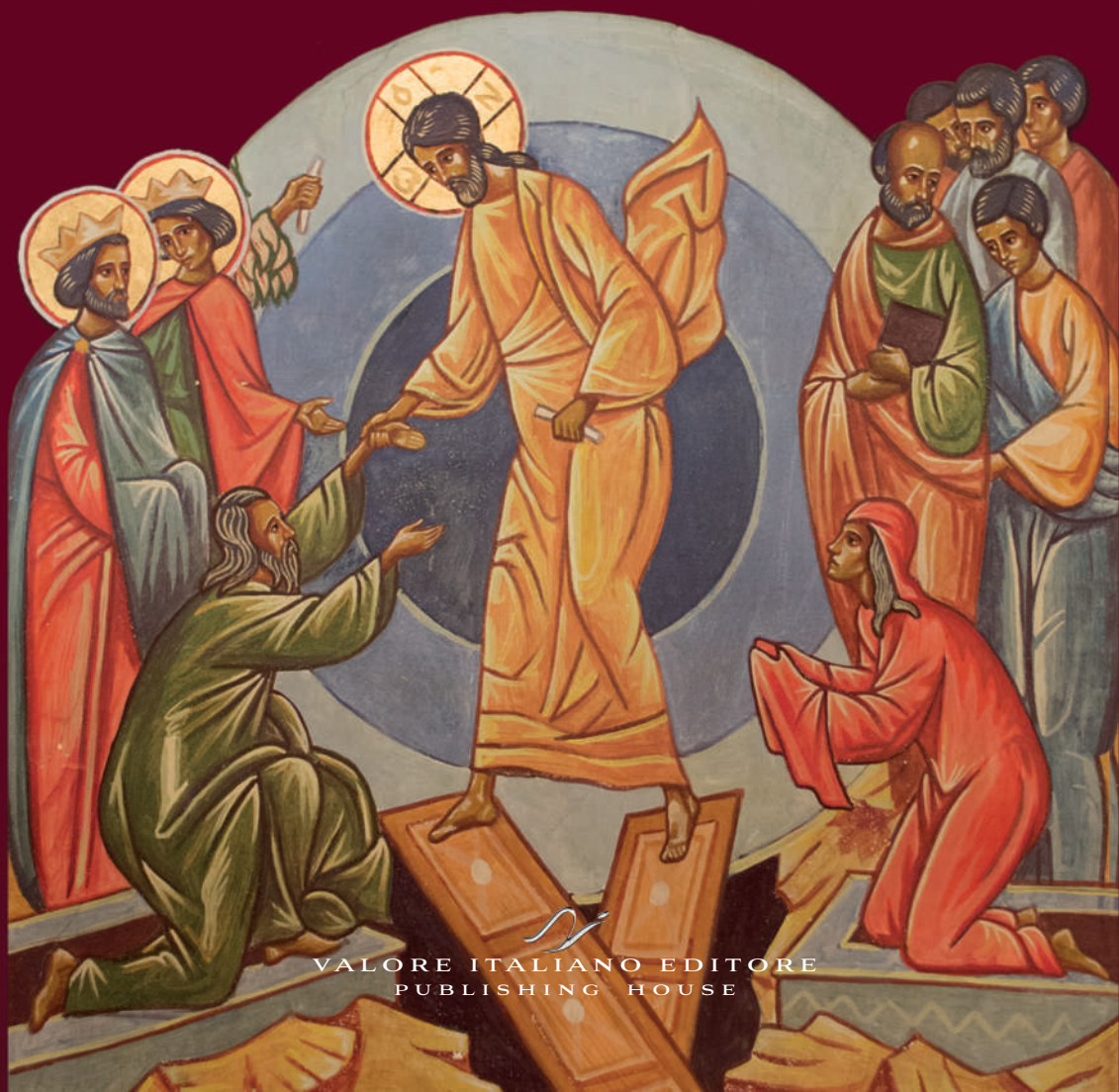




DICASTERY FOR THE EASTERN CHURCHES

THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025 AND THE EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES

PASTORAL GUIDE



VALORE ITALIANO EDITORE
PUBLISHING HOUSE



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INTRODUCTION

The Jubilee Year is now upon us, an event that is significant for all humanity. For Christians, it is a moment to reflect on the presence in our midst of Jesus Christ, the Lord of history and the inexhaustible source of our hope. The Catholic Church desires this time of grace to be an occasion to reveal the richness of the different traditions that converge in full communion. The Eastern Catholic Churches – whose Jubilee will take place from 12 to 14 May 2025, marked by celebrations in the various rites – are thus called throughout this Holy Year to highlight their distinctive identity as part of that communion.

With the present pastoral guide, the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches hopes to contribute to a fuller and more effective celebration of the Holy Year by providing information useful for both the clergy and the lay faithful.

Part I highlights certain elements of the Eastern heritage that are particularly relevant in reference to the Holy Year. Parts II and III offer practical, albeit concise, assistance to the faithful of the Eastern Churches who make a Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome by pointing out events and places of encounter between Rome and the East in such a way as to enrich their journey of faith.

This guide is also offered to the faithful of the Latin Church as a means of broadening their horizons and acquainting them with the gifts that the Christian East constantly brings, not simply on this occasion, to the entire Catholic world.

In this presentation, our fraternal thoughts also extend to the faithful of the Eastern Churches who are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church yet share these same liturgical and patristic treasures with Eastern Catholics, in the hope that they will also find this guide useful for their own reflection and prayer.

PART ONE

THE JUBILEE IN THE
EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES

Chapter I

THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Meaning of the Jubilee

1. The origins and meaning of the Holy Year harken back to the biblical tradition of the “jubilee year of Israel” that for its part reflects the “Sabbath”, the seventh day, when God rested after the work of creation, contemplating his handiwork and enjoying its beauty, which reveals him as its Lord. The gift of the Sabbath to man, and its divine institution, are a sign that humanity is called to share in the lordship of God and must never become enslaved to material things. According to the book of Leviticus, every fiftieth year, that is, the year following “seven weeks of years” (Lev 25:8) was to be a sort of great sabbatical year: the land was allowed to rest and so be left fallow for the entire year. Fields and homes that had been forfeited were returned to their original owners; slaves were set free and debtors were forgiven their debts. The jubilee year was therefore a time of pardon and grace, of liberation for both man and nature. The land, which belongs to God, was not to be sold outright, nor could individual freedom be compromised by the accumulation of property in the hands of a few. The Israelites, whom God had freed from slavery in Egypt, were not to become the slaves of any earthly overlord, nor were they to abuse nature, the land of promise and the gift of God.

After seven weeks of years, the fiftieth year thus reaffirmed the absolute sovereignty of God over his creation and his people. For Christians, this sabbatical rest for man and nature was a foreshadowing of the “eighth day” that began with the resurrection of Jesus, when the Holy Spirit renewed the face of the earth and came to dwell in the new people of God. Each year, during the

holy season of fifty days extending from Easter to Pentecost, the liturgy invites us to relive this eternal “day” of grace and joy. The Jubilee Year is meant to do the same.

2. The Holy Year also recalls that year of mercy that the vinedresser requested from the owner of the vineyard, in the hope that the barren fig tree would eventually bear fruit (cf. Lk 13:5-9). It is likewise the “year of grace” proclaimed by Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk 4:16-30). As such, it is a time for forgiveness and conversion, capable of bringing forth rich and surprising fruit, a time when the love of God heals wounded humanity and we are enabled to rediscover the fullness of life to which the Father destined us at the creation of the world. The Holy Year is thus a privileged time for welcoming this joyful message and for returning to the Lord.

It is also a time of fraternal reconciliation and social justice. God is pleased by prayers, sacrifices and almsgiving only if those who offer them are righteous and show compassion for the lowly, who are the brothers and sisters of Jesus (cf. Is 58; Mt 25:31-36).

The Jubilee and the Christian Meaning of Time

3. In the life of the Church, the supreme way of celebrating this season of salvation is through the liturgy. The year 2025 is above all a liturgical year. The passage of time must be experienced in relation to the liturgy and its annual celebration of the Christian mystery. Throughout the jubilee year, we relive the mysteries of salvation celebrated throughout the liturgical year, in accordance with the specific traditions of each Church.

4. For the sacred Scriptures, time is the progress of human history towards a single goal: Christ the Lord, the fulfilment of its hope. In Christ, that fulfilment is already present in our midst: “At the acceptable time I have listened to you, and helped you

on the day of salvation” (2 Cor 6:2). Yet it still awaits us: the Church, as the Bride of the Book of Revelation, ceaselessly implores the return of her Saviour. Liturgical chant is nothing less than an unending plea: *Marana tha*, “Come, Lord” (cf. 1 Cor 16:22). In union with Christ, we pray to the Father: “Thy kingdom come” (Mt 6:10).

5. The salvation that is Christ himself entered time, made itself known at a precise moment in the past, and continues to be alive in the present through the power of the Holy Spirit, who permeates our lives and transforms them. What, then, is “Christian time”? It is at once the fulfilment of the history of salvation in Christ the Lord, the coming of God’s kingdom, and the beginning of the end times, as John the Baptist had proclaimed. Remembrance of the saving event of Christ is the perennial source of all Christian prayer. The liturgy is shaped by the rhythm of the passage of time, a time now transformed in Christ. Consequently, the celebration of the mystery of Christ, as the heart of all liturgical prayer, also enriches the rhythm of our daily lives. We sanctify time by the liturgy, yet the liturgy also sanctifies us in time, by the grace of our Saviour: Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God.

6. The year and its feasts, the weeks, the days and the hours from dawn to dusk, the nights of vigil that await the new light, and the Jubilee itself thus point, in every age, to humanity’s eternal and enduring encounter with the salvation of Christ. To pray in time is “to recall these things” (cf. 2 Pet 1:15) which transcend every moment and all ages. The Christian East is particularly sensitive to our awareness of this mystery.

The Jubilee and Liturgy

7. To enhance the presence of the Christian East in the Jubilee, it will be important to make known the extraordinary riches present in the liturgy celebrated according to the traditions

of the various Churches. The usual rhythm of the liturgical year, which culminates in the celebration of Lord's resurrection, must naturally be respected. All other specific celebrations associated with the Holy Year (penitential celebrations, pilgrimages, etc.) should be clearly related to the liturgy and its rites according to the particular traditions of each ecclesial community, and never as a substitute for them. Individual events and celebrations must also be planned in harmony with and, as it were, arise directly from the celebration of the liturgical year, in accordance with the instructions of the Holy Father in the Bull of indiction of the Jubilee *Spes Non Confundit* (9 May 2024). All celebrations should thus have Christ, altar and victim, Christian forgiveness and ecumenical fraternity as their constant point of reference. These various dimensions – liturgical, jubilee, ecclesial – may at times be joined in the same celebration; nevertheless a clear sense of the priority of the liturgy over all other dimensions should be preserved.

The Sacramental Dimension

8. The liturgical year is the celebration, within the context of a single solar year, of the entire mystery of Christ, “from the Incarnation and Nativity to the Ascension, to Pentecost and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 102). The sacraments, as “mysteries of this mystery”, are “ordained to sanctify men, to build up the body of Christ, and, finally, to give worship to God” (ibid., 59). According to the Fathers, the sacraments, by making present Christ's saving mysteries, conform disciples to the Master. In this way, the earthly ministry of Christ continues through the visible ministry of the Church, the sacrament of his presence among us. In the words of Saint Leo the Great: “That which was visible in the Redeemer has now passed into the sacraments” (*De Ascensione*, 74, 2).

9. It is most fitting, then, that the first concern of the Eastern Churches during the Jubilee Year should be the solemn celebration of all the sacraments, in such a way that the gift of salvation that they convey is appreciated as much as possible. The Easter Vigil, for example, can highlight the three mysteries of Christian initiation. So too, Penance, during the seasons liturgically dedicated to it in each tradition, and the Anointing of the Sick, in certain traditions, on the Thursday of the Great and Holy Week that leads to Easter, and so forth. In this way, the Jubilee Year will constitute a genuine mystagogy, whereby the faithful, fully directed to the Father through Christ in the Spirit, may approach these inexhaustible sources of grace and salvation, and draw from them a more lively faith and a renewed commitment.

Signs of Communion with the Church of Rome

10. Rome became the principal destination of pilgrimage in the West for specific historical reasons, the chief of these being the increasing difficulty experienced by the faithful in gaining access to Jerusalem and the Holy Places. The proclamation of the first Holy Year by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300, and the Jubilee years that followed, had a distinctively Roman character. The Jubilee of 2025 will therefore express in a particular way the full communion of the Eastern Catholic Churches with the Bishop of Rome. It will also be particularly meaningful for these communities, which at times have made, and continue to make, great sacrifices to maintain this communion. With regard to the celebrations, two things should be borne in mind:

a) As the Bishop of Rome, the Successor of the Apostle Peter, the Pope thus shares in the primacy that the Lord conferred on Peter for the service of the universal Church. Wherever possible, the full communion of the Eastern Catholic Churches should be stressed in the meetings of their pilgrims with the Bishop of

Rome. Local celebrations should also clearly express this communion with the Holy Father.

b) Rome preserves venerable Christian monuments and ancient memories. Here are the tombs of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, who preached the Gospel and bore faithful witness to the Lord Jesus by their death as martyrs; then, those of the countless other martyrs who, beginning with the Roman proto-martyrs, testified to their faith in Christ by their words, their deeds and, ultimately, the sacrifice of their lives. Among these martyrs were many who came from the East, yet another sign of the universal communion of the one Church of Christ in *confessione fidei et in effusione sanguinis*.

Signs of Universality

11. Rome's unique history, the fact that it is the episcopal see of the Pope and the fact that the Jubilee is celebrated simultaneously in the Eternal City, in the Holy Land and in the local Churches, makes the Jubilee a truly universal event. The ecclesial moments of the Holy Year and, in particular, the exemplary celebration of its liturgies will serve to foster the communion of the whole Church. The local Churches, in celebrating the unique mystery of Christ, will be able to experience at first hand the Church's unity in faith. The present guide is itself a sign of the Holy See's concern for the participation of the Eastern Churches and, as such, to strengthen the bonds of communion and fraternity.

12. A further sign of universality will be seen in the numerous participants in the Roman jubilee celebrations coming from different countries and different Eastern Churches. Thanks to the communications media, even members of the faithful who cannot be present in person will also be able to participate in some way. Above all, however, this value of universality will be evident in the variety of the liturgies of the different Churches

celebrated in Rome. The Holy Year calendar naturally reflects this remarkable richness of different forms of prayer, united in perfect communion of faith, a clear sign of show the Church's catholicity. Celebrations in the Eastern liturgies have been scheduled: Armenian, Byzantine, Alexandrian-Coptic, Alexandrian-Ethiopian, Syrian-Antiochene, Eastern Syrian.

Ecumenical Sensitivity

13. Ecumenism is very much a part of this great Jubilee. As Pope Francis prophetically confided to the Eastern Catholic Bishops of Europe assembled in Rome on 12-14 September 2019: "Today, while all too many inequalities and divisions threaten peace, we feel called to be artisans of dialogue, promoters of reconciliation and patient builders of a civilization of encounter that can preserve our times from the incivility of conflict. While so many people allow themselves to be caught up in a spiral of violence, in a vicious circle of demands and constant mutual recriminations, the Lord wants us to be meek sowers of the Gospel of love. In the Christian family, you are the ones who, looking to 'the God of all consolation' (2 Cor 1:3), are committed to healing the wounds of the past, overcoming prejudices and divisions, and offering hope to all, as you walk side by side with your non-Catholic brothers and sisters."

Saint John Paul II had earlier observed: "The sin of our separation is very serious: I feel the need to increase our common openness to the Spirit who calls us to conversion, to accept and recognize others with fraternal respect, to make fresh, courageous gestures, able to dispel any temptation to turn back" (Apostolic Letter *Orientale Lumen*, 17).

14. The calendar for the Holy Year, as desired by the Holy Father and the whole Church, has provided for a number of significant ecumenical meetings. The Eastern Catholic Churches are invited, together with other Christians, above all those

belonging to their same ecclesial tradition, to seek out possible forms of common celebration for the Holy Year, which can thus become occasions for encounter, prayer and dialogue. Given the penitential dimension of the Jubilee, in addition to individual conversion it would be fitting that the Churches also encourage and celebrate gestures of forgiveness given and received. These will prove all the more prophetic in light of the tragic conflict that our human family is presently experiencing.

A Living Sign of Hope

15. Discouragement, lack of hope and a sense of nagging insecurity are evils of our time, partly the result of the tragic mistake of placing our hopes only in what we possess (cf. Lk 12:19). In response, the Church offers solid reasons for hope, indicating their source in the Lord Jesus. In Jesus, the foundation of our hope, we, as believers, ground our daily lives; in Jesus, we find the source of our credibility as Christians who seek joyfully to share our faith, to abound in charitable works and to bear enthusiastic witness to the Lord whose presence has transformed our lives.

