

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 21 OCTOBER 2007

21ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST—HOLY FATHERS OF THE 7TH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, VENERABLE PELAGIA THE PENITENT, VIRGIN-MARTYR PELAGIA OF ANTIOCH, VENERABLE THAIS OF EGYPT, VENERABLE DOSITHEUS-ABBOT OF VERKHNEOSTROV-PSKOV, VENERABLE TRYPHON-ABBOT OF VYATKA, MARTYR IGNATIUS OF BULGARIA

TROPARION—TONE 4

When the women disciples of the Lord
Learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection;
They cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles:
Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen,
Granting the world great mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

KONTAKION—TONE 4

My Savior and Redeemer,
As God rose from the tomb
And delivered the earthborn from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of Hell,
And as Master, He has risen on the third day!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 4

READER: O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

PEOPLE: **O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.**

READER: Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, Thou art very great!

PEOPLE: **O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.**

READER: O Lord, how manifold are thy works!

PEOPLE: **In wisdom hast Thou made them all.**

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 4

Go forth and prosper and reign, because of truth and meekness and righteousness.

You love righteousness and hate iniquity.

RAVENNA: DIALOGUE BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND ORTHODOX

VATICAN CITY, OCT 8, 2007 (VIS) - From October 8 to 15, the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between Catholics and Orthodox is holding its 10th plenary assembly in Ravenna, Italy, according to a communique issued by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

This session is the second to be held since the reactivation of dialogue during the 2006 plenary in Belgrade. The commission was established in 1979 by Pope John Paul II and Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I, and held its first assembly in Patmos-Rhodes in 1980.

The document to be analyzed by the commission at its current gathering is entitled "the ecclesiological and canonical consequences of the sacramental nature of the Church - conciliarity and sinodality in the Church." The study of this document, the communique reads, "was part of the program agreed at Patmos-Rhodes in 1980" but was "suspended to make way for questions concerning the relationship of Orthodoxy with the Oriental Catholic Churches following the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe. With the plenary of Belgrade, the commission reactivated its normal theological agenda."

The commission is made up of 60 members, 30 Catholics and 30 Orthodox, and is jointly presided by Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and His Excellency Ioannis (Zizioulas), metropolitan of Pergamo. The Catholic members are cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests and lay experts in various fields. The orthodox members represent - in the order indicated by Fanar - the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate of Moscow, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Serbia, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Romania, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Bulgaria, the Orthodox Church of Georgia, the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, the Orthodox Church of Greece, the Orthodox Church of Poland, the Orthodox Church of Albania, the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and of Slovakia, the Orthodox Church of Finland, and the Orthodox Church of Estonia.

CALL FOR FULL COMMUNION BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND ORTHODOX

VATICAN CITY, OCT 10, 2007 (VIS) - At the end of today's general audience in St. Peter's Square, the Pope recalled how "the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between Catholics and Orthodox is currently holding its 10th plenary assembly in Ravenna, Italy, where it is deliberating upon a

theological subject of particular ecumenical interest: the ecclesiological and canonical consequences of the sacramental nature of the Church - ecclesial communion, conciliarity and authority."

"I ask you to join me in my prayer," said the Holy Father, "that this important gathering may help us to progress towards full communion between Catholics and Orthodox, and that we may soon be able to share the one chalice of the Lord."

God Must Be Weeping

Written by Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes, Boise, Idaho, USA, September 2007

The shortest verse in the New Testament is Chapter 11, verse 35 in the Gospel of John. It is a sentence containing only two words: "Jesus wept." The occasion was the death of His friend, Lazarus. Before He raised him from the dead, Jesus wept in front of Lazarus' tomb. He did this to show that He was fully human, capable of feeling sorrow over the human condition, fully able to empathize with the mourners' sense of grief and loss. But He wept also because, despite all He had told them, they still did not see Him as their Savior Who would give them all immortal life.

The Scriptures tell us that Jesus wept on other occasions as well. Luke 19: 41 – 47 tells us about Jesus' return to Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday: "And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it". From where He stood on the Mount of Olives, He could look down over what was then one of the greatest cities in the ancient world. The Holy City must have been an impressive sight— gleaming in the spring sunshine, with the great Temple built of white marble and ornamented with polished brass, set like a gem in its center!

