



THE FAITH

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

JULY 2010

A. MESSAGE FROM THE HIERARCH

- **The Incarnation – The Responsible and Free Assumption of the Relationship between the Creator and His Creation**

“Who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was became man.” (Article 3 of the Creed)

The Fathers of the First Ecumenical Synod speak in this article of the purpose of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ and the way in which that was done.

“Who for us men and for our salvation.”

The Incarnation was made by the will of God in order to fulfill the need of humankind to refind the path of communion with God. As we know from the Book of Genesis, the Holy Scripture speaks of the history of humankind as a history marked by the man’s departure from the word of God which fundamentally affected the relationship with Him. The purpose of the Incarnation was precisely this new chance which God offers humankind in order to return to that which was natural from the beginning, meaning this relationship of the creation with the Creator as intimacy which shapes more and more deeply. The joy which God had prepared for man from eternity and shared with him at creation disappears, once sin enters, due to the appearance of doubt, distrust, suspicion, and uncertainty in God’s providential care. God does not withdraw but something fundamental happens through the fall; something of the intimacy is definitely affected and man experiences it as state of nakedness which needs to be hidden. But where shall man hide from God when He is everywhere? The initiative of the restoration of the initial relationship, understood in an ontological sense, is taken by God.

“(He) came down from the heavens and was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.”

The Creed tells the manner by which God’s plan was accomplished. The incarnation took place through the corroboration of two elements – the divine work and the human work. The divine acts because only God could restore this relationship through His Son. The fact that the Son is incarnate and not the Holy Spirit, as the third Person of the Holy Trinity, shows us that man was created in the image of the Son, thus humankind had, at least potentially, the sonship or adoption as an attribute or founding gift which can be put to work and to blossom. By disobeying the word of God man distances himself from this potentiality of sonship which God had granted. Through the Incarnation man is recreated as child of God. The work of the two Persons, the Son and the Holy Spirit, in more direct manner at conception, shows the need for this work to be done by God the Holy Spirit in symphony with man’s ability to receive the adoption to sonship through the divine Image

(the Son of God) according to which he was created. Human nature needed to be redeemed by the Son of God, who as divine hypostasis comes to take on from the Virgin Mary. The Son of God takes on human flesh with his earthly form in order to raise man through His redemptive action. In His omnipotence God could have accomplished this simply by His word. However, through the Incarnation, God shows the freedom which He offers man to either receive this gift or not. The words “*came down from the heavens*” show precisely God’s will to act for the salvation of humankind. Nevertheless, the accomplishment of this salvation through the two elements – divine and human – the real presence of both not just the will of one. The words “*and became man*” show that what the Son of God assumed was not any nature but human nature in its totality; and this primarily because humankind is the crowning of Creation. Through the Incarnation the Son of God becomes Son of man but he does not assume a generic nature rather one concretely of man – meaning with body, soul, and rational mind as many of the Holy Fathers of the Church teach us. Through His redeeming work Jesus Christ restores human nature integrally. He does not simply replace the afflicted parts of human nature but permits the re-establishment of human nature in the fullness of His works. In this manner God shows that His responsibility toward His creation has been fulfilled, but also shows the freedom which He offers humankind to freely and voluntarily assume the restored humanity.

+His Grace Ioan Casian of Vicina

Vicar Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas

B. WORLD ORTHODOXY

- **The Holy Synod of the ROC will gather in a work meeting on July 6 & 7, 2010**

During the weekly work meeting on June 17, 2010, which took place in the Synodal Hall of the Patriarchal Residence under the chairmanship of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel, the Permanent National Church Council decided that the Romanian Patriarchate will present a pastoral and social program during times of economic crisis for analysis and approval to the Holy Synod at the work meeting on July 6 & 7, 2010. In addition to the 335 socio-philanthropic programs developed to this point by the Romanian Orthodox Church at the national level, the pastoral and social program in times of economic crisis proposed by the Romanian Patriarchate will take three principal directions: (a) aid to elder families who have small pensions, (b) aid to low-income families with many children, and (c) aid to those who are ill and have low-income. This pastoral and social program of the Romanian Patriarchate will be developed at different levels in parishes, monasteries, deaneries, and eparchial centers through the organization of new charitable kitchens, food shelves, clothing, other necessary items, and funds with the purpose of aiding the social groups most severely affected by the economic crisis in Romania.