Surely, “the most convincing testimony to this hope is provided by the martyrs. Steadfast in their faith in the risen Christ, they renounced life itself here below rather than betray their Lord. Martyrs, as confessors of the life that knows no end, are present and numerous in every age, and perhaps even more so in our own day. We need to treasure their testimony, in order to confirm our hope and allow it to bear good fruit” (*Spes Non Confundit*, 20).

Many of the Eastern Churches are presently martyr Churches, deeply wounded and needing love, support and hope. Hence the heartfelt appeal that Pope Francis addressed to the participants in the meeting of aid agencies for the Eastern Churches on 27 June 2024: “These are Churches which must be cherished: they

preserve unique spiritual and sapiential traditions, and they have much to say to us about the Christian life, synodality, and the liturgy. We think of early Fathers, the Councils, and monasticism: inestimable treasures of the Church... This beauty, however, is marred. Many Eastern Churches are bearing a heavy cross and have become ‘martyr Churches’. They carry the marks of Christ’s wounds. Just as the Lord’s flesh was pierced by nails and a lance, so many Eastern communities are suffering and bleeding because of the conflicts and violence they endure. Let us think of some of the places where they dwell: the Holy Land and Ukraine; Syria, Lebanon, the entire Middle East; the Caucasus and Tigray. It is in these very places, where great numbers of Eastern Catholics are found, that the brutality of war is felt most fiercely”. Even so, these Churches continue to be witnesses of hope, persevering in our earthly pilgrimage towards the encounter with the Risen Christ and echoing the trust expressed in the words of Psalm 71: “In you, O Lord, I take refuge; I will never be disappointed”.

It is essential, then, that all of us grow in hope, which “gives inward direction and purpose to the life of believers. For this reason, the Apostle Paul invites us to rejoice in hope” (*Spes Non Confundit*, 18), the theological virtue that redeems us from fear and sets us free. “By virtue of the hope in which we have been saved, we can view the passage of time with the certainty that the history of humanity and our own individual history are not doomed to a dead end or a dark abyss, but directed to an encounter with the Lord of glory. As a result, we live our lives in expectation of his return and in the hope of living forever in him. In this spirit, we make our own the heartfelt prayer of the first Christians with which sacred Scripture ends: ‘Come, Lord Jesus!’” (ibid., 19).

Here we find expressed the essence of Christian hope: even “in facing death, which appears to be the end of everything, we

have the certainty that, thanks to the grace of Christ imparted to us in Baptism, ‘life is changed, not ended’, forever. Buried with Christ in Baptism, we receive in his resurrection the gift of a new life that breaks down the walls of death, making it a passage to eternity” (*Spes Non Confundit*, 20). In hope, our hearts already feel the sure and consoling presence of the just Judge, who did not condemn the adulterous woman, but restored her to a new life (cf. Jn 8:11); the Master, who gave the rich young man a chance to lead a truly rich and fulfilling life by following him (Mt 19:21; Mk 10:21); the crucified Redeemer, who opened the gates of Paradise to the repentant thief amid the ruins of a mis-spent life (cf. Lk 23:43).

In the world in which we live – amid wars, injustice and violence – is it still possible to hope? The Jubilee encourages us to answer this question with a resounding “yes”! This is indeed reasonable, for the answer is the Lord Jesus himself.

Chapter II

SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

16. Each of the Eastern Churches is born of a particular culture; each enriches that culture by bringing it the Gospel message. Here we attempt to offer some suggestions that may prove useful to all the Eastern Catholic Churches. Each can adapt them to its own specific context and sensibilities.

A Time of Reconciliation and Repentance

17. Time and conversion are closely linked from the first pages of the Gospel, in the preaching of John the Baptist: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt 3:2). What the Precursor, as the Christian East loves to call him, proclaimed was not primarily an invitation to asceticism but to conversion, that is, to a radical change in one’s way of thinking and seeing things, which is the real goal of every spiritual journey (cf. Rom 12:2).

18. Eastern spirituality greatly emphasizes this spirit of *pen-thos*: compunction, contrition, sorrow for one’s sins and for the sins of all humanity, for “if we say we have no sin in us, we deceive ourselves and the truth of God is not in us” (1 Jn 1:8). Yet repentance is also tied to conversion: indeed, it is a product of the joy born of conversion. The unmerited forgiveness bestowed by God gives rise to such joy that sinful man seeks to respond by purifying himself of all sin with tears of repentance and by forgiving whatever offences he has received.

19. Conversion necessarily involves openness to reconciliation. Indeed, “if anyone says, ‘I love God’, and hates his brother, he is a liar, for he who does not love his brother whom he has

seen cannot love God whom he has not seen” (1 Jn 4:20). Without reconciliation, not only with our brothers and sisters but even with our enemies (Mt 5:43-47), our prayers and liturgical offerings are worthless before God. “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice”, Jesus said more than once (Mt 9:13; 12:7), citing the words of the prophet Hosea (Hos 6:6). His own teaching was even more explicit: “If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come back and offer your gift” (Mt 5:23).

20. The teaching of the Church Fathers on penance takes up these teachings of the Lord. Saint Athanasius of Sinai (seventh century), in a homily on the sacred Synaxis, has this aside: “I often hear many saying, ‘Alas, woe is me, how can I acquire salvation? I am too weak to fast, I do not know how to keep vigil, I am incapable of observing chastity, I cannot abandon the world, how can I obtain salvation? How? I will tell you: Pardon others and God will pardon you (Lk 6:37). Forgive others and you will be forgiven: this is the short and rapid way to salvation” (PG LXXXIX, 845a).

A Time of Fasting and Abstinence

21. The story of creation is set in a garden, and eating, as an expression of the “greed to possess” was the cause of the Fall. The Gospel begins in the desert and is accompanied by fasting: this is the contrast that Lent symbolically sets before us. Each believer is called to retire to the desert, to withdraw from everything superfluous and distracting, and to dispose himself or herself interiorly to receiving the gift of salvation. Fasting prepares us to reject the forbidden fruit in order to be nourished by the Bread of Life.

22. It is true that, while John the Baptist fasted, the Lord Jesus was pleased to share meals with his disciples and even

presented his return at the end of time as an eternal banquet of joy. The wedding guests do not fast, Jesus said, when the bridegroom is present, but when the days come that the bridegroom is taken from them, then they will surely fast (cf. Mt 9:15; Mk 2:20; Lk 5:35). The Lord is certainly with us all the days of our life (Mt 28:20), but since we do not yet see him face to face, we await and pray for his return. Living as we do in the tension between the “already” and the “not yet”, fasting and expectation are closely connected. We are called to keep watch and to persevere in prayer, since we do not know the hour the Master will return.

23. The liturgical year, and hence the Jubilee, expresses this constant tension between the kingdom present in our midst and its fullness that we await. This paradox is but one of the many that find expression in the liturgy of the Eastern Churches and their theology, which halts at the threshold of the mystery out of respect for its ineffable nature. The same paradox is seen in the East in the tension between the Eucharist and fasting. The Eucharist is the festival of the Church, the banquet of the Lord’s presence, whereas fasting is the sign of hopeful expectation, the vigil that precedes the sacramental *parousia*, prayer and preparation for the sacrament. One fasts not to abstain from the Eucharist, but to prepare oneself for the Eucharist. This was the original meaning of the vigil before Sundays and feast days.

24. Fasting is also a form of asceticism, a spiritual exercise aimed at strengthening the will. Christ fasted in preparation for his ministry (Mt 4:2) and told us that only by fasting could certain demons be cast out (Mt 17:18). Since Satan seduced Adam and Eve with forbidden fruit, fasting represents the rejection of that seduction, the exorcism of Satan and a reaffirmation that man lives not on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (cf. Mt 4:4). Indeed, “prayer and fasting are the weapons of love that change history, the weapons that

defeat our one true enemy: the spirit of evil that foments war” (*Letter of the Holy Father Francis to the Catholics of the Middle East*, 7 October 2024). In an age of searing conflicts that tragically affect the homelands of many Eastern Churches, those words of encouragement, which the Holy Father never tires of addressing to the faithful, prove all the more timely and urgent. The Church Fathers viewed fasting as a sign of solidarity with others, and taught that fasting enables us to share our daily bread with the needy. That teaching is extremely relevant to our own time, when distances between the rich few and the masses of the poor are constantly increasing.

25. Fasting in no way represents a denial of the joys that God, in his infinite generosity, abundantly bestows. Yet, if life in Christ is participation in the life of the Church, and if the mystery of the Church is a nuptial mystery, this demands of us the radical fidelity of love. We learn this fidelity by our making daily efforts to mortify our self-centredness by the practice of patience and renunciation. For this reason, down the centuries the Church has celebrated liturgically, together with the Most Holy Mother of God, above all, the martyrs. Martyrdom is a proof of sanctity, not because it rejects the value or the beauty of life, but because it is a sign of love lived to the utmost. As Saint John Chrysostom noted, love without martyrdom can make disciples, but not martyrdom without love (cf. *De Sancto Romano martyre*, I, 1).

26. The Holy Year, centred on hope, encourages us to think about the future, about the end of our earthly lives and the end of time, when the Lord will come to judge the living and the dead. While not everyone is called to shed his or her blood for the sake of the Gospel, all of us are called to be witnesses of faithful love. That is why the Church began to compare to the martyrs those men and women, especially monastics, who died to self through asceticism in order to live for Christ. Asceticism

thus becomes an exercise of love that bears rich spiritual fruit. If we look to the Jubilee as an invitation to fix our gaze on the Lord of life and death, then we will be able to view our own death not as an end to life, but as a passage to our true birth that, in the sacrament of Baptism, has begun even now. “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2:20).

A Jubilee with the Mother of God, Icon of Hope

27. In the Christian East, the Most Holy Mother of God enjoys a completely privileged place, which can and should be celebrated in a particular way in the Jubilee year. Mary, the All-Holy, had an essential role in the history of salvation. At the Incarnation, she welcomed the Son of God in the name of her people and of all humanity. After giving birth to him, she presented him to his own people and to the world. Throughout her life, even at the foot of the cross, she humbly placed herself at the service of his saving work. On the eve of Pentecost, she joined the apostles in imploring the necessary gift of the Spirit (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 56-59).

Today, in a particular way, Mary’s intercession is most precious to us, as we see from the words of the Act of Consecration addressed to her by Pope Francis, in union with all the Bishops and particular Churches: “Amid the misery of our sinfulness, amid our struggles and weaknesses, amid the mystery of iniquity that is evil and war, you remind us that God never abandons us, but continues to look upon us with love, ever ready to forgive us and raise us up to new life. He has given you to us and made your Immaculate Heart a refuge for the Church and for all humanity. By God’s gracious will, you are ever with us; even in the most troubled moments of our history, you are there to guide us with tender love” (Basilica of Saint Peter, 25 March 2022).

28. In the age-old tradition of the Christian East, the mystery of Mary is seen as an integral part of the mystery of Christ and

of the Church. The Mother of God is praised and venerated for her unique role as the one who brought the Son into the world. It is not by chance that the Eastern iconographic tradition almost always portrays Our Lady together with her divine Son, whom she, as a woman, conceived and now, as a mother, entrusts to her children. The gift of the divine Child is the very image of hope. What greater joy is there in life than to welcome the gift of a new life? In this case, that life is the life of the Lord who loves us, who triumphs over sin, death and fear, and who is held out to us by his Mother and ours. The Jubilee of 2025 is also meant to be the Jubilee of the All-Holy Mother of God, as a sign of consolation and an icon of sure hope for his pilgrim people on earth.

Chapter III

PRACTICAL PROPOSALS

29. Every action of the Church is directed to the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The Jubilee of 2025 has this same purpose. It invites us to accept the hope that the Father offers us freely in the gift of his crucified and risen Son and in the Holy Spirit who dwells in our hearts, and consequently to act as credible witnesses of that hope for which today's world yearns. The Holy Year thus calls for a profound exterior and interior renewal on the part of every Christian Church. This renewal also corresponds to the urgent desire of the faithful, who wish to cooperate with their Pastors in restoring vitality to the institutions and activities of the Church at a time when social and political unrest and powerful cultural challenges require new approaches. Courageous steps need to be taken in order to make Christians more conscious of the treasure of their faith and more credible in their witness to the gift of love that they have received.

30. Every renewal begins with listening to the word of God, which is a fundamental and essential element of the sacred liturgy. In this regard, the Eastern Catholic Churches should make every effort to promote the homily, ensuring that it is never omitted when prescribed by the Church's norms, but prepared with care and with respect for its proper place in the context of the celebration (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 135-144). The homily should be rooted in sacred Scripture and in the liturgical texts, and not reduced to a mere formality. One must never forget that in all the Churches the homily is the ordinary and, in many cases, the sole means of instructing the adult faithful. The Fathers of the Church could thus speak of the "two tables" which provide

nourishment in the liturgical mysteries: the table of the Lord's Supper and the table of his word.

31. The Jubilee can also be a precious occasion for each of the Eastern Catholic Churches to deepen its understanding of its own distinct heritage and to reflect on the statements of the Church's magisterium on how to testify to its value in the contemporary world. An occasion, in other words, "to understand, venerate, preserve and foster the rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Churches in order faithfully to preserve the fullness of Christian tradition, and to bring about reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christians" (*Unitatis Redintegratio* n. 15). Obviously, this is a task above all for the Eastern Churches themselves. Their Pastors should implement practical means of ensuring that this happens, by creating suitable opportunities for deeper knowledge of their spiritual patrimony and for dignified and solemn celebrations of the mystery in accordance with their proper tradition. In this way, the liturgy will truly be able to shape hearts and minds and, by its splendour and depth, enrich the universal Church.

32. Given the particular nature of the Jubilee, which seeks to promote a radical conversion of heart, the Eastern Catholic Churches should also make a special effort to highlight the Lenten season, so that its forceful summons to penance and reconciliation can be better understood and practised by the faithful. It will be helpful to prepare a pastoral plan for the liturgical and spiritual renewal of the Lenten celebrations, bearing in mind the guidelines contained in nn. 86-90 of the *Instruction for applying the liturgical prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* issued by this Dicastery on 6 January 1996.

33. The Eastern Churches are outstanding for their fidelity to the practice of fasting. May the Holy Year be an occasion for them to review their own pastoral guidelines regarding fasts and

to restore their importance within the context of Christian ascetic practices, avoiding an automatic reception by Eastern Catholics of directives issued by the Latin Church for different cultural contexts. In this regard, an appropriate catechesis should be prepared for the faithful, emphasizing the profound value of the traditional customs, some of which are still practised today, especially by the elderly, even though current norms are more permissive (cf. *Instruction*, n. 62).

34. The Jubilee year could also be the occasion for a restoration of non-liturgical days, a practice that has fallen into disuse in recent times. “Their disappearance often entails... abandoning the celebration of the liturgy of Presanctified. Considering that the joyous and festive dimension of the Eucharist, experienced as an event and not as a habit, was alive in Christian antiquity and is maintained in many Eastern liturgies, the forsaking of such practice contributes to diminishing the full meaning of the Divine Liturgy, which is celebrated in an integral and solemn way at the conclusion and as a seal of a whole journey of preparation, punctuated by celebrations of various types” (*Instruction*, n. 63)

35. Mention has been made of the appropriateness of restoring full solemnity to the celebration of the Paschal mystery during the Great and Holy Week and during the Easter Vigil in particular. The Holy Year is an ideal occasion for the suitable celebration of two liturgical actions in particular, any contrary customs notwithstanding. Baptism should be celebrated by full immersion (cf. *Instruction*, n. 48) and the Eucharist distributed under the two species of consecrated bread and wine (cf. *Instruction*, n. 59). Pastors should make appropriate arrangements to implement these indications of the magisterium for the benefit of the universal Church.

36. The Divine Praises manifest the meaning and beauty of Christian prayer in the course of time. The monastic communities of the Eastern Catholic Churches, and, to the extent possible, other religious communities, ought to celebrate the Divine Praises with particular solemnity during the Holy Year, taking advantage of this opportunity to grow in familiarity and understanding of these marvellous texts that the Church has entrusted to their care. The same should be done in seminaries, so that the liturgy can be the first teacher of those preparing for the sacred ministry. Efforts should also be made to restore in cathedrals and parish churches the ancient practice of communal celebration of the Divine Praises, especially on Sundays and feast days, where it has fallen into disuse, and to maintain and reinforce the practice where it has been preserved.

37. The above pastoral indications should be enriched by whatever other elements Bishops consider appropriate in the light of local situations. It falls to them to indicate the sites of the Jubilee pilgrimage and to map specific spiritual itineraries. This involves selecting from their proper calendar those feasts that celebrate one or another particular dimension of the Jubilee, in harmony wherever possible with the civil calendar, so that the hope of Christ may illumine the path of the Churches that arose in the East.

