

On the Unity in Christ

Ukrainian People
Peace and Blessings

Every Believer in God, who is conscious of his Ukrainian Nationality, when viewing the present difficult situation of Ukrainian people, both in Ukraine and Diaspora, is subconsciously filled with terror for its future existence and development. Persecution and oppression of the Church and religion in the Ukraine and divisions and dissensions outside the native Ukraine; these are the facts which every honest Ukrainian is compelled to reflect upon.

Where to look for a solution and what means it is necessary to employ in order that one may tread the right path in this time of misfortune; to use means necessary to secure a healthy future and, what is more, that one may not disappear from the face of the earth and go down in history as an obsolete and dead element, as has already happened in the history of some Nations. Even for a genius, it is no easy task at present to achieve the edification of so many unfortunate people. However, this must not be a reason for throwing up our hands in despair, especially for those who believe God and look for his sure help. Indeed, St Paul says: "Come then, stiffen the sinews of the drooping hand and flagging knee and plant your footprints in a straight track so that the man who goes home may not stumble out of the path but regain strength instead" (Hebrews 12, 12).

Every person, no matter what views he holds, or how he regards the present religious and governmental positions - be they Ukrainian or foreign - must admit that the strongest factor in the deeds and creations of the people is religion; belief in God. Even atheists see and openly declare that it is impossible today to eliminate belief in God from the soul of a person, even by the use of the most powerful means of material and physical governmental strength. Therefore, if this is so, then it is necessary to focus on this most important moment in the life of a person, people and State. Thus emerges the question, what is the state of affairs concerning religion and belief in God amongst the Ukrainian Nation? It is a pity that in this is the root of all evil, because it is religion which should be that strongest element in the thoughts and deeds of the so heavily divided and disunited Ukrainian people. We have Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Evangelical Communities and several divided religious groups, all of which suffer penal servitude. It is, however, a great pity that they fight each other and, therefore, are not strong enough to unite the Ukrainian people and lead the offensive against the evil forces of the world. Our Good Lord admonished us: "NO KINGDOM CAN BE AT WAR WITH ITSELF WITHOUT BEING LAID WASTE; NO CITY OR HOUSEHOLD THAT IS AT WAR WITH ITSELF CAN STAND FIRM" (Matthew 12,25).

Therefore, in view of the strong religious convictions of the Ukrainian people, we appeal to you to **BEGIN YOUR RECOVERY FORM THE ROOTS OF SPIRITUALITY, FROM YOUR IMMORTAL SOUL AND ITS NEEDS!**

All individuals who accept belief in God and Christ, must admit that Christ made Man established ONE FLOCK, ONE CHURCH AND ONE SHEPHERD, and for this unity He prayed fervently during the Last supper: "Holy Father, keep them true to Thy name, Thy gift to me, that they may be one, as we are one" (John 17, 11) "that they too may be one in us" (John 17,21) "and so they may be perfectly made one" (John 17,23).

The majority of our Churches are Orthodox and Catholic, and, impartially peaking, THERE ARE NOT FUNDAMENTAL DOGMATIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US, as is shown by theological studies and stated in history. To tell the truth, severance and division are supported only from outside, from those who know that by this they will weaken the Ukrainian Nation and Church. The brightest moment in our history was the basic understanding on the question of the Patriarchate between both Churches during the time of Metropolitans Peter Mohyla and Joseph Weliamyn Rutskyj. Unfortunately, their great concept of agreement did not come to fruition. From another side, the Poles and other neighbors wanted to latinize and polonise Ukrainian Catholics in order to serve their own political motives. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on such a state of affairs and to give consideration to own Church, and own good, instead of to be the reel in strange hands, who wind and spin cotton for their own clothing. Admittedly, such great steps towards near understanding, in recent times, were made during the lifetime of the late Metropolitan Andrij Szeptyckyj. Similarly now a cordial meeting took place during the Gathering of Orthodox in Bound Brook with Metropolitan John Teodorowycz. There great words were uttered: WE ORTHODOX, ARE THE SAME AS YOU CATHOLICS: This is true, and conscientious studies reveal that there are no dogmatic or spiritual differences. IT IS NECESSARY FOR US ALL TO STAND ON THE TRADITION OF OUR KIEV FOREFATHERS and not to be subjected to Russian Synodian and likewise influences.

Our Evangelists too stand on the same principle with regard to Christ's Gospel. It is necessary to draw closer to the Apostles Andrew and Peter, with whom our Christianity began and still continues.

Likewise, our Biblical Communities, who take the Holy Bible as their basis, read that within it burns this belief in One God and Jesus Christ our Redeemer. When we celebrated Holy Mass in the Northern part of the Argentine, in Chaco, countless numbers of our Jehovah Witnesses learned over the radio about our Liturgy in a great Roman Catholic Cathedral and came from colonies and woods and filled the whole Church to capacity. They prayed with us! No wonder, that they speak out about the necessity for the unity of religion and faith.

TRUTH IS ONLY ONE! How painful it is for other Nations, for example, the Germans, regarding the split in their Church and how their endeavors to unite develop so splendidly under the influence of the Holy Ghost in the so-called Ecumenical Movement - movement of unification but, on the contrary, how strong is the unity of today's Catholic Church in Poland which shows resistance to both atheists and materialists!

How powerful was our State in the time of Vladimir the Great and Jaroslav Mudryj! Because we had ONE FAITH AND ONE CHURCH, which spiritually united all people, and strengthened all governmental life and created its culture!

Would it not be possible to commence united action of two Churches by agreeing the translations of the Liturgy and other Liturgical Services, to pray "with one tongue and one heart"? Again, to achieve such friendship with other Christian communities, it is necessary to begin by reading the same Holy Scripture translated from the original. Apparently this approach must take place with understanding, slowly and gradually. WE MUST BE OURSELVES! We must look after our own spiritual needs and salvation of our Souls - and then THERE WILL BE UNITY BETWEEN US, IN THE FIRST PLACE AT CHURCH LEVEL AND THEN AT NATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL! It is necessary for them to place the needs of the Church and Nation above our own vain personal ambitions and own personal or communal profits!

This is a very gratifying sign in that all believers in the Ukraine belonging to various religious groups begin to understand and feel that, UNITING IN ONE PARTICULAR UKRAINIAN CHURCH UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PATRIARCH, WE WILL BECOME A FORTRESS AGAINST WHICH THE OFFENSIVES OF THE ENEMIES WILL BE CRUSHED, both religious and political.

We are approaching the FEAST OF PENTECOST. With common ardent prayer, we must appeal to the Holy Ghost, as the Ghost of Unity, that He may enlighten us, inspire and give us strength for our unity and unification in faith in One Church. The Holy Ghost through the words of St. Paul appeals to us: "ONLY I ENTREAT YOU, BRETHREN, AS YOU LOVE THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, USE, ALL OF YOU, THE SAME LANGUAGE. THERE MUST BE NO DIVISIONS AMONG YOU; YOU MUST BE RESTORED TO UNITY OF MIND AND PURPOSE." (Corinthians 1,10)

GOD'S BLESSING UPON YOU!

+ JOSEPH
+ PATRIARCH

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