- **The Russian Orthodox Church of France Has a New Young Vicar-Bishop**

The Orthodox Russians of Chersones, France have a new vicar-bishop, in the person of Fr. Nestor Sirotenko – announces the official site of the Diocese of Chersones (Moscow Patriarchate), cited the newspaper “The Light”. Having gathered on May 31 at St. Petersburg, Russia the Holy Synod of the Church of Russia, under the chairmanship of Patriarch Kirill, has nominated the egumen Nestor Sirotenko as Vicar-Bishop of Chersonese. The election took place at the request of Archbishop Innocent of Chersones. The new vicar-bishop will be ordained in Moscow at a date to be announced. Born in 1974 in Moscow, the new bishop studied theology at the Theological Academy of Serhiev-Posad and then went to France where he finalized studies at the St. Serge Orthodox Theological Institute. Over a number of years, he was parish priest at the Church of Asniers, France and in 2008 was elected dean of the parishes of the Diocese of Chersones, and parish priest of Three Holy Hierarchs Church in Paris. Fr. Nestor taught pastoral theology at Orthodox Seminary of Epinay-sous-Senart. The Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas sends the new hierarch the best of wishes to pastor “in peace, honorable, and healthy for many years, rightly teaching the Word of His Truth”.

http://www.egliserusse.eu/Mgr-Nestor-Sirotenko_a17.html

C. AMERICAN ORTHODOXY

- **OCMC Mission Trip to Romania – www.ocmc.org**

Join ASCOR (The Association of Romanian Orthodox Christian Students) in offering a Youth Camp outside of Cluj from July 9 until July 21, 2010. This team will offer missionaries the opportunity to participate together, offer religious education and youth ministry in a camp setting. The program will include Bible studies, sports, arts and crafts, and fellowship. Participants should have the ability to share and teach their Orthodox Faith. Visit the trip link:

http://ocmc.org/programs/view_team.aspx?TeamId=60

D. LIFE OF OUR ARCHDIOCESE

- **ARCHDIOCESAN CONGRESS CONVENES IN CHICAGO, JULY 1-4, 2010**

Priests and lay delegates, together with representatives of the AROLA and ROYA organizations from the parishes of our Archdiocese will gather at the Archdiocesan Center in Chicago for the 77th Congress of the Archdiocese which will begin Thu, 1 Jul 2010 and will adjourn Sun, 4 Jul 2010. The detailed Congress schedule as well as hotel information may be found at:

<http://romarch.org/news.php?id=2238>

- **Summer Camp at Emlenton, PA – August 21 – September 4, 2010**

Our archdiocese announces the seventh edition of the orthodox camp for children. The camp will take place this year again in Emlenton, Pennsylvania (110 All Saints Road, Emlenton, PA 16373) between the dates of *Aug 21 and Sep 4, 2010*. The theme of this year’s camp is *The Life of the Savior Jesus Christ “Commandment or Encouragement: Let the children come to me...(Matthew*

19:14)” The tuition cost is **\$400/camper** for the two weeks. The due date for registrations is July 21, 2010. For further details please contact Fr. Daniel Ene 585-705-9288 or Mrs. Florina Radu at 917-916-0612. For information and registration form download please visit the webpage:

<http://www.romarch.org/news.php?id=2198>

E. LIFE OF OUR PARISHES

- **Deanery of Eastern USA**

- **Deanery of Western USA**

-Holy Ascension Church of Hayward, CA

The Ladies Reunion of Holy Ascension Romanian Orthodox Church invite everyone on Sun, 11 Jul 2010 to a Romanian picnic at Kennedy Park in Hayward starting 11 am. Following the Divine Liturgy, which begins at 9 am, all are invited to the festivities. Among socio-cultural activities of the summer we also announce the event “An Evening for You” held on 17 Jul 2010. For further details please visit: <http://inaltarea-domnului.org/node/286>

- **Deanery of Eastern Canada**

-The Holy Cross Monastery, Toronto ON

Holy Cross Monastery in Toronto is planning a Pilgrimage to visit some monasteries in Romania between October 11-22. At this time we do not have pricing for this trip, possibly not before the end of August. However, we would be happy if people would register their intentions to join us by calling the Monastery at (647) 436-9786. Thank you! Please visit our website: www.holycrossorthodoxmonastery.com

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