PART TWO

THE EASTERN FACE OF ROME

Chapter IV

Eastern Roots

Classical Antiquity

38. From the very beginning, Rome has claimed Eastern roots. Its foundation is linked to the landing at Ostia of Aeneas, a fugitive from the sack of Troy and an ancestor of Romulus and Remus. The Etruscans who according to the historians came from Lydia in the heart of Asia Minor, also had a part to play in the development of its culture. The art and religion of the Romans explicitly reflected Greek traditions and mythology, while absorbing elements from other distinctive Eastern traditions (Egyptian, Syrian, etc.).

Christian Antiquity

39. The monuments of Eastern Christianity that enrich the artistic heritage of Rome are so numerous that the city could be considered a portion of the East set on the banks of the Tiber.

From its birthplace in the Middle East, Christianity reached the heart of the Roman Empire and the city of Rome itself, *caput mundi*. Saint Irenaeus highlighted the universal dimension of Rome, as the capital of the Empire, home to people from all its regions. Irenaeus also stressed how, after receiving the divine light in the East, Saints Peter and Paul, the Coryphaei of the Apostles, brought that light to Rome, converting the city by their preaching and above all by their martyrdom. Together with Peter and Paul, the Eternal City is also closely tied to several other Apostles. The relics of Saints Philip and James are venerated in the Basilica of the Holy Apostles; those of Simon and Jude

Thaddeus can be found in the Vatican Basilica; and those of Bartholomew in the Church dedicated to him on the Tiber island.

Eastern Saints and Scholars in Rome

40. During the first millennium, at least fifteen Popes were of Eastern origin. From the seventh to the ninth centuries, political and ecclesial events brought a great influx of people, and monastics in particular, from the East to Rome. From the long list of saints and men of culture, only a few can be mentioned here.

Saints Cyril (826-869) and *Methodius* (815-885), known as “the Apostles of the Slavs”, were brothers born into a high-ranking Greek family in Thessalonica. Methodius, after serving as governor of a Slavic province of the Byzantine Empire, became a monk on Mount Olympus in Bithynia. His brother Constantine, who took the name Cyril only in 868 upon his monastic consecration in Rome, was a professor of philosophy in Constantinople. In 860-861, the two brothers were sent on a diplomatic mission to the Khazars north of the Caucasus. In 862, the Emperor Michael III sent them as missionaries to Moravia. Before they took leave of Constantinople, Constantine invented the Glagolitic alphabet, which became the basis of Slavic literature, and together they translated the Scriptures, the liturgical texts and some of the works of the Church Fathers into the vernacular. Some years later, they came to Rome to have their apostolic mission confirmed. Constantine-Cyril died here and his body was buried with great solemnity in the Basilica of Saint Clement: according to tradition, it was Cyril who had brought the bones of Saint Clement to Rome from Crimea. Methodius was consecrated bishop and returned to Moravia, where he encountered strong opposition from the Latins and even spent two years in prison before Pope John VIII obtained his release. Later, the disciples of Saint Methodius would continue his apostolate and his

cultural endeavours among the Balkan Slavs. In 1980, Pope John Paul II proclaimed Saints Cyril and Methodius Patrons of Europe alongside Saint Benedict and dedicated the Encyclical Epistle *Slavorum Apostoli* to them and their work.

Chapter V

EASTERN TREASURES IN THE MAJOR SHRINES OF ROME

Saint Peter's Basilica

41. Saint Peter's is not only the greatest Christian church, but also the most important Eastern "reliquary" in Rome. Beneath its dome, conceived as a kind of replica of that of Hagia Sophia, and the *baldacchino* with its tortile columns that evoke the decoration of the Temple in Jerusalem, lie the remains of the Apostle Peter. The relics of the Apostles Simon and Jude rest under the altar of Saint Joseph the Worker in the left transept. The head of the Apostle Saint Andrew, entrusted to Rome by the Orthodox authorities at the time of the Ottoman invasions, was restored to the Metropolitan of Patras in 1977. The reliquary had been kept behind the balcony above the statue of Saint Veronica. Higher up, above the spandrels of the dome, appear the words of Jesus to Peter: "*Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam et tibi dabo claves regni caelorum*" (Mt 16:18-19).

Bernini's great *cathedra Petri* in the apse of the basilica features statues of Saints Ambrose and Augustine, both Doctors of the Western Church, and with them, Saints John Chrysostom and Athanasius the Great, representing the Greek patristic tradition. Those known in the Orthodox calendar as "the three Hierarchs" are commemorated here, and further enrich the Eastern associations of the Basilica: the relics of Saint John Chrysostom are deposited beneath the altar of the Canons' Chapel, while those of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, brought to Rome in the eighth century, are found beneath that of Our Lady of Succour. Opposite the latter is the altar of Saint Basil, dominated by a

mosaic representing the first Cappadocian Doctor in the solemn context of a liturgical celebration, while the young Arian emperor Valens, who had come to arrest the great defender of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, falls to the ground. Beneath the altar of Saint Basil is the body of the martyr, Saint Josaphat Kuncevyč, Bishop of Polotsk, who bore witness to his faith by the shedding of his blood, in communion with the Bishop of Rome.

In the left transept, the altar of the martyrdom of Saint Peter contains the sarcophagus of Pope Leo IX, who died in 1054, just before the act that for centuries has symbolized the rupture of communion between the Church of Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius. This occurred through mutual excommunications whose memory was rescinded by the Church with a solemn bilateral act in 1965 on the part of both Catholics and Orthodox, referred to in an inscription in Greek and Latin beside the Holy Door.

On the central door of the Basilica among the great bronze panels depicting Christ, the Blessed Virgin, Saints Peter and Paul and their martyrdom, we find scenes of the 1438-1439 Council of Ferrara-Florence. These include the arrival in Venice of the Emperor John VIII Paleologos and Joseph, Patriarch of Constantinople, and their welcome, and the full communion of the Coptic Patriarch and the Armenian *Catholicos* in Rome in 1440.

Near the Canons' Chapel is the tomb of Pope Innocent VIII, who is depicted holding the tip of the lance of Saint Longinus, the Roman centurion who pierced the side of Christ on the cross; the relic was given to the Pope by the Turkish Sultan Bajazet. The crypt of the Basilica (Vatican Grottoes) contains a chapel dedicated to the Apostles of the Slavs, Saints Cyril and Methodius, who also appear on a medallion in the right transept, beside the altar of Saint Wenceslas.

Saint Paul Outside the Walls

42. Here, in addition to the body of the Apostle Paul, are preserved the relics of his disciple Timothy, considered the first Bishop of Ephesus. The series of medallions of the Popes, reconstructed after the fire of July 1823, records how, in the course of the first millennium, the Chair of Peter was occupied by eleven bishops of Greek origin (Saints Evaristus, Telesphorus, Eugene, Anterus, Sixtus II, Eusebius, Zosimus, Theodore and Zacharius; Popes John VI and John VII); six of Syrian origin (Saints Anicetus, Sergius I and Gregory III; and Popes John V, Sisinnius and Constantine) and one from Epirus (Saint Eleutherius). At the end of the middle ages, we find a Cretan pope, Alexander V (Peter Filargis) of the Pisan obedience. Dioscorus, a native of Alexandria, is missing.

In the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament is a Byzantine mosaic of the *Theotokos* (Mother of God), one of the innumerable Byzantine works of art or copies that embellish the churches of Rome, where not a few artists from the East found refuge during the centuries of iconoclastic strife. Following the devastation caused by the 1823 fire, Czar Alexander of Russia donated the malachite altars in the transepts, while the alabaster columns supporting the end wall were the gift of the Muslim viceroy of Egypt, Muhammad Ali.

The ancient bronze doors of the Basilica date from the eleventh century and were cast in Constantinople at the expense of Pantaleon of Amalfi and by order of Bishop Hildebrand (later Pope Gregory VII), the administrator of the Basilica. They were gravely damaged by the fire of 1823, but were patiently restored and today are preserved in the Basilica museum. They bear legible inscriptions in Greek and Syriac. The modern bronze and silver doors that have replaced them, the work of Antonio Marinari, are of Italo-Byzantine inspiration.

Saint Mary Major

43. The celebrated mosaics of the triumphal arch and the central nave were created to commemorate the proclamation of Mary as *Theotokos* by the Council of Ephesus (431).

The mosaics that adorn the two walls along the nave, beneath the windows, narrate the miraculous help offered by God to the Hebrew people in the Old Testament: from Abraham through Moses, up to the entry into the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. Closely related to these are the mosaics that decorate the triumphal arch, the only surviving elements of the fifth-century apse. They celebrate the epiphany of the Saviour and the mysteries of his holy childhood as the fulfilment of God's promises. On golden tesserae and varied enamels we find illustrated scenes of the Annunciation, the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, the dream of Joseph, the adoration of the Magi, the apocryphal encounter with Aphrodisius before the Egyptian city of Sotina, the slaughter of the Holy Innocents, the Magi and scribes before Herod, and finally the cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. At the summit of the arch is a representation of the *Hetoimasia* (the empty throne that awaits the coming of Christ, as in the Book of Revelation). On either side are the figures of Saints Peter and Paul.

The Coronation of the Virgin is the main subject of the magnificent apse mosaic commissioned by Pope Nicholas IV (1288-1292); closely connected to this, in the fascia below is depicted the Dormition, surrounded by scenes from the earthly life of the Blessed Virgin.

In the Pauline (or Borghese) Chapel, built by Pope Paul V (1605-1621), is venerated the celebrated precious icon of the *Hodegetria*, known as *Salus Populi Romani* (Plate 5, p. 150).

Beneath the high altar, in the Confessio, the relic of the manger of Bethlehem is kept, framed with Egyptian alabaster and other precious marbles from the East.

Saint Clement

44. This basilica is linked to the martyrdom *in amphitheatro* (i.e., the Colosseum) of Saint Ignatius of Antioch and to the transfer of his relics and those of Pope Clement, recovered in the Chersonese by Constantine the Philosopher (Saint Cyril) and brought to Rome by him and his brother, Saint Methodius. These events are portrayed in the paintings and frescoes adorning both the upper and lower churches (Plate 3, p. 149), where the remains, formerly lost, of Constantine-Cyril have been placed.

Chapter VI

ANCIENT WITNESSES TO EASTERN MONASTICISM

45. Rome has always welcomed monks from the East, whether they came as pilgrims, ambassadors or refugees. Monastic settlements were not uncommon in the Eternal City during the first millennium; they provide a fascinating insight into its openness to the light from the East.

46. *At the school of Saints Athanasius and John Cassian.* The exile of Saint Athanasius of Alexandria in the West aided the spread of monasticism. Specifically, his journey to Rome in 340 in the company of the monks Ammonius and Isidore sparked a lively interest in monastic life. Such was the case of the noblewoman Marcella, whose house on the Aventine saw the birth of so many coenobitic foundations in the years around 382 to 385 that Saint Jerome could write in a letter to Principia that “Rome has become a second Jerusalem” (Ep. 137, CSEL 56, p. 151-152). In 405, John Cassian, returning from a long sojourn in the East, gave a new impetus to the spread of monasticism in Rome.

47. *Saint Cassian at Saint Lawrence Outside the Walls (S. Cassiano al Verano).* Burial inscriptions from the fourth and fifth centuries that refer to *virgines* confirm the tradition that a monastery of nuns was founded near Saint Lawrence Outside the Walls, although it is not certain whether they came from the East.

48. *Saint Agnes in Via Nomentana.* It has been determined that a Eastern monastery of women was founded, certainly during the fifth century, near the Basilica and catacombs of Saint Agnes. In 817, Latin women religious took the place of the Greek nuns.

49. *Saints Vincent and Anastasius*. Thanks to the support of the patrician Narses, several monks from Cilicia (the homeland of Saint Paul) founded a monastery on the site of the Apostle's martyrdom dedicated to the *Theotokos* and to Saint Paul. After the translation of the relics of Saint Anastasius, a Persian martyr (†628) this foundation was called *monasterium Ciliciorum sancti Vincentii et Anastasii ad Aquas Salvias*. Its hegumen took part in the Lateran Synod of 649. The signatures affixed to the acts of this Council are important as providing clear early evidence of the presence of Eastern monasteries in Rome. In 998, Saint Bartholomew the Younger, the founder of Grottaferrata, was admitted there. In the twelfth century, the monastery passed into the hands of Latin Cistercians.

50. *Saint Sabas* is the most famous of the Eastern monasteries in Rome. It was founded on the Aventine, most probably by monks of Saint Sabas in Palestine, towards the end of the sixth century or a little later, at the beginning of the seventh. Its hegumen was also one of the signatories of the acts of the Council of 649. Some of its monks were sent as delegates to the Second Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (787). This monastic community, which was in contact with Saint Theodore the Studite, was mixed (Greek and Latin) during the tenth century. It passed entirely to the Latin rite in 1145 at the latest.

51. *Saint Mary and Saint Gregory (Nazianzen) in Campo Marzio*. There are indications of a Greek foundation from the beginning of the seventh century on the site of the present-day church of this name officiated by priests of the Syrian-Catholic rite. A pious legend relates that the religious of the monastery of Saint Anastasia in Constantinople, fleeing the iconoclastic persecutions of Emperors Leo III and Constantine V, took refuge in Rome in 750, bringing with them the remains of Saint Gregory Nazianzen. In Rome, Pope Zacharius gave them a monastery in the Campo Marzio where the nuns are said to have built two

churches, one dedicated to the Mother of God and the other to Saint Gregory Nazianzen. In the tenth century, the Basilian nuns abandoned the Greek rite and embraced the rule of Saint Benedict.

52. *Saints Andrew and Lucina*, also known as the *Monasterium Armenissarum quod appellatur Renati*. Founded as a Latin monastery at the end of the sixth century, it was occupied by a community of Armenian nuns at the beginning of the seventh. Its hegumen was also one of the signatories of the Lateran Council of 649. It returned to the Latin rite at the latest during the tenth century. Its exact location, somewhere between the Campo Marzio and the Esquiline (Piazza Vittorio Emanuele) is not clear.

53. A *monasterium Boëtianum*, named for Boethius (480-c.524). In the biographical notice on Pope Donus (676-678), the *Liber Pontificalis* states (I, 348, no.4) that the Pope replaced with Roman monks the *nestorianitas monachos syros* then living in the monastery.

54. *Saint Apollinaris*. In the place where the present-day Church of Saint Apollinaris stands, an uncertain tradition holds that there once stood a monastery where Greek monks fleeing the persecutions of the iconoclast Emperor Leo the Isaurian (717-741) had settled.

55. *Saint Sylvester in Capite*. The monastery of *SS. Stephani papae et martyris et Sylvestris papae et confessoris in schola graecorum* was founded by Pope Paul I (757-767) on 4 July 761 to house monks who chanted the psalms *in graeca modulatione*. It passed to the Latin rite during the eleventh century.

56. *Saint Gregory on the Caelian*. Around the middle of the eighth century, a group of Greek monks fleeing the iconoclast persecution were allowed to settle in the monastery founded by Saint Gregory the Great. In the list of monasteries within the

walls of Rome drawn up in 806, it was ranked third in order of importance. It is interesting to note that, of the seven largest Roman monasteries, fully five were held by Greek monks. The monastery of Saint Gregory probably returned to the Benedictines towards the end of the tenth century.

57. *Saint John Calybita*. The existence on the Tiber Island of a church dedicated to this saint suggests a possible Eastern monastic foundation, believed to date from the ninth century.

58. *Saint Praxedes*. Close to the Basilica of the same name, Pope Pascal I (817-824) founded a monastery for Greek monks (*Liber Pontificalis* II, 79 and 106) thought to have been replaced by a monastery of women. It may be that the *Theodora episcopa* whose name appears in the chapel of Saint Zeno in the same Basilica was the abbess of that monastery. Here, in 869, Constantine the Philosopher made his monastic profession, taking the name Cyril, and remained here until his death. The monastery passed to the monks of Vallombrosa at the end of the twelfth century.

59. *Saint Caesarius Graecorum in Palatio*. There is evidence of the presence of a Greek community on the Palatine from about 825. This Church is not to be confused with the Church of Saint Caesarius in Palatio at the beginning of the Via di S. Sebastiano, next to the residence of Cardinal Bessarion. Saint Sabas the Younger died here in 990. The foundation survived until the fourteenth or fifteenth century.

60. *Saints Lawrence and Stephen in Campo Verano*. The monastery of Saint Lawrence, founded by Pope Hilarius (461-468) adjacent to the Basilica of the same name outside the walls, was annexed to the neighbouring monastery of Saint Stephen by Pope Leo IV (847-855) and entrusted to Greek monks. The hegumen Arsenius restored the Basilica of Saint Lawrence, which

houses the remains of the protomartyr. In the tenth century, the monastery passed to Benedictine monks.

61. *Saint Basil in scala mortuorum in Foro Augusti*. This was a Greek monastery whose existence is attested by a document dated 25 March 955. In 1230, the Knights of Rhodes settled here.

