3:1-15
25. Acts 3:1-8; John 2:12-22
26. Acts 3:11-16; John 3:22-33
27. Acts 5:12-20; John 20:19-31
28. Acts 3:19-26; John 2:1-11
29. Acts 4:1-10; John 3:16-21
30. Acts 4:13-22; John 5:17-24

Special Donations

Special Donations may be offered at \$15 for the Altar Vigils, \$10 for the Sanctuary Lamp, and \$5 for any one of the following: St. John's Cross, St. Nicholas' Cross, and Triple Candelabra, and may be offered in memory of the departed or in honor of the living. For acknowledgement of Special Donations in the May 2025 issue, the donation must be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by April 21, 2025.

April 13, 2025

Sanctuary Lamp offered by Reader Stephen Wasilewski in memory of Robert Graf (40th day). **Triple Candelabra** offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Walter R. Royer (15th anniversary of repose). **Altar Vigils** offered by Helen Wanko in memory of Andrew Wanko (anniversary of birth).

April 20, 2025

Sanctuary Lamp offered by Helen Wanko in memory of Olga Lometz.

April 27, 2025

Triple Candelabra offered by Fr. W. Sophrony Royer in memory of Bishop Daniel (Alexandrow), who ordained him to the holy priesthood (15th anniversary of repose).