62. *Saints Boniface and Alexius in Monte Aventino*. This monastery was founded by Sergius, Metropolitan of Damascus (977-981) with the authorization of Pope Benedict VII (974-983). The Greek monks were succeeded by Benedictines around the twelfth century.

63. *The Abbey of Saint Mary in Grottaferrata*. Still in existence today, this monastery arose in the early tenth century, just as the Greek monastic tradition was beginning to decline in Roman territories. Founded by Greek monks from Southern Italy fleeing the Saracen invasions, the group, guided by Saint Nilus of Rossano, was welcomed with great favour by Gregory I, Duke of Tusculum, who gave the land on which to found a new monastery. Saint Nilus died in 1004, but work on the building made such rapid progress that on 17 December 1024 Pope John XIX, himself the son of Gregory of Tusculum, consecrated the church, built in the Romanesque style in the time of Saint Bartholomew the Younger, the disciple and biographer of Saint Nilus.

The monastic life of Saint Nilus and his followers was influenced by the Studite cenobitic tradition, but retained the values of eremitic origin that they inherited from their forebears and developed in fidelity to the theological, spiritual and liturgical patrimony of the Greek Church. Mention should be made of the immense contribution made by early generations of these monks to Byzantine hagiography, hymnody and music. For twenty-five years in the later twelfth century, the community had to flee to Subiaco because of the violence and unrest that devastated the region.

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were a dark period in which outside influences markedly altered the character of the monastery. In a changed context, the older tradition was partially restored in the seventeenth century and many members of the community at Grottaferrata then contributed to keeping alive in Rome the knowledge of the Greek tradition.

The monastery was often threatened with suppression, due to economic interests on the part of political powers, as during the French occupation or after the suppression of the Papal States, or for ecclesiastical reasons. One fact has always ensured its survival: as the only Greek rite monastery in Rome and in the West, the Abbey of Grottaferrata represents an inalienable cultural patrimony of inestimable religious and cultural significance, one that enriches the Church of Rome and manifests its universality. It is this aspect in particular that Pope Leo XIII wished to highlight when he called the monastery “an Eastern jewel in the Papal tiara”.

In the last hundred years, in harmony with the desire expressed by Leo XIII, the monastery has taken steps to reinvigorate its distinctive heritage. Today too, despite the crisis of monastic vocations, its liturgical life is carried out in accordance with the Byzantine tradition, with Italo-Greek elements. The library, with its precious collection of Greek manuscripts, and the archives are of extraordinary importance. In 2024, the monastery celebrated the millennium of the foundation of the abbatial church of Saint Mary. It hosts numerous academic conferences and lecture series on history, liturgy, spirituality and sacred art. The community, which has grown slightly in recent years, numbers about ten monks.

Chapter VII

RELIGIOUS, ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL PATRIMONY

64. *Churches and Their Frescoes.* Eastern and specifically Byzantine influence was already evident in Rome in the fifth century, as can be seen from the mosaics of the triumphal arch in Saint Mary Major. During the period from the end of the sixth century up to the end of the eighth century, this influence would become more pronounced, above all through the introduction of new iconographic models with images that reflected the Roman tradition. This was due to a large number of Greek Popes and a wave of Greek and Eastern immigrants.

Thanks to the Exarchate of Ravenna under Justinian, Greek art made greater inroads in Rome, as Italy, and the West in general, in some sense basked in the splendour of Byzantium. At the same time, the Christian East itself turned to the West as a result of Arab conquests of the seventh century and the iconoclast crisis of the eighth. The Eastern influence continued to be felt through the eighth and nine centuries, as the Greek and Eastern colony in the city grew steadily. The oldest reliable evidence for the existence of Greek monasteries in Rome dates from 649. By the middle of the seventh century, there must have been at least three such monasteries, one of which was located at the site of Saint Paul's martyrdom. During the iconoclast persecutions of the eighth and ninth centuries, they became more and more numerous.

According to the most accredited hypothesis, a group of monks took up residence, as we have seen, in the *monastery of Saint Sabas* around the middle of the seventh century, coming from a *laura nova* of the same name in the hills of Judaea. It was

certainly in memory of this that the Eastern monks chose to call their Roman foundation, situated on the slopes of the so-called Little Aventine, by the name of “*cella nova*”. A monastery had existed on this site since the days of Saint Gregory the Great. The convent of Saint Sabas was long dependent on the Studite monastery in Constantinople. One of its abbots, Gregory of Agrigentum, was the Holy See’s legate to the Second Ecumenical Council of Nicaea where, in order to refute the iconoclasts and support the cult of images, the Roman mosaics of the Saint Mary Major were adduced.

The interior of the first small church of the Eastern monks of Saint Sabas was decorated throughout with frescoes of typically Syrian-Palestinian inspiration, with a combination of Greek and Latin inscriptions. The second church, dating from the ninth to the tenth centuries, showed architectural adaptations suited to the requirements of the Eastern liturgy. Several fine portraits of saints from the early eighth century have survived from the decoration of this ancient oratory. Two important scenes from the life of Christ (the healing of the paralytic and Saint Peter saved from drowning), both dated to the end of the eighth century, show a finesse of execution and a balance of composition evidently inspired by Eastern models, as their Greek inscriptions confirm. A fresco showing monks from Saint Sabas, linked to the period of transition from Eastern to Benedictine monks in the course of the tenth century, is particularly striking (Plate 4, p. 149).

During the period of the persecution of the iconoclast Emperors, Eastern and Greek influence was increasingly felt in Rome. From the seventh to the ninth centuries, a number of Popes had the walls of the diaconal church of *Sancta Maria Antiqua* in the Roman Forum, frequented by Greeks and others from the East, splendidly adorned with paintings. Various artists, most of whom were probably Byzantine, worked there at the same time

that the iconoclast controversy was raging. The Oriental origin and style of many of these icons painted on the walls is evident, especially in a series of frescoes dated to the seventh and eighth centuries, with titles written in Greek.

Entirely painted in a style deeply grounded in the art of ancient Syria, Sancta Maria Antiqua celebrated and exposed for the veneration of pilgrims the image of the Mother of God enthroned in majesty, together with doctors and martyrs of East and West alike, as the Church of Rome's response to the iconoclast Emperors. Greeks who emigrated to Rome at the time of the Arab invasions were already numerous in the seventh century and their numbers increased during the iconoclastic persecutions. For them, this respect shown for their saints surely proved a source of consolation and hope. It is very probable that the cult of the Alexandrian saints Abacyrus (Abba Cyrus) and John, invoked for their healing powers, was introduced in Rome in the seventh century, precisely when the Eastern influence was at its height. Both these Egyptian martyrs appear in a fresco dated to the time of Pope John VII (eighth century). A bust painted in fresco of Saint Abacyrus holding a probe, peers out from a niche. This striking portrait, in an iconographic style unusual in Rome, is clearly derived from an Eastern, perhaps Coptic, icon that the painter must have had in mind when he carried out his commission. The depiction of the crucified Christ with his long *colobion*, is identical to that of the crucified Christ in the Syrian Rabula Codex (Florence, Laurentian Library, Plut. I, 56), while the image of the Virgin standing, presenting her Son and surrounded by an aureole, is similar to that found in another Syrian manuscript of the same period (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale).

These paintings exalt the figures of Christ, the Mother of God and the saints at the very same time that the iconoclasts were destroying their images in Byzantium. Long lines of saints can be seen on either side of Christ enthroned: saints of both the

Roman and the Eastern Churches with inscriptions in Greek; Roman and Eastern martyrs; masters of the ascetic life like Euthymius and Sabas himself, honoured in the monastery named after him. In these frescoes, painted at the time of Pope Zacharius (741-752), Eastern and Western saints were portrayed together and given equal veneration. Pope Paul I had the apse decorated with a great image of Christ *Pantocrator*. Almost certainly from the same period is a fresco in a niche that depicts the Three Mothers (Mary, Anne and Elizabeth), a rare subject that can be traced to Syrian and Armenian models.

With its Oriental quarter around the church of Saint Mary in Cosmedin, and with some of its feasts borrowed from the liturgy of the Byzantine Church, Rome had taken on a distinctive Greek character. Pope Zacharius, the last of the Greek and Syrian Popes who succeeded one another on the Chair of Peter during the seventh and eighth centuries, was well versed in Italo-Byzantine culture and worked to bring the two worlds, Latin and Greek, closer together. He undertook a project of cultural mediation and translated into Greek the celebrated *Dialogues* of Saint Gregory the Great. The work proved popular and, translated into other languages, made known not only in Rome, but also in southern Italy and in the East, the spirituality of Saint Benedict and the virtues of a host of Italian saints.

65. *Basilicas and Their Mosaics*. In the ninth century, the period when the iconoclast persecution flared up under Leo the Armenian (813), the Pope, to whom Saint Theodore the Studite had personally appealed, was sensitive to the troubles in the Christian East. Eastern monks once more began to flee to Italy and Rome in particular, and were received in great numbers by Pope Paschal I, who established a monastery for them at Saint Praxedes. Three splendid churches that he restored and embellished between 817 and 824 preserve their splendid mosaics almost

intact even today: Saint Mary in Domnica on the Caelian; Saint Praxedes on the Esquiline, and Saint Cecilia in Trastevere.

In *Saint Mary in Domnica*, the Eastern influence is obvious, not only in its liturgical design with three apses, but above all in its great apsidal mosaic. For the first time in Rome, the *Theotokos*, the Mother of God, occupies the place of honour, majestically seated on a throne holding her Son and surrounded by a throng of angels. In this stupendous mosaic, which in a number of ways reflects the new iconographic compositions that appeared in Byzantium at the end of the ninth century following the solemn declarations of the Second Council of Nicaea (787), Eastern inspiration and workmanship are clearly evident. In the rectangular band above the triumphal arch, Christ is portrayed seated on the arc of heaven as the twelve apostles, preceded by an angel, advance towards him, while beneath, on either side of the apse, Moses and Elijah symbolically evoke the theophany of the Transfiguration, echoing a long Eastern tradition. The mosaics of Saint Mary in Domnica point to the greater freedom of composition and the high artistic standards of the ninth century.

The representation of the heavenly Jerusalem in the *Basilica of Saint Praxedes* is closely linked to one found in a Greek manuscript of the same period (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, gr. 923). The analogies suggest an Eastern model and execution. Inside the Basilica, nothing could be more Byzantine than the charming Chapel of Saint Zeno, with its glittering gold mosaics (Plate 1, p. 148). The images of the *Deesis* or Great Supplication in which the Virgin and the Precursor intercede on behalf of mankind, the Transfiguration, and the *Anastasis* portrayed as the descent into hell, link this tiny chapel quite closely to the East. The Romans liked to call it “the Garden of Paradise”. The mosaics of Saint Praxedes are some of the most important of all those produced in Rome, and not only in the ninth century.

The unusual architectural arrangement of lateral galleries, no longer extant, gave the *Basilica of Saint Cecilia* a particularly Eastern appearance. The apse features a theophany modelled on that created in the sixth century by ancient Roman mosaicists for the Basilica of Saints Cosmas and Damian in the Roman Forum and then imitated in Saint Praxedes. In Saint Cecilia, however, it is executed in a more abstract style and with less brilliant colours. Christ no longer raises his hand in a noble gesture of welcome, but gives a blessing in the Greek manner.

For the execution of these works, Pope Paschal probably employed both Greek and Roman artisans, yet their inspiration is indisputably Eastern. The influence of the Christian East, especially in Rome, was to be one of the most important factors in the development of sacred art in the mediaeval period.

66. *Icons*. Whereas in the fourth century the devotion of the faithful centred above all on the cross and on relics, in the following century the veneration of icons became widespread throughout the Christian world. These were exported from the holy places of Palestine, as is attested by a wooden coffer for relics from the Holy Land preserved in the Museo Sacro of the Vatican Apostolic Library, which has scenes from the life of Christ painted on its lid. Given the significant Greek influence in Rome, the use of icons dates from very early times and many examples have been preserved. These Roman icons were painted on wooden panels using an encaustic process, and are similar to those from the same period found in Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai.

Many of these images have allegedly miraculous origins, a sign of the great devotion attached to them. The most famous is the panel portraying the Saviour kept in the *Sancta Sanctorum*, the Papal Chapel of the Lateran Palace, and known as the

Acheiropoieta, literally, an image “not made by human hands”. Another *acheiropoieton* icon of Christ, related to the mandylion of Edessa, modern Urfa, is that formerly venerated in the church of Saint Sylvester *in Capite* and now kept in the papal sacristy in the Vatican.

Several icons of the Virgin Mary, still much venerated in Rome, were also considered *acheiropoieta*. The most popular of these was that of the Virgin *Hodegetria*, attributed to Saint Luke, where Mary holds the standing Child in her left arm. Among the most outstanding icons kept in Roman churches is that of the church of Saint Frances of Rome, originally from Sancta Maria Antiqua, the church of the Greek diaconia in Rome; it depicts the Virgin *Dexiokratousa*, who holds the Child on her right arm. A delicate work, painted with a light touch and a style that accentuates the fascination of the deep gaze of its enormous blue eyes, this is the famous *Imago antiqua* of the earlier church in the Forum. Universally dated to the sixth century, it is perhaps the oldest icon of Our Lady. The icon of the Virgin *Hodegetria* in the Pantheon probably dates from 609, when the ancient temple became the church of Saint Mary *ad Martyres*. The icon of *Maria Advocata*, which can be seen today in the church of Saint Mary of the Rosary, presumably of Siro-Palestinian origin, is dated to the seventh century. It echoes the celebrated image of the Blessed Virgin known as *Hagiosoritissa* in the Byzantine capital.

The greatly venerated icon of Our Lady *Salus Populi Romani*, kept in the Borghese Chapel of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major, despite various restorations during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, is also associated in popular tradition with Saint Luke (Plate 5, p. 150). In the church of Saint Mary in Trastevere, the icon known as the *Madonna della Clemenza*, seated in majesty with the Child on her knee, appears with a crown, in a way that is entirely Roman (eighth century). Many of these icons were

copied and reproduced during the medieval period and were venerated in churches throughout Rome and the surrounding region.

68. *Testimonies of the East in Rome of the Second Millennium.* In 1070, in Constantinople, Staurachios of Chios, by commission of Bishop Hildebrand, later Gregory VII, and by the order of the consul, Pantaleon of Amalfi, cast the celebrated bronze doors of the *Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls*, still preserved despite the grave damage suffered in the fire of 1823. The life of Christ, from the Nativity to Pentecost, is recounted in damascened silver panels followed by portraits of the Prophets

and the Apostles. Of the three doors facing the vestibule of the Basilica, this was called the “*porta byzantina*” due to its distinctive style and shape.

In the *Abbey of Grottaferrata*, Greek inscriptions are legible on the entrance to the ancient monastic church; above them, the Byzantine mosaic of the *Deesis* can be admired. Despite restorations, the venerable church preserves very little of its original decoration, apart from the fine mosaic of the Twelve Apostles at Pentecost, later connected to the fresco of the Trinity surrounded by choirs of angels painted above it; both works date from the thirteenth century.

The monastic library has a wealth of Greek codices and miniatures, including extraordinarily valuable manuscripts of Saint Nilus himself. In the museum, the chalice of Cardinal Bessarion and an ancient and precious omophorion, a Byzantine episcopal pallium, are of special interest. In addition to his house on the Appian Way, exceptional for its typically Florentine grace and style, Bessarion also left various other traces of his presence in Rome. Some bearded doctors in frescoes in the Vatican are traditionally said to be his portraits. His tomb is in the Basilica of the Holy Apostles, his titular church.

The many important works of art portraying events and figures from the Greek world, or inspired by them, give us an idea of the impact Greek culture must have made in Rome at the time of the fall of Constantinople. The Vatican houses a bronze bust by Filarete of the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus, in addition to the bas-reliefs on the bronze doors of Saint Peter’s Basilica. These depict the arrival of the Greek delegation at the Council of Florence, the Council sessions and the reading of the Bull of Union in the presence of the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus and Pope Eugene IV.

When, in the sixteenth century, Eastern churches, mostly Greek, were built in Italy to provide for the religious needs of the colonies of Eastern refugees and merchants, Pope Gregory XIII had a church built specifically for them in Rome: that of *Saint Athanasius*, meant to serve the Greek College founded by the Pope in 1577.

Despite the presence of Armenians, particularly from the time of the Crusades, who were given the use of numerous churches, and Ethiopian pilgrims and monks who occupied the small convent and church of Saint Stephen behind Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, only Saint Athanasius was explicitly erected as an Eastern church, with proper liturgical arrangements and furnishings. Such was the founder's intention. The original wooden iconostasis was replaced at the end of the last century with the one we see today. Its two large icons in Cretan style showing Saints Basil of Caesarea and Saint Athanasius of Alexandria may have been the gift of Gregory XIII himself, since they bear his arms. They can be counted among the more important remains of the original decorations (Plate 7, p. 152).

Apart from the church of Saint Athanasius, no other church in Rome was built expressly for the Eastern rite population of the city before the twentieth century. In the seventeenth century, however, Pope Urban VIII gave the church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus to the Ruthenian Basilian Fathers, and in 1734 Pope Clement XII gave the Basilica of Saint Mary in Domnica on the Caelian to Basilian Melkite monks. In the nineteenth century, Pope Gregory XVI entrusted the church of Saint Blaise in Via Giulia to the Armenians.

Lastly, mention should be made of the many artists who painted images of the Doctors and Fathers of the Eastern Churches on the walls of Roman churches between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Domenichino decorated the Farnese Chapel in the abbey church of Saint Nilus in Grottaferrata

(1610). The Provençal painter Pierre Subleyras painted the large canvas of Saint Basil celebrating Mass in the presence of the Emperor Valens in Saint Mary of the Angels. Pietro Rasina worked in the Basilica of Saint Clement. With great attention to detail, these artists sought to depict as exactly and faithfully as possible the “exotic” appearance, so impressive to the Romans of the time, of the Eastern hierarchs who officiated in their churches in the city, including Saint Athanasius. There, Goethe was fond of attending, during his sojourn in Rome, the solemn celebration of the Greek liturgy.

As early as the eighth century, the Romans could contemplate, as we can today, the ranks of holy Eastern hierarchs depicted on the walls of Saint Mary Antiqua at the foot of the Palatine, a testimony to the ancient tradition of universal hospitality that has always been characteristic of the catholicity of the Church of Rome.

In modern times, at the request of Pope Pius XI, who praised the art of the Christian East as an “ancient and venerable artistic tradition that blended with Christianity and the culture of the peoples of the East”, *Pimen Sofronov*, a Russian painter well known for his icons, was called to Rome. Sofronov trained at the school of the well-known “old believer” Gabriel Frolov, and himself belonged to the iconographic school of the Old Believers. Sofronov had decorated many churches, chapels and monasteries in what was then the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. As a model for imitation in accordance with the “canon” and rules of the “school” of Old Believers, he painted the 54 panels of a magnificent iconostasis, housed today at the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches (Plates 11-14, pp. 156-159), as well as the iconostasis of the house chapel of the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. Later, he was active in a number of other countries, particularly the United States, where he executed the iconographic decoration of many Eastern churches.

In that same period, Pius XI also entrusted to the care of the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches an important collection of works depicting monuments of ancient Russian sacred art – including places of worship that no longer exist today – painted by the spouses *Leonid and Rimma Brailovskij* (Plates 8-10, pp. 153-155).

“Leonid Brailovskij’s mastery as a scenographer is especially evident in the details and perspectives of his canvases... which follow one another and can be perceived as individual moments of a single drama. Today too, they propose the true, the beautiful and the good reflected in the sacred art and architecture of the Russian territory between the Volga and the great lakes of the North. Cathedrals, monasteries, churches, liturgical spaces, icons, but also domes, towers, walls and the surrounding natural setting are a devout hymn to the *Pantocrator* raised by the painter Leonid. At the end of his industrious life, meditating on the Gospel of John (14:2) ‘In my Father’s house there are many rooms’, he exclaimed: ‘Can it be that our heavenly Father will not let me adorn one of these places?’ The author of the priceless iconographic gallery exhibited at the Congregation for the Eastern Churches was thus a believer, a Christian exile from his beloved homeland, who found a haven in the Eternal City, esteemed and supported by the learned Pontiff and patron, Pius XI. His interiors of cathedrals, his iconostases and his ‘snapshots’ of liturgical celebrations bring us to the heart of Eastern spirituality in the Byzantine tradition, in a school of catechesis and theology. The austere solitude of the coenobites reminds us of the fundamental monastic component of the Russian Church, imbued with asceticism, prayer, study and contemplation” (from the Preface to the volume *Leonid e Rimma Brailovskij: Visioni della Vecchia Russia*, Vatican City, 2021).

PART THREE

A LIVING REALITY

Chapter VIII

PRINCIPAL INSTITUTIONS

69. Rome is not only a city of memories. It has been enriched, especially since the Renaissance, by numerous works of art of Eastern provenance or workmanship, which have helped to make the Eternal City a great museum. Yet Rome is also something greater: a vital context in which the rich religious and cultural traditions of the Christian East continue to flourish.

The Voice of the Popes and Councils

70. “As history teaches, the Eastern Churches have always been the object of special predilection on the part of the Roman Pontiff”. These are the opening words of the Encyclical *Orientales Omnes Ecclesias* (23 December 1945). Beginning especially with the pontificate of Leo XIII, an increasing number of papal documents have testified to the solicitude of the Bishops of Rome for the Eastern Churches in communion with them or seeking full communion. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) clearly expressed the Catholic Church’s concern to preserve within her communion, while ensuring their autonomy, those Eastern communities united with Rome, and at the same time to highlight the spiritual riches likewise possessed by the Orthodox Churches, as well as the need to engage in dialogue with them.

The declarations of the Popes were accompanied by concrete actions. This is not the place to give a full account of documents issued or to record the long series of Apostolic Journeys in the East, from Pope Paul VI’s pilgrimage to Jerusalem (4-6 January 1964) to Pope Francis’s visits to Iraq (5-8 March 2021) and to

Cyprus and Greece (2-6 December 2021). Worthy of special mention is the sign of friendship shown by Patriarch Bartholomew I in coming to Rome for the inauguration of the papal ministry of Pope Francis (19 March 2013), a gesture unprecedented in the history of ecumenical relations between Rome and Constantinople. Recent times have also seen the annual exchange of delegations for the feasts of Saints Peter and Paul and of Saint Andrew, the welcome accorded to Patriarchs and other Orthodox prelates in Rome, the signing of agreements and the exchange of correspondence.

The Dicastery for the Eastern Churches

71. The first evidence of a body within the Apostolic See explicitly charged with matters relating to the Eastern Churches dates back to 1573, when Pope Gregory XIII established the *Congregatio de rebus Graecorum*, entrusted not only with matters involving Catholics of the Byzantine or Greek rite but also with promoting and protecting the faith among other Christians of the East. Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605) changed it to the *Congregatio super negotiis sanctae Fidei et religionis catholicae* for the affairs of Greeks and other Eastern Christians, and for the spread of the faith in mission territories, prior to the establishment in 1622 of the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, charged with the latter task.

On 6 January 1862, Blessed Pius IX, with the Constitution *Romani Pontifices*, created a separate section *pro negotiis ritus orientalis* within the Dicastery. With the *Motu Proprio Dei Providentis* (1 May 1917), Pope Benedict XV established the *Sacra Congregatio pro Ecclesia Orientali*, determining that the reigning Pope was to be its Prefect. Pope Paul VI, with the Constitution *Regimini Ecclesiae Universae* (15 August 1967), changed its name to *Congregatio pro Ecclesiis Orientalibus* and appointed as Prefect the then Secretary.

With regard to the Eastern Churches in full communion with the Bishop of Rome, the Dicastery has received from the Supreme Pontiff the institutional mandate to foster their growth, to defend their rights, and to preserve their liturgical, disciplinary, and spiritual heritage alive and intact in the Catholic Church.

Over the years, the Popes have shown close interest both in the specific work of the Dicastery and its place within the organization of the larger Roman Curia, as expressed in the two *Motu Proprio* *Inde ab initio Pontificatu* (1930) and *Sancta Dei Ecclesia* (1938) of Pius XI and the Apostolic Constitutions *Regimini Ecclesiae Universae* (1967), *Pastor Bonus* (1988), and *Praedicate Evangelium* (2022) of Saint Paul VI, Saint John Paul II, and Pope Francis respectively. The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council offered a broader frame of reference, particularly in its Decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (1964), as did the subsequent work of redacting the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* (CCEO), promulgated in 1990. The new title of the Dicastery appears in the Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium*.

The Dicastery for the Eastern Churches is composed of a Cardinal Prefect, who governs, directs, and represents it, assisted by an Archbishop Secretary and an Undersecretary. Its members include the Eastern Catholic Patriarchs and Major Archbishops, the Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity, and a given number of Cardinals and Bishops. The Dicastery also includes a suitable number of officials and consultants from the Latin and Eastern Churches. Its Special Commission for the Liturgy is charged with protecting the liturgical patrimony of the Christian East. Its Special Commission for Studies on the Christian East examines proposals of statements and initiatives aimed at making the East known to Catholics of the West and promoting editorial projects for a deeper exploration and appreciation of the patrimony of the Eastern Churches. Its Special Commission for the Training of Clergy and Religious oversees the

education of Eastern students in Rome or elsewhere, in accordance with the specific tradition to which they belong.

ROACO, the Reunion of Aid Agencies for the Eastern Churches, is a committee that brings together aid agencies from various countries of the world engaged in providing financial support in various sectors, providing places of worship to scholarships, educational institutions and schools, and social and health care facilities. The Prefect of the Dicastery is its President and the Secretary is Vice-President. In addition to the United States CNEWA, the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, approved by Pope Pius XI in 1928, and the Pontifical Mission for Palestine, created in 1949, it includes agencies from Germany, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Spain and Italy.

The Dicastery for the Eastern Churches is also charged with fostering love for the Holy Land and fraternal solidarity with its Christian communities. Each year it sends to all the Bishops of the Catholic Church a circular letter on the Good Friday collection for the Holy Land as a means of encouraging the faithful to provide spiritual and material assistance to the Catholic communities and institutions present in the lands where the Lord Jesus was born, preached the Gospel, died and rose again. There, tragically, devastating wars continue to take the lives of countless victims, including civilians, despite the repeated and heartfelt appeals for peace made by Pope Francis.

The Dicastery is housed in an imposing edifice built during the years 1937-1941 and restored in 2014, on the right-hand side of Via della Conciliazione, looking towards Saint Peter's Basilica. This building replaced the ancient *Palazzo dei Convertendi* overlooking Piazza Scossacavalli. Its historical archives contain records dating from 1862, which are available for consultation by scholars.

The Byzantine chapel in the Palazzo is, despite its small size, a remarkable blend of art and devotion. It was painted between 1940 and 1943 by the Dutch Benedictine Jérôme Leussink, inspired by the artistic traditions of Mount Athos. The iconostasis and the mural decorations express the unity of the Church in the variety of her rites. The ceiling features a Christ *Pantocrator* surrounded by angels; the upper register of the walls portray the mysteries of the Redeemer and his Most Holy Mother; the lower register is decorated with images of more than three hundred Eastern saints, all identified by their names, written in the liturgical language and script of their respective country (Plates 15-19, pp. 160-164).

The Pontifical Oriental Institute

72. The Pontifical Oriental Institute was erected on 15 October 1917 by Pope Benedict XV a few months after the foundation of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. According to its founding document *Orientis Catholici*, the new Institute was meant to be “the centre in Rome for advanced studies in Eastern matters”.

The Institute was first quartered in Piazza Scossacavalli in the *Palazzo dei Convertendi*, which also housed the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. It initiated its academic offerings on 2 December 1918.

The first president of the Institute was Alfredo Ildefonso Schuster, the Abbot of Saint Paul’s Outside the Walls and a future Archbishop of Milan. In 1920, Benedict XV granted the Institute the right to confer academic degrees in theology. Twenty years later, Cardinal Schuster, referring to “this grandiose plan to build a bridge between East and West”, observed that “in Benedict XV’s mind, the Pontifical Oriental Institute was to be an academy or theological university dedicated exclusively to the study of the various theological disciplines cultivated in the

East” (*Benedetto XV e l’unione delle Chiese*, Lenten Conference at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, 1940).

In 1922, Pius XI entrusted the Institute to the Society of Jesus, and it moved to premises beside the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Piazza della Pilotta. Four years later, it moved again to its present site in Piazza S. Maria Maggiore. In 1928, the Pope combined the Institute with the Gregorian University and the Pontifical Biblical Institute to form the Gregorian Consortium. His Encyclical *Rerum Orientalium*, issued that same year, was a fundamental statement of the mission of the Institute in service to the universal Church.

In 1971, the Faculty of Eastern Canon Law was added to the Faculty of Eastern Theology; it was to be instrumental in the redaction of the present *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*.

For more than a century, this Institute of the Catholic Church for higher studies in Eastern disciplines, unique in the world, has pursued its mission of researching, explaining and making better known the life and traditions of the Eastern Churches, and of training the future pastors, teachers and leaders of the educational and ecclesiastical institutions of the Christian East. As an educational centre where students can study the East as a place of origin and authentic preservation of the Christian faith, its library houses one of the richest collections of books on the Christian East, approximately 210,000 volumes. Pope Benedict XVI, on his visit to the Dicastery on 9 June 2007, thanked the Institute “for its unique and distinguished service to the Church.”

In 2017, the Oriental Institute and the Congregation for the Eastern Churches celebrated the centenary of their foundation. In his Message for that occasion, Pope Francis wrote: “The times in which we live, and the challenges that war and hatred pose to the very roots of peaceful co-existence in the devastated lands of the East, place the Institute once again at the centre of a

providential crossroads, just as it was a century ago. While maintaining intact the precision and discipline of traditional research methods, I would ask everyone to offer to those Churches and to the entire ecclesial community their ability to listen to life and to engage in theological reflection as a means of supporting their continued existence and growth. Many of the students and professors are conscious of the importance of this moment in history. Thanks to the research, teaching and witness that this Institute offers, it has the responsibility of helping these brothers and sisters of ours to strengthen and consolidate their faith in the face of these immense challenges. It is called to be a privileged place for the training of men and women, seminarians, priests and laypeople capable of accounting for the hope that inspires and sustains them (cf. 1 Pet 3:15) and prepared to cooperate in Christ's mission of reconciliation (cf. 2 Cor 5:18)."

Two years later, on 17 December 2019, with the Chirograph *Una maggiore collaborazione*, Pope Francis decreed that the Biblical Institute and the Oriental Institute were to be more closely linked to the Gregorian University, forming a single juridical person. On 19 May 2024, the new statutes of the Pontifical Gregorian University took effect, whereby the University's mission is carried out by its three components: the Collegium Maximum, the Pontifical Biblical Institute and the Pontifical Oriental Institute.

Administration:

Rev. Sunny Kokkaravalayil, S.J., *President*

Students: 165, of whom 95 are ordinary and 70 guests (2024/25)

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Eastern colleges in Rome

73. The spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation of seminarians and priests, as well as of men and women religious, has always been a principal concern of the Holy See. During the last five centuries, various Eastern colleges were established in Rome, either at the instance of a Pope or the request of a Patriarch or an Eastern Bishop. The Dicastery for the Eastern Churches is responsible for these colleges, which are centres for human, spiritual, liturgical and cultural formation in accordance with their distinctive Eastern tradition. Academic formation is carried out at any of the various Roman ecclesiastical universities, including the Pontifical Oriental Institute.

The Pontifical Greek College

74. The Greek College is the oldest of the Eastern colleges in Rome. It has been in existence for more than four centuries, with a gap of some thirty years during the Napoleonic occupation of Rome. The college opened with six students on 3 November 1576 and was officially erected by the Bull *In Apostolicae Sedis Specula* of 13 January 1577.

The intent of its founder, Pope Gregory XIII, was far-sighted. The college was planned for the entire Greek Church, Catholic and Orthodox, which had remained faithful to the first seven Ecumenical Councils, wherever its traditions were found, also among non-Greek-speakers. This included Constantinople and in mainland Greece and the Greek islands, but also, farther afield, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Poland, among Ruthenians and Romanians, in Albania and southern Italy, as well as in the ancient Patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.

Most of the Greek Churches were at that time hard pressed, religiously separated from Rome and controlled or threatened by foreign powers, especially the Ottoman empire. The Pope's

intention was to offer them all possible aid. In the first fifty years of the college's existence, it was open to all vocations: clerical, monastic, and even secular. After 1642, it was restricted to those aspiring to the ecclesiastical state. Its original aim was to restore peace between the Churches; in view of this, the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople sent two of his nephews there in 1581.

The provenance of the students has changed greatly over the centuries. In the beginning, the majority came from Greece, but there were also Italians and Albanians, and even some Slavs, such as the Ruthenian Elias Stephanides Morocoschi, who arrived in 1596 and became the Bishop of Vladimir in 1613, and other of Romanian and Melkite origin. The number of Greeks gradually diminished, while the number of those of other origin, particularly Ruthenians, grew. Many of them were later to be named Bishops and Metropolitans.

The formation offered by the college was broad: first, a solid grounding in humanist culture, then, more specifically, philosophy and theology. It was meant to be a place of encounter between different cultures and approaches, a source of enriching exchange, and even, at times, dispute.

The alumni of the College include many important figures. It is enough to mention Leo Allatius, the most important Greek philologist of the seventeenth century, who was not only a theologian and historian but also a physician. An indefatigable worker and prolific author, in 1648 he published his *De Ecclesiae Occidentalis et Orientalis perpetua consensione*. Despite the limitations of the outlook of the times, this work, as well as many others by the same author, gave the West a first chance to understand and better appreciate the traditional values of the East. Metropolitan Joseph Velamin Rutskyj also studied at the College from 1599 to 1603.

The training of students was usually entrusted to religious orders or to the secular clergy. Those that served longest were the Jesuits, for a total of 170 years, and the Benedictines, who were charged by Leo XIII in 1897 with the specific mission of implementing a programme along the lines of the Encyclical *Orientalium Dignitas* (1894) in order to foster a greater recovery of their proper traditions on the part of Eastern Catholics. This orientation would be further encouraged by the Second Vatican Council.

The changing political landscape led in time to the establishment of new national colleges for Churches belonging to the Constantinopolitan tradition: the Ruthenian College in 1897, later called the Ukrainian College; the Russian College in 1929; the Romanian College in 1937. As a result, the Greek College lost some of its international flavour, although today it continues to host Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Italian Albanians and students from the Middle East, thus remaining open to all the Eastern Churches of the Byzantine tradition.

Administration:

Rev. Maciej Marek Pawlik, O.S.B., *Rector*

Students: 14 (2024/25), from Syria (1), Lebanon (2), Holy Land (4), Iraq (1), Slovakia (1), Romania (1), Greece (1), Italy (1), United States (2)

Address:

Via del Babuino 149 - 00187 Roma
www.collegiogreco.com

The Pontifical Maronite College

75. As communications between Lebanon and Rome improved during the sixteenth century, especially after the mission of the two Jesuits Giambattista Eliano and Giovanni Bruno (1580), it

seemed fitting that the Maronites should have a hospice in Rome. Pope Gregory XIII founded one for pilgrims and poor travellers from that country with his Bull *Exigit Incumbentis* of 31 January 1581. With the Bull *Salvatoris Nostri* of 11 January 1582, he assigned the small church of San Giovanni della Fioccia in the Trevi district as its site and donated the adjacent houses and market gardens.

With the Bull *Humana Sic Ferunt* of 11 July 1584, the hospice became a college. Cardinal Antonio Carafa was named its Protector, charged with ensuring that the liturgical offices were celebrated there by regulars or secular priests *etiam arabico vel chaldaico idiomate*. He was likewise charged to accept a certain number of young men for instruction in the ecclesiastical sciences. Cardinal Carafa left his estate to the college at his death on 12 September 1590 (Vatican Archives, A.A., 1785, fol. 32-36). It was then entrusted to the care of the Jesuits who for the next two centuries provided for the education of a good number of priests. When the Society of Jesus was suppressed in 1773, the college was given to the secular clergy of Rome. In 1808, following occupation by Napoleon's army and the annexation of the Papal States, the college was closed, its goods confiscated or sold by the state and its library absorbed by the Vatican, where it still survives today in various collections. When the Urban College of Propaganda Fide reopened in 1815, several young Maronites found refuge there.

With the Apostolic Letter *Sapienter Olim* of 30 November 1891, Pope Leo XIII, noting the efforts of the Patriarch Paul Mas'ad and the Maronite Bishops to ensure suitable funding for the future of the college, restored the ancient foundation of Gregory XIII in a new site at Via di Porta Pinciana, 14. The first Rector was Elia Huayek, then titular Archbishop of Arca, later Patriarch, whose cause for beatification has been opened.

The college remained closed from 1911-1920; it was reopened on 8 November of that year with the Motu Proprio *Cum Primum* of Pope Benedict XV (10 October 1920).

At its plenary session of 3 July 1939, in light of the small number of students, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches decided, for the time being, to reserve the College to Maronite priests seeking to follow courses of higher studies. This was to last, “until such time as the Lebanese seminaries at Ghazir and Beirut can regularly send students in sufficient numbers to ensure the good functioning of a true seminary in Rome” (*ex Audientia SS.mi*, 9 July 1939). These plans never came to fruition because of the outbreak of the Second World War. The college was to remain closed for lengthy period of time (1939-2000), when Maronite clergy were chiefly trained in Lebanon, although some seminarians were sent to the Urban College of Propaganda Fide.

The College was reopened on 9 February 2000. Its legal representatives reside there, as does the Patriarchal Procurator, who is also the rector of the church attached to the college.

Administration:

Bishop Rafic El Warcha, *Rector*

Students: 24 (2024/25), from Lebanon (11), Syria (1), Georgia (2), South Korea (5), Egypt (1), Italy (1), France (1), United States (1), Colombia (1)

Address:

Via di Porta Pinciana 14 - 00187 Roma
www.collegiopcm.org

The Pontifical Armenian College

76. Pope Gregory XIII established an Armenian College in Rome with his Bull *Romana Ecclesia* of 13 October 1584, but he died without having implemented the project that, for lack of

adequate means, was never followed through. For certain period, Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santoro maintained a few young Armenians in Rome at his own expense, in the vain hope that this might encourage the eventual completion of the project. The founding of an Armenian College in Rome was proposed anew by some Armenian merchants from Julfa in Persia; at the special Armenian Congregation of 9 July 1630, the Congregation *de Propaganda Fide* was prepared to open such a college and purchase a house for it, as long as the merchants provided for the upkeep of the young people. This project was not implemented either, and young Armenian clerics were thus educated at the Urban College of Propaganda Fide through two foundations established by Cardinal Antonio Barberini, the brother of Urban VIII, and confirmed in the Briefs *Altitudo Divinae* of 23 March 1638 and *Onerosa Pastoralis* of 21 June 1639. These were meant primarily for Armenians in Poland, then those in Constantinople, and lastly those in the Crimea, Georgia, Armenia itself and Persia.

In 1867, the Armenian Bishops, gathered in Rome for the Jubilee of the millennium of the martyrdom of the Apostles Peter and Paul, petitioned Pope Pius IX to implement the original proposal of Gregory XIII, but this too came to naught. Finally, on 1 March 1883, with the Brief *Benigna Hominum Parens*, Pope Leo XIII established the present Armenian College, entrusting it to the secular clergy and giving the Armenian faithful, in exchange for the church of Saint Mary of Egypt, that of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, where many tombs and funerary inscriptions from the older church were then moved. For this reason, the college bears the name, “Pontifical Leonine College”.

In 1938, as the result of a general restructuring of the surrounding area involving the construction of Via Bissolati, it was decided to build a new college on the same site, but respecting the plan of the newly opened streets. The foundation stone was

laid by Cardinal Eugene Tisserant on 8 June 1940, and the first students moved into the new college on 2 January 1943.

The administration of the college was first entrusted to the Priests of Saint Sulpice (1954 to 1959), and then restored to the Armenian eparchial clergy.

Administration:

Rev. Khatchig Kouyoumjian, *Rector*

Students: 15 (2024/25), from Armenia (7), Georgia (1), Siria (2), Libano (3), Stati Uniti (1), Brasile (1)

Address:

Salita San Nicola da Tolentino 17 - 00187 Roma

The Pontifical Ethiopian College

77. In 1481, an Ethiopian delegation came to Rome and was cordially received by Pope Sixtus IV. The Pope had the small monastery and the ancient church of Saint Stephen in the Vatican restored and entrusted it to Ethiopian monks. The church's name, Saint Stephen of the Moors (or of the Abyssinians), dates from that time. The adjacent building served as a convent for the monks and a hospice for Ethiopian pilgrims. The monk Tasfa Seyon published in Rome in 1548-1549 a New Testament in the Ge'ez language, along with the *Ordo Communis* of the liturgy with a Latin translation. In the last years of the seventeenth century, the convent was no longer occupied and the college's administration was entrusted to a chaplain. The Ethiopian clergy were educated at Urban College of Propaganda Fide, thanks to the two foundations established by Cardinal Antonio Barberini.

With the Brief *Alias Postquam* of 15 January 1731, Pope Clement XII extended the grant of Saint Stephen's to include the Copts, without, however, excluding the Ethiopians, of whom express mention was made. From 1782 until 1816, there were no

resident Ethiopians or Copts, and Saint Stephen's was administered by Roman priests. In 1816, the Ethiopian monk George Galabadda was appointed rector, and remained there until his death in 1845. The Roman clergy then returned. From 1883 to 1919, the Trinitarian Fathers resided there and made Saint Stephen's a house of studies for members of their Order.

In 1916-1917, a young Ethiopian from Terami, Ghebre Maryam Andikiel, came to Rome desiring to study. The Capuchins, who had directed the mission of Eritrea from 1894, asked the Trinitarians to house him at Saint Stephen's, from which he later moved to the Urban College of Propaganda Fide. Fr. Camillo Beccari, S.J., an expert in the history of the Ethiopian mission during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, made concerted efforts to establish a college for Ethiopians in Rome. Benedict XV, while preserving Saint Stephen's character as a hospice for Ethiopian monks, permitted, *ad experimentum*, a college for the education of the eparchial clergy to open there in October 1919.

The construction of the present Palazzo del Governatorato in Vatican City resulted in the demolition of the old convent, but the ancient church of Saint Stephen's was saved. Pius XI then had new premises built for the college (1928-1930) in the Vatican gardens, not far from its former building. It received the title and rights of a Pontifical College with the Apostolic Constitution *Curis Ac Laboribus* of 12 February 1930. In 1960, the chapel was restored, redecorated and adapted to the requirements of the Ethiopian rite.

In 2002-2003, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches had all the rooms of the college renovated. In addition to the chapel and other spaces on the ground floor (reception and residences for superiors), the basement and the first floor were renovated, along with the student rooms. On 7 October 2003, the renovated premises were blessed and inaugurated. In 2019, the college commemorated the centenary of its foundation.

Administration:

Rev. Hailemikael Beraki Hasho, O.F.M. Cap., *Rector*

Students: 18 (2024/25), from Ethiopia (11), Eritrea (5), India (1), Mexico (1)

Address:

Piazzale del Collegio Etiopico
00120 Città del Vaticano

The Pontifical Russian College of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus

78. The Bolshevik revolution had serious consequences for religious life in Russia. Many Russians emigrated and settled in the West, while at home persecutions decimated the clergy and devastated the seminaries. In 1929, the Pontifical College *Russicum* was founded in Rome in order to promote ecclesiastical vocations and to provide religious assistance to the Russian faithful. The college was placed under the patronage of Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, thanks to a donation from the Carmelites of Lisieux that Pope Pius XI received just as he was planning this foundation. On 11 February 1928, the cornerstone of the new college, built beside the church of Saint Anthony Abbot on the Esquiline, was laid. The college was canonically erected on 15 August 1929 with the Apostolic Constitution *Quam Curam de Orientalibus* and opened its doors in the fall of that year. Since then, its administration has been entrusted to the Society of Jesus.

The *Russicum* seeks to pursue its historic vocation to be a centre for the promotion and spread of knowledge of the Slavic Christian tradition in the centre of Western Christianity. Its purpose is the training of priests, both Latin and Eastern, who either come from or intend to carry out pastoral ministry in Russia or other areas of the Byzantine-Slavic tradition, or in Eastern

Europe. This training is aimed at inculcating deeper knowledge and familiarity with the cultural and spiritual heritage of the territories in which they will be working, and a greater knowledge and understanding of the heritage of the Eastern Churches among Western Catholics. At the same time, it seeks to encourage contacts, communication, respect and collaboration with Orthodox Christians, according to the mind of the Church. To this end it houses students of different local traditions and confessions, including some Orthodox, who pursue advanced studies at the Pontifical Oriental Institute or at other Roman universities.

Administration:

Rev. Władysław Gryzlo, S.J., *Pro-Rector*

Students: 23 (2024/25), from Ukraine (6), Slovakia (3), Macedonia (1), Greece (1), Lebanon (1), Jordan (4), Armenia (2), Georgia (2), India (2), Egypt (1)

Address:

Via Carlo Cattaneo 2 - 00185 Roma

The Pontifical Ukrainian College of Saint Josaphat

79. The reconciliation of the Metropolia of Kyiv with Rome in 1595 was largely the work of one of the most illustrious alumni of the Greek College in Rome, Peter Arcudius. Metropolitan Joseph Velamin Rutskyj (1614-1637) vigorously defended the Union and ensured its stability. At Rutskyj's request, the Brief *Decet Romanum Pontificem* of Pope Paul V, dated 2 December 1615, reserved four places at the Greek College for students from Ukraine and Belarus. In the early years of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, there were frequent attempts to establish a seminary for the Metropolia of Kyiv, but it was decided to establish a seminary in the country itself. In view of this, several places were assigned to Ruthenian Greek-Catholic students in

the Pontifical Colleges of Brunsberg and Vilnius. In 1665, following the Union between Rome and the Armenian archbishopric of Lviv, the noted missionary Clement Galano founded an Armenian College in that city; very soon after, several students of the Ruthenian rite were admitted. The Italian Theatines directed this college and at the beginning of the eighteenth century, built a residence that could accommodate ten Armenians and sixteen Ruthenians.

Metropolitan Rutskyj soon realized the usefulness of having a permanent procurator in Rome, and so in 1626 appointed a Basilian monk, Nicholas Novak, who was confirmed by a rescript dated 6 June 1626 of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide. In the congregation's meeting of 25 September 1627, the little church of Saint Lawrence in Fonte was ceded to the Ruthenian Basilians, and at the congregation of 21 May next, they were granted a subsidy to build a residence next to it. Since in the meantime, the church in question had been occupied by others, on 25 June 1640 the Ruthenian community was given the church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus *ad montes*.

With a Brief dated 8 February 1641, Pope Urban VIII approved a grant, made possible by a legacy of twenty thousand Polish florins from a certain John Dubovyc of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which provided room and board for four Basilian religious who were to study in Rome, living together under the rule of their Order. In this way, the Basilians became established in the church and its adjoining hospice. Cardinal Antonio Barberini granted them an annual pension of one hundred scudi, and a further one-time offer of two hundred scudi for the restoration of the church and hospice. With the Brief *Ex Commissi Officii Debito* of 12 June 1660, Pope Alexander VII placed the hospice under the immediate jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide.

Until 1829, the Basilian procurators lived in the house adjoining the church. When the last of these, Anatol Vilcinskyj, died that year, no successor was appointed, and the church passed to the direct administration of the Sacred Congregation. In 1852, the Provincial of the Basilians of Galicia appealed to Pius IX to recover this building to be the office of a Procurator, but to no avail; the church continued to be officiated by priests of the Roman clergy.

In 1897, when the Greek College was entrusted to the Benedictines, the Jesuits and their Slavic students went to Saints Sergius and Bacchus. The College, under the name *Ruthenum*, was erected by the Apostolic Letter *Paternum Benevolentiam* of 18 December 1897. The building was enlarged, and the church adapted and provided with an iconostasis and a new altar at the expense of Pope Leo XIII and the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph. The Jesuits administered the college until 1904, when the Basilians took over its direction, which they maintain today.

Due to the increasing number of students, Pope Pius XI decided to build on the Janiculum a new college dedicated to Saint Josaphat, the martyr of the Union. Gregory Khomyshyn, Bishop of Stanyslaviv, solemnly blessed the foundation stone on 28 October 1929 at the conclusion of the second periodic Conference of Ukrainian and Ruthenian Bishops, then held for the first time in Rome. The new college, under the name Pontifical College Saint Josaphat, was built between 1929 and 1932 and was inaugurated on 13 November 1932, the liturgical memorial of the holy martyr Bishop. Built to accommodate fifty students from Ukraine, Yugoslavia, America, and Canada, it opened on 13 November 1932. Its greatest influx of students was in the years 1932-1940, prior to the Second World War. In the immediate post-war period, the students came mainly from the refugee and prison camps of Europe, as it was impossible for anyone to be sent from Ukraine, where the Greek-Catholic Church had been

suppressed. After 1950, new arrivals appeared from the Ukrainian diaspora in Brazil and Canada, and after 1960, from Yugoslavia and from the minor seminary of Rome. With the fall of the Communist regime in Ukraine, seminarians from that country returned, to complete in Rome the first cycle of studies in philosophy and theology.

Administration:

Rev. Luis Caciano, O.S.B.M., *Rector*

Students: 42 (2024/25), from Ukraine (41) and Macedonia (1)

Address:

Passeggiata del Gianicolo 7 - 00165 Roma

www.collegioucraino.it

The Pontifical Romanian College “Pio-Romeno”

80. The first steps towards the establishment of the Greek-Catholic Church of Romania date back to 1697, when a synod held at Alba Iulia in Transylvania under the presidency of Bishop Theophilus decided on union with the Church of Rome. A first eparchy was set up at Făgăraș in 1721 and another at Oradea in 1777. In 1853 Pius IX created two more, joining them all in the Metropolitan Province of Făgăraș and Alba Iulia. To further the formation of its clergy, the Pope provided four scholarships at the Greek College in Rome, for the training of candidates from all Churches of the Constantinopolitan tradition.

Ever since 1921, the Bishops of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Church had hoped to open a college in Rome of their own, in order to train priests knowledgeable and well-formed in Catholic doctrine for service both as teachers and directors in seminaries and schools, and as officials in chanceries or missionaries to the faithful. Pope Benedict XV recognized the importance of the project and immediately took the first steps for its implementation, which came to completion under Pope Pius XI.

The foundation stone of the new college on the Janiculum was blessed on 12 May 1930 by Metropolitan Vasile Suciu of Făgăraș and Alba Julia, and the first students entered in October 1935. On 6 January 1937, the college was canonically erected as the Pontifical Pio-Romanian College by Pius XI in the Apostolic Constitution *Romani Pontifices*. The Pope stressed his “heartfelt desire that the College provide its students with a fitting formation in conformity with the norms of their own rites”. This was a far-sighted view, in continuity with the directives of Leo XIII that anticipated and prepared for the decisions of the Second Vatican Council, with its insistence that “all members of the Eastern Churches be firmly convinced that they can and ought always to preserve their own legitimate rites and ways of life ... with the greatest fidelity. They are to aim always at a more perfect knowledge and practice of their rites” (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, 6).

On 9 May 1937, in the presence of the entire Romanian episcopate, the college was solemnly inaugurated by the consecration of its church dedicated to Our Lady of the Annunciation, the work of the architect Giuseppe Momo, and featuring a great iconostasis by the painter Gregorij Maltzev (1881-1953).

Unfortunately the Second World War and, after it, the long persecution of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church by the Communist government, first limited and later prevented the arrival of new candidates, so that after 1950 the college’s activity was interrupted. With the fall of the Communist regime, the first students returned in October 1990 and the college officially reopened on 24 March 1993.

Today, in addition to the Romanian community, the *Pio-Romano* also houses another community: after the closing of the former Saint Ephrem College in 2014, its students were transferred to the Romanian College. There is one rector for the two communities.

For its part, Saint Ephrem College, dedicated to the Church Father Saint Ephrem the Syrian, had been opened on 8 March 2003. It was not the first place to accept and train Arabic-speaking student priests, but the fruit of earlier experiences like that of the Romanian College itself, the Saint John Damascene Institute and Saint Benedict College. From 2003-2014 it hosted, in its quarters on via Boccea 480, Arabic-speaking students belonging to the Eastern Catholic Patriarchal Churches – Chaldean, Coptic, Melkite and Syrian – who had come to Rome for specialized studies in the ecclesiastical disciplines at the various Pontifical Universities.

Administration:

Rev. Gabriel-Vasile Buboï, *Rector*

Students: 35 (2024/25), from Romania (17), Iraq (4), India (6), Egypt (7), Eritrea (1)

Address:

Passeggiata del Gianicolo 5 - 00165 Roma
www.pioromeno.com

The Saint John Damascene Institute

81. The Congregation for the Eastern Church, at the beginning of the tenure of Cardinal Eugene Tisserant as its Prefect, examined the proposal of a residence for Eastern priests who wished to study in Rome in preparation for their work in the Near East, but had no place of their own in the city. Pope Pius XII approved the plan on 9 November 1940. The Institute opened on 4 December 1940, the liturgical commemoration of its patron, Saint John Damascene.

In its early days, the Institute was housed in a wing of the *Russicum*. In 1949, it moved to the Pontifical Romanian College

on the Janiculum, since at the time the Communist regime in Romania prevented Romanian clerics from coming to Rome.

On 18 April 1991, a new location for the residence (via Carlo Emanuele I, 46) was acquired by the Eastern Congregation and, after necessary renovations and adaptations, it opened on 27 April 1993.

The Institute has so far hosted hundreds of students from about 32 nations (Western and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, India, the Far East, the two Americas, sub-Saharan Africa). Among its former students, most belong to Eastern Churches (Armenian, Byzantine of varying denominations, Chaldean, Coptic, Ethiopian, Italo-Albanian, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara, Maronite, Melkite, Romanian, Syrian), as well as Latin Catholics.

Starting with the academic year 1996-97, the Institute was reserved to student priests from India and belonging to the Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara Churches. For students from the Middle East, the Saint Benedict College (opened in 1996 and closed in 2002) and Saint Ephrem College (opened from 2003 to 2014) had earlier been opened.

The Jesuits directed the Institute until 1974, after which its administration passed to the Order of Discalced Carmelites.

In September 2015, the Saint John Damascene Institute moved to via di Boccea 480 (formerly the site of Santa Maria del Patrocinio College and Saint Ephrem College). It currently hosts a large Indian community of Syro-Malabar and Syro-Malankara priests.

Administration:

Rev. Jaymon John, O.C.D., *Rector*

Students: 40 (2024/25), all from India

Address:

Via di Boccea 480 - 00166 Roma

www.collegiodamasceno.wordpress.com

Pontifical College of Santa Maria del Patrocinio for Eastern Women Religious

82. In 2016, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches decided for the first time to establish a college as a residence for Eastern women religious studying in Rome. It was, and continues to be, a challenging enterprise, both in terms of formation and finances, but of great assistance to those religious congregations that do not have a house in Rome. It is located in the building that previously housed the Saint John Damascene Institute.

The new experience of community life began in September 2016, coordinated by three Sisters of the Mother of Carmel Congregation, who took over the direction of the College as superior, assistant superior and bursar. About twenty women religious were accepted, mainly from India, but also from Lebanon, Iraq and Ukraine.

Administration:

Sister Molly George Nedumkallel, C.M.C., *Superior*

Students: 25 (2024/25), all from India

Address:

Via Carlo Emanuele I, 46 – 00185 Roma

83. *Procurators in Rome of Eastern Catholic Churches*

Patriarchate of Antioch of the Syrians

Piazza Campo Marzio 45 – 00186 Roma

Patriarchate of Antioch of the Greek Melkites

Piazza della Bocca della Verità 18 – 00186 Roma

Patriarchate of Antioch of the Maronites
Via di Porta Pinciana 18 – 00187 Roma

Patriarchate of Baghdad of the Chaldeans
Basilica di Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri
Oratorio dell'Epifania del Signore
Via Cernaia 9 – 00185 Roma

Patriarchate of Cilicia of the Armenians
Pontificio Collegio Armeno
Salita San Nicola da Tolentino 17 – 00187 Roma

Major Archbishopric of Kyiv-Halyč of the Ukrainians
Via di Boccea 478 – 00168 Roma

Major Archbishopric of Ernakulam-Angamaly of the Syro-Malabars
Domus Mar Thoma
Via degli Estensi 137 – 00164 Roma

Major Archbishopric of Trivandrum of the Syro-Malankaras
Via Aurelia 172 – 00165 Roma

Major Archbishopric of Făgăraș and Alba Julia of the Romanians
Pontificio Collegio Pio Romeno
Passeggiata del Gianicolo 5 – 00165 Roma

84. *Institutes of Eastern Men Religious*

Basilian Order of Saint Josaphat
Monastero dei Monaci Basiliani di San Giosafat
Via San Giosafat 8 – 00153 Roma

85. *Procurators in Rome of Institutes of Eastern Men Religious*

Chaldean Antonine Order of Saint Hormisdas
Convento di S. Giuseppe
Via Tina Lorenzoni 67 – 00166 Roma

Melkite Basilian Order of the Most Holy Saviour
Via Felice Cavallotti 72 – 00152 Roma

Carmelites of Mary Immaculate
Via Martino V 26/b – 00167 Roma

Lebanese Maronite Order (Baladites)
Via Monza 31 – 00182 Roma

Maronite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Mariamites)
Piazza S. Pietro in Vincoli 8 – 00184 Roma

Antonine Maronite Order
Via di Affogalasino 68 – 00148 Roma

86. Institutes of Eastern Women Religious

Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate
Via Cassia Antica 104 – 00191 Roma

Russian Monastery of the Dormition (Uspjenskij)
Via della Pisana 342 – 00163 Roma

Armenian Sisters of the Immaculate Conception
Via Vincenzo Monti 9 – 00152 Roma

Sisters of the Order of Saint Basil the Great (Basilian Sisters)
Via Sant’Alessio 26 – 00153 Roma

87. Procurators in Rome of Institutes of Eastern Women Religious

Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary
Viale Pola 15 – 00198 Roma

Franciscan Sisters of the Cross of Lebanon
Via Fratelli Bandiera 19 - 00152 Roma

Congregation of Chaldean Sisters “Daughters of Mary Immaculate”
Via di Selva Candida 671 – 00166 Roma

PRINCIPAL INSTITUTIONS

Mossul Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena
Via dei Rogazionisti 8 – 00182 Roma

Sisters of the Holy Rosary
Circonvallazione Tuscolana 40 - 00174 Roma

Basilian Sisters “Daughters of St. Macrina”
Via Anagnina 123 – 00046 Grottaferrata (RM)

Congregation of the Mother of Carmel
Via dei Colombi 131/2 – 00169 Roma

Franciscan Clarist Congregation
Villa Santa Chiara
Via di Valledlunga 128 – 00166 Roma

Chapter IX

EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN ROME

88. *Coptic Church*

Saint Andrew in via Flaminia

The church of Saint Andrew the Apostle in via Flaminia, also called “del Vignola”, was built in 1552-1553 based on a design by Jacopo Barozzi, known as “Il Vignola”. Pope Julius III made it a private chapel to fulfil a vow made during the sack of Rome by the troops of Emperor Charles V (1527), since he had managed to escape from the city on 30 November, the feast of Saint Andrew.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Giuseppe Valadier radically restructured the cupola, built the sacristy and the perimeter wall. In 1852 the bell tower was added above the apse and in 1894 the roof was completely restored. During the years 1977-1978, the cupola was sheathed with lead, but the original covering was renewed in the 1990s, restoring its ancient colour.

The *Vision of Saint Andrew the Apostle*, a fresco of the mid-sixteenth century, appears on the back wall, in the centre of a rectangular apse in which the altar is placed.

For some fifteen years, the church, under the care of the Friars Minor of the Franciscan Province of the Holy Family, has been the parish of the Coptic Catholic community of Rome, attended by about thirty families.

Sant’Andrea in via Flaminia (“del Vignola”)

Via Flaminia 194 – 00196 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sunday at 4:00 p.m.

89. *Syrian Church*

Saint Mary of the Conception in the Campo Marzio

The origins of the church are linked to a community of Eastern nuns who fled Constantinople around the middle of the eighth century and received from Pope Zacharias a small place of worship in the Campus Martius. According to tradition, the nuns brought with them an ancient icon of the Mother of God and various relics, including the body of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. They restored the church and built a monastery next to it.

Outside the original cloister, the church of Saint Mary of the Conception was built in the mid-1560s, then replaced with a new and larger building that was completed by 1685, the work of the architect Giovanni Antonio De Rossi. The interior is in the form of a Greek cross with a dome. Above the high altar is a twelfth or thirteenth century panel representing the *Virgo Advocata*.

The church has been entrusted to the Patriarchate of Antioch of the Syrians and the part of the complex formerly used as a monastery is presently the seat of the Patriarchate's procurator to the Holy See.

Santa Maria della Concezione in Campo Marzio

Piazza Campo Marzio 45 – 00186 Roma

www.santamariaincampomarzio.com

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

90. *Greek Melkite Church*

Saint Mary in Cosmedin

On the left wall of the church's portico is preserved a great marble disc representing a sea god, popularly known as the *Bocca della Verità*, or "Mouth of Truth". It is a Roman drain cover, perhaps from a well or from one of the openings into the

Cloaca Maxima, and was placed here in 1632, set on a Corinthian capital.

The first record of the existence here of a *diaconia* (a church with an attached centre for charitable assistance) dates back to the eighth century, but archaeological remains suggest that it had already existed in the sixth century. Enlarged in 782 by Pope Hadrian I, it was known as *Kosmedion* because of the sumptuousness of its decoration. According to some sources, the name was that of an edifice in Constantinople. Later it was also called Saint Mary *in schola graeca*, because of the Greek-speaking community that had settled in the area. In the ninth century, a sacristy was added, as was an oratory dedicated to Saint Nicholas. The complex was completely transformed by Pope Gelasius II (1118-1119) and his successor Pope Callixtus II (1119-1124), who consecrated it in 1123. Dating from that period and worthy of note are the Cosmatesque floor and the liturgical furnishings attributed to the workshop of the *marmorarius* Paul, the rebuilding of the portico with a *protyrum* in the centre, and the seven-storey Romanesque bell tower. In the eighteenth century, the church was renovated in the Baroque style, but was restored to its original form at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Roman structures found beneath the Basilica are now widely considered a fourth-century loggia and the podium in tufa blocks of the Ara Maxima of Hercules, one of the oldest and most sacred monuments of the ancient city.

The interior is divided into three aisles with undecorated pilasters and columns ending in three apses, frescoed in 1899-1900 in neo-Romanesque style. The *Schola Cantorum*, composed of two ambos, and a pergola after the style of a Byzantine *templon* occupy most of the central nave; these date from the twelfth century, but have significant additions from the nineteenth century. The high altar is a Roman *labrum* of red granite surmounted by a ciborium from the end of the thirteenth century, the work of

Deodatus, the son of Cosmas the Younger. The image of the *Theotokos*, to whom the Basilica is dedicated, was located in the central apse until 1900 and is now in the winter choir. The sacred image, considered miraculous, dates from the fifteenth century, although traditionally held to have been brought from Byzantium to Rome at the time of iconoclast persecution. The tripartite crypt was built in the eighth century inside the Roman podium. The seventeenth-century sacristy, altered in the eighteenth, displays a mosaic with the Adoration of the Magi from the destroyed Oratory of Pope John VII (705–707) in the old Saint Peter's. It had been placed above the door of the Basilica in 1639.

Pope Saint Paul VI granted the Basilica as a personal title to the Melkite Patriarch Maximus IV and then to all his successors. The Greek-Melkite clergy who officiate in this church celebrate the Byzantine rite in three languages: Arabic, Greek, and Italian.

Santa Maria in Cosmedin

Piazza Bocca della Verità 18 – 00186 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 10.30 a.m.

91. *Syro-Maronite Church*

Saint John Maron

Designed by the well-known Roman architectural firm Busiri Vici, construction on this, the national church of Lebanon, began in 1902 and was completed in 1935. It stands next to the former Maronite convent-hospice. The style is characterized by a sober reference to the East grafted onto the traditions of Roman minor architecture. The interior is divided by three transverse arches, at whose corners the twelve apostles are depicted. Behind the raised altar is a large tripartite window with opalescent glass. In the centre is the cross with symbolic figures of the Old Testament on its right and the New Testament on the left, on either side is a line of cedars of Lebanon. The ceiling over the

sanctuary is decorated with the image of the Virgin Mary, while the Holy Trinity dominates the entire nave. The relic of the head of Saint Maron, a fourth-century anchorite, the father and patron saint of the Maronite Church, has been definitively placed in this church, after being sent to Lebanon from the Cathedral of Foglino where it had been preserved from ancient times in an altar dedicated to the saint.

In 2010, the church became a Mission with care of souls for migrants belonging to the Syro-Antiochene Maronite Church and residing in the Diocese of Rome.

San Giovanni Marone

Via Aurora 6 – 00187 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

92. *Chaldean Church*

Saint Mary of the Angels and Martyrs

Oratory of the Epiphany of the Lord

In 1561, under Pope Pius IV, the remnants of the Baths of Diocletian were consecrated to the holy angels and to Christian martyrs who, according to legend, had been forced to work as slaves in the construction of the baths. Michelangelo was commissioned to make the building into a church. He gave it a plan that is approximately a Greek cross. The basilica was given its present appearance by Luigi Vanvitelli for the Holy Year of 1750. The sixteenth-century façade was demolished at the beginning of the twentieth century to reveal the Roman brickwork beneath. In the sanctuary, the painting of *The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* by Domenichino (1629) and *The Presentation of Mary in the Temple* by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli (1640) can be admired.

One of the chapels in the church is reserved for the use of the faithful of the Chaldean rite who gather here on special occasions.

Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri
Oratorio dell'Epifania del Signore
Via Cernaia 9 (Piazza della Repubblica) – 00185 Roma

93. *Armenian Church*

Saint Blaise of the Armenians

One of the oldest churches in Rome, it arose above the temple of Neptune. An inscription in the interior attests to its reconstruction under Pope Alexander II (1061-1073) by the abbot Dominic, who lived in the adjacent monastery. The church, restored in the nineteenth century, is known as Saint Blaise of the Loaf (*pagnotta*) because on the saint's feast day (3 February) blessed bread is distributed to the faithful. On the same day, throats are blessed in memory of the saint's healing powers, attributed to him according to popular tradition because he saved the life of a boy choking on a fish bone caught in his throat. Blaise was a physician who became Bishop of Sebaste (Armenia), where he was martyred about the year 316.

In 1836, Pope Gregory XVI entrusted the church to the Armenians, together with the adjoining hospice, in place of the church of Saint Mary of Egypt, which had been their place of worship.

San Biagio degli Armeni
Via Giulia 64 – 00186 Roma
Divine Liturgy: Saturdays at 6:30 p.m.

Saint Nicholas of Tolentino agli Orti Sallustiani

Built by the Discalced Augustinians in 1599 for Prince Camillo Pamphili, the church was rebuilt in 1614 by the architect

Giovanni Maria Baratta. The Baroque façade, preceded by a long flight of steps, is noteworthy. Pope Leo XIII gave the church and adjoining buildings to the Pontifical Armenian College when he established the college in 1883. The liturgy is celebrated by the students of the college, and the church is frequented by the Armenian community.

San Nicola da Tolentino agli Orti Sallustiani
Salita S. Nicola da Tolentino 17 – 00187 Roma
Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

94. *Ukrainian Church*

Santa Sophia

Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, then Major Archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, freed after almost twenty years of imprisonment in Siberia thanks to the intervention of Pope John XXIII and President John F. Kennedy, had the *Sobor* of Santa Sophia built in Rome between 1967 and 1968 as a spiritual and religious centre for all Ukrainians. On 28 September 1976, Pope Paul VI deposited here some relics of Pope Saint Clement (88-97), who had been martyred in Crimea and whose relics were brought to Rome by the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius, the apostles of the Slavic peoples.

The church, constructed in the traditional style of Ukrainian Byzantine churches, possesses a remarkable iconostasis. The paintings are the work of the Studite monk, Juvenalij Josyf Mokryckyj. Its three levels show, from bottom to top, scenes from the Old Testament, icons of Christ, the Holy Mother of God and several saints, and scenes of the principal feasts. The entire church is covered with an iconographic cycle in gold mosaic. The iconostasis and the mosaics were designed by the Ukrainian artist Sviatoslav Hordynsky.

This sacred space is a spiritual centre for the large Ukrainian Greek-Catholic community in Rome; it is also a centre for the provision of aid and relief to the Ukrainian people as a result of the tragic war in their country.

Santa Sofia

Via Boccea 478 – 00166 Roma

www.santasofia.today

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 7:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.; weekdays from Monday to Wednesday at 6:00 p.m., Thursday at 4:00 p.m., Friday at 6:00 p.m.; Saturday at 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.; *Vespers*: Saturday at 5:00 p.m.; *Matins*: Sunday at 8:45 a.m.

Our Lady of Žyrovici and Saints Sergius and Bacchus, Martyrs

A church in the Suburra dedicated to Saint Sergius with a nearby convent was built in the ninth century. It was rebuilt in 1563 by Pope Paul III and dedicated to Saints Sergius and Bacchus, two officers of the Roman army in Syria who converted to Christianity and were martyred in 303. In 1641, Pope Urban VIII granted the church to the Metropolitans of Kyiv-Halych. In 1741, the church was completely rebuilt according to the design of Francesco Ferrari. It was then restructured between 1880 and 1896 by Ettore Bonoli. After a brief period of alienation, it was repurchased and re-consecrated in 1969 by Cardinal Josyf Slipyj, Major Archbishop of Lviv. Erected by Cardinal Angelo Dell'Acqua, Vicar General of Rome, as a personal parish for Ukrainians, it is currently the cathedral of the Apostolic Exarchate for the Ukrainian Catholic faithful of Byzantine rite residing in Italy.

On the sides of the seventeenth-century portal are two niches with statues of Joseph Velamin Rutskyj, Metropolitan of Kyiv, on the left and, on the right, Cardinal Josyf Slipyj. Above, on either side of an arched window, appear the coat of arms of Pope Leo XIII and that of the Basilian Order.

Above the altar is the image of *Our Lady of the Pasture*, which was discovered, beneath a coat of plaster, during the rebuilding of 1718. The image, which portrays the Virgin and Child, is a copy of the miraculous image of the Mother of God found by some shepherds in the village of Žyrovici; hence, the church is also known as “Our Lady of Žyrovici”. Two side altars show Saints Sergius and Bacchus on one side, and Saint Basil on the other, both the work of Ignaz Stern. The church preserved the remains of the Romanian Greek-Catholic Bishop Ioan Inocențiu Micu-Klein, a great defender of the national rights of his people, who died in exile in Rome in 1768. In 1998 they were brought back with honours to Transylvania and buried in the metropolitan cathedral of Blaj.

Madonna di Žyrovici e Santi Martiri Sergio e Bacco

Piazza Madonna dei Monti 2 – 00184 Roma

www.ukr-parafia-roma.it

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 7:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.;

Thursday at 4:00 p.m. and other at 7:00 a.m.; Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

Vespers: Saturday at 4:30 p.m.; *Matins*: Sunday at 8:00 a.m.

95. *Syro-Malabar Church*

Saint Anastasia on the Palatine

The Basilica, dedicated to Saint Anastasia, who died a martyr in Dalmatia in 304, already existed in the fourth century, built on the remains of the home of her husband. The interior is bright and replete with statues, marbles, and frescoes from different eras. The coffered wood ceiling depicts the *Martyrdom of Saint Anastasia*, by Michelangelo Cerruti (1663-1748); in the tribune of the main altar is a *Nativity* and on the altar *Our Lady of the Rosary*. Under the main altar is the statue of Saint Anastasia.

The participation of the Syro-Malabar faithful in the liturgies celebrated in this basilica, located in the heart of ancient Rome, continues to grow.

Santa Anastasia al Palatino

Piazza Sant'Anastasia 1 – 00186 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 10:00 a.m.; weekdays at 8:00 a.m.

The Divine Liturgy is also celebrated in the following places of worship for the Syro-Malabar faithful residing in Rome:

Shrine of Divine Love: Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Via del Santuario 10 – 00134 Roma

Convent of the Missionaries of Charity: Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Via San Agapito 8 – 00177 Roma

Istituto Don Orione: Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Via Camilluccia 120 – 00135 Roma

Generalate of the Congregation of Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother and Holy Cross, Convent Chapel: Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Via dei Brusati 84 A – 00163 Roma

Chiesa del Santo Volto di Gesù: Sundays at 5:00 p.m.

Via della Magliana 162 – 00146 Roma

Chiesa di Santa Maria della Salute: Sundays at 4:00 p.m.

Via Tommaso De Vio 5 – 00168 Roma

Istituto Suore Figlie della Divina Provvidenza, Chapel Convent:

Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Piazza Monte Gennaro 47 – 00139 Roma

Chiesa di Santa Maria Stella Maris: last Sunday of the month at 5:00 p.m. Via dei Promontori 113, Ostia Lido – 00122 Roma

Chiesa di San Pio V: Sundays at 4:00 p.m.

Piazza Largo San Pio V – 00165 Roma

96. *Syro-Malankara Church*

San Gregorio VII

Via del Cottolengo 4 – 00165 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 3:00 p.m (in the chapel)

97. *Romanian Church*

Holy Saviour alle Coppelle

Together with its twelfth-century bell tower, still intact, the church was built on ancient foundations and consecrated by Pope Celestine III (1190-1198). Its external appearance was altered in 1743 under Pope Benedict XIV. In 1914, Pope Pius X gave it to the Greek-Catholic episcopate of Transylvania and the building was adapted to the requirements of the Byzantine rite, specifically by the erection of an iconostasis painted by Alessandro Pigna.

The students of the Pontifical Romanian College are in charge of liturgical functions, which are celebrated in Romanian. Many Romanians, either resident in Rome or visiting the city, gather here on Sundays and feast days.

Santissimo Salvatore alle Coppelle

Piazza delle Coppelle 72/b – 00186 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 10 a.m; feast days according to the Byzantine-Romanian calendar at 5:00 pm.

Romanian Greek-Catholic faithful can also participate in the Divine Liturgy at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday of the academic year at two other places of worship:

Cappella della Scuola Rossello Flaminio

Via Flaminia 351 – 00196 Roma

Santuario Madonna di Fatima in San Vittorino

Via Ponte Terra 8 – 00132 Roma

98. *Ethiopian Church*

Saint Stephen of the Abyssinians

The church was built by Pope Leo III (795-816) and dedicated to Saint Stephen. In 1479, it was assigned to Coptic monks by Sixtus IV. During the pontificate of Clement XI (1700-1721), it was radically rebuilt. The portal with its twelfth-century sculpted lamb and cross is worthy of note.

The church is administered by the Fabbrica of Saint Peter's. It is used by the community of the Pontifical Ethiopian College especially for the liturgical celebration – First Vespers, Matins and Divine Liturgy – of the patronal feast of Saint Stephen on the Sunday after 7 January, attended by the Ethiopian and Eritrean communities resident in Rome. Occasionally, at the request of some of the faithful, weddings or wedding anniversaries are celebrated there.

Santo Stefano degli Abissini

Largo S. Stefano degli Abissini – 00120 Città del Vaticano

Divine Liturgy: Coordinated by the Fabbrica of Saint Peter's.

Saint Mary of Peace

In 1482, Pope Sixtus IV, in fulfilment of a promise made to Our Lady, began construction of this church dedicated to peace. The interior consists of a short nave with two spans with cross vaults and side chapels rich in frescoes and marble sculptures. The dome, attributed to Bramante (1520), rests on an octagonal base. Its drum depicts scenes from the life of the Virgin. On the high altar, the work of Carlo Maderno (1611), the fifteenth-century image of Our Lady of Peace is venerated. Adjoining the church is the cloister, one of the finest Renaissance examples in Rome, added by Bramante in the early sixteenth century.

Santa Maria della Pace

Arco della Pace, 5 – 00186 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays and feast days at 10:30 a.m.

99. *Eritrean Church*

Saint Thomas in Parione

The church, near the Campo Marzio, was founded by Pope Innocent II in 1139 and rebuilt in 1582 to a design of Francesco Volterra.

San Tommaso in Parione

Via Parione 33 – 00186 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays and feast days at 10:00 a.m.; Thursdays at 5:00 p.m.

100. *Greek Church*

Saint Athanasius

The church, dedicated to one of the greatest of the Greek Fathers, was commissioned by Pope Gregory XIII for the newly founded Greek College and built by Giacomo della Porta in 1581-1583 to meet the ritual requirements of the college's students. Inside, the short nave covered by a barrel vault has chapels on each side and terminates in three semi-circular apses. The sanctuary is divided from the nave by an iconostasis built by Andrea Busiri Vici in 1876 to replace the sixteenth-century one designed by Francesco Trabaldesi (1584), elements of which are preserved in the refectory of the Greek College. In the chapels and side apses, one can admire frescoes by Trabaldesi and by the Cavalier d'Arpino. Worthy of note are the two large sixteenth-century icons of the Cretan school depicting *Saint Athanasius* and *Saint Basil*.

For centuries, the church has welcomed great numbers of the faithful for the celebration of Vespers and the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and feast days. In 1787, the great German poet Goethe, who lived near the church during his sojourn in Rome, wrote: "Today, the feast of the Epiphany, I saw and heard a Mass celebrated according to the Greek rite. The ceremonies seem to me

more imposing, more severe, more profound and yet more popular than those of the Latin rite”.

The liturgy is celebrated in Greek by the students of the Greek College, but Italian is also used to permit greater comprehension and participation on the part of the assembly. Some celebrations are particularly noteworthy, especially those during Lent and Holy Week.

Sant'Atanasio

Via del Babuino 149 – 00187 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 10:30 a.m.; *Vespers*: Saturdays at 7:00 p.m.

101. *Russian Church*

Saint Anthony Abbot on the Esquiline

In 1259, Cardinal Pietro Capocci agreed to establish a hospital near the early Christian church of Saint Andrew *Cata Barbara* (or *in Piscinula*), built in the fifth century on the site of the fourth-century pagan dwelling of Julius Bassus. The hospital took its name from the church; in 1289, the hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem run by the Antonines was attached to it. The medieval phase of the complex can be seen in the beautiful Romanesque portal by Vassalletto facing Via Carlo Alberto.

In 1308, the Antonines built a new church dedicated to Saint Anthony Abbot, which underwent numerous alterations down the centuries. The interior contains frescoes by Pomarancio and the chapel of Saint Anthony by Domenico Fontana. By the end of the sixteenth century, the complex was surrounded by a protective wall and the ancient church of Saint Andrew had fallen into ruin. The church of Saint Anthony took on its present appearance at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In front of the church, on the feast day of Saint Anthony (17 January), the

patron saint of animals, a solemn blessing of horses and carriages formerly took place.

In 1932, the church was assigned to Russian Catholics of the Byzantine-Slavonic rite. This required certain modifications of the interior for the erection of an iconostasis and the adaption of the church to the liturgical norms of the Churches of Greek tradition. In the centre of the iconostasis is the royal door, which is opened during the most solemn moments of the ceremonies; this depicts the Annunciation, while the lateral doors portray Saint Michael and Saint Stephen. Behind the richly decorated iconostasis is the altar with an *artophorion* (tabernacle) and the Book of Gospels. The church's frescoes for the most part show scenes from the life of Saint Anthony, abbot and hermit, the Father of monasticism. The icons of the iconostasis are the work of the Russian painter Gregorij Maltzev (1881-1953), who died in Rome.

Officiated by students of the Russian College in Church Slavonic, the church is well attended, especially on Sundays and on major feast days, both for the Vespers of the vigil and the Divine Liturgy. Special services take place during Lent and in Holy Week.

Sant'Antonio Abate all'Esquilino

Via Carlo Alberto, 2a – 00185 Roma

Divine Liturgy: Sundays at 10:00 a.m.; *Vespers*: Saturdays at 6:00 p.m.

* * *

At the end of these pages of historical and practical information, the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches entrusts the sons and daughters of the Eastern Catholic Churches and their pilgrimage

of hope during the Jubilee Year to the protection of the Most Holy Virgin Mother of God, “the star that heralds the great Sun” (Akathist Hymn).

From the Dicastery for the Eastern Churches

Vatican City, 15 August 2024

Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God

Cardinal Claudio Gugerotti
Prefect

✠ Michel Jalakh, oam
Archbishop Secretary

APPENDIX II

CALENDAR OF EASTERN-RITE LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS IN ROME DURING THE HOLY YEAR 2025

Jubilee of the Eastern Churches 12-14 May 2025

The “Calendar of Major Events” for the Jubilee of the Eastern Churches can be found on the site: www.iubilaeum2025.va, under the heading “Pilgrimage”.

Liturgical Celebrations and Audience with the Holy Father

Monday 12 May 2025

SAINT PETER’S BASILICA

Divine Liturgy in the Ethiopian Rite at 8.30 (Chapel of the Canons)

Responsible: Ethiopian Church and Eritrean Church

BASILICA OF SAINT MARY MAJOR

Divine Liturgy in the Armenian Rite at 13.00 (Pauline Chapel)

Responsible: Armenian Church

Divine Liturgy in the Coptic Rite at 15.00 (Pauline Chapel)

Responsible: Coptic Church

Tuesday 13 May 2025

AUDIENCE WITH THE HOLY FATHER AT THE VATICAN
at 10.00

SAINT PETER'S BASILICA

Divine Liturgy in the East Syrian Rite at 13.00

Responsible: Chaldean Church and Syro-Malabar Church

BASILICA OF SAINT MARY MAJOR

Vespers in the West Syrian Rite at 18.45

Responsible: Syrian Catholic Church, Maronite Church, and
Syro-Malankara Church

Akathistos at 21.00 (Portico in front of the Basilica)

Responsible: Roman Colleges of the Byzantine Rite

Wednesday 14 May 2025

SAINT PETER'S BASILICA

Divine Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite at 14.00

Responsible: Melkite Greek Catholic Church, Ukrainian Greek
Catholic Church, Romanian Greek Catholic Church, together
with the other Byzantine Rite *sui iuris* Churches

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PLATE 1

Christ Pantocrator supported by Angels | Mosaic (9th century)
ROME, BASILICA OF S. PRASEDE ALL'ESQUILINO, CHAPEL OF S. ZENO



PLATE 2

Mother of God (Theotokos) with Angels
Apse mosaic (9th century)
ROME, BASILICA OF SANTA MARIA IN DOMNICA AL CELIO



PLATE 3

Descent into Hades and Resurrection of Christ, with a monk
Fresco (9th century)

ROME, LOWER BASILICA OF SAN CLEMENTE



PLATE 4

Group of monks
Fresco (10th century)

ROME, CHURCH OF SAN SABA



PLATE 5

Mother of God (Hodegetria) Salus Populi Romani

Icon (11th -13th century)

ROME, BASILICA OF SAINT MARY MAJOR, PAULINE CHAPEL



PLATE 6
Mother of God Hodegetria
Iconostasis (13th century)
GROTTAFERRATA, EXARCHIC CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA



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This pastoral guide aims to help pastors and faithful of the Eastern Catholic Churches to live fully and celebrate effectively the grace of the Jubilee. It is also offered to the faithful of the Latin Church, as a means of broadening their horizons and acquainting them with the gifts that the Christian East constantly brings to the entire Catholic world.

Front Cover

"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (Jn 11:25)

Descent into Hell and Resurrection

Painting by Jérôme Leussink, O.S.B. (1940-1943)

Rome, Palazzo dei Convertendi, Byzantine Chapel

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