Jesus knew that hardly forty years would pass before legions of Roman soldiers would attack and destroy Jerusalem and the Temple along with it. And so He wept for what this city could have been but never would be— a true haven of peace where goodness and justice prevailed and God ruled the hearts and minds of His chosen people. But Jesus saw what really was there and so He wept over the selfishness and meanness and apathy of the people, over their refusal to do God's will and their indifference toward realizing their potential and becoming all that God calls all of us to become.

Today God must spend quite a lot of time weeping over us.

We too have built great cities but they are not cities of peace where God is honored and life is celebrated as a holy gift. Instead, we oppress one another and we rush to war when mere oppression isn't enough to preserve our power and control.

We are too busy to tend our own families and too irresponsible ourselves to be adequate role models for our youth. And so without guidance, our children are left to fend for themselves. Too many fall along the way and we abandon them to wallow in drugs and despair and to drown in the cultural sewage we've allowed to engulf our lives.

We ignore our poor and elderly, the dispossessed, the mentally ill, the stranger in our midst. We are too busy pursuing our own 15 minutes of fame! We have no time to spare to help others, to visit the sick, to comfort the despairing, to guide the lost, to resettle the dispossessed, to show hospitality to the stranger. Abraham entertained angels but we do not even know who our neighbors are! We do not even see the homeless. The pains and trials of those "not of our class" or "not of our race" are "not our problem"!

All around the world, Christianity is out of fashion. Christians are persecuted and their beliefs are under attack from followers of other faiths and from followers of no faith. Science is perversely misinterpreted to "prove" there is no God; evil is gleefully held up as evidence that "God is dead" or, at the very least, He has gone away, forsaking the world at last. Churches are desecrated. Interpretation of Scripture is stretched beyond the limits even of common sense to confuse those who sincerely seek to do God's will. Atheism and secularism are written into law and public policy; those who persist in publicly witnessing to their faith are subjected to ridicule, censorship and even prosecution.

Life itself is progressively cheapened. People who cannot defend themselves —the unborn, the severely disabled— are treated as things to be managed (or disposed of) by others. In our greed for personal wealth and power, we trash the environment, God's glorious creation and the web of life that He designed to sustain us all, as if it were merely our property over which we have a right to do as we please.

If Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb because he understood and shared one family's sorrow, how much more must God weep in empathy with entire nations' despair over the oppression or destruction of entire races and peoples?

If Jesus wept contemplating the future destruction of Jerusalem, how much more must God weep over the nuclear holocaust with which we continue to threaten our neighbors? Over the damage to the planet which our greed continues to worsen? Over our indifference to the suffering of people "not of our class" and "not of our race" who live in Darfur or New Orleans?

Lord Jesus, Thou hast embraced our own humanity, sharing our grief, experiencing our pain and despair, and the weaknesses of our flesh. By taking on our nature, Thou didst show us how to merge humanity with the divine. Let us never cause Thee to weep over us; but keep us focused on Thee that we may transform the earth into the New Jerusalem.

Amen.

Peace to your soul!

Humbly in our Risen Lord,

+Very Rev. Archimandrite Nektarios Serfes

Who prays for you and with you!

White House and Turkey Fight Bill On Armenia Genocide Label for WWI-Era Killings Has House Support

By Glenn Kessler
Washington Post Staff Writer
Wednesday, October 10, 2007; A01

A proposed House resolution that would label as "genocide" the deaths of Armenians more than 90 years ago during the Ottoman Empire has won the support of a majority of House members, unleashing a lobbying blitz by the Bush administration and other opponents who say it would greatly harm relations with Turkey, a key ally in the Iraq war.

All eight living former secretaries of state have signed a joint letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) warning that the nonbinding resolution "would endanger our national security interests." Three former defense secretaries, in their own letter, said Turkey probably would cut off U.S. access to a critical air base. The government of Turkey is spending more than \$300,000 a month on communications specialists and high-powered lobbyists, including former congressman Bob Livingston, to defeat the initiative.

Pelosi, whose congressional district has a large Armenian population, has brushed aside such concerns and said she supports bringing the resolution, for the first time, to a full vote in the House, where more than half of the members have signed on as co-sponsors. The House Foreign Affairs Committee, which has passed such a resolution before, is set to vote on it today.

House Resolution 106, officially the Affirmation of the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide, has been pushed doggedly by a congressman whose Southern California district contains the largest concentration of Armenian Americans in the country. Rep. Adam B. Schiff (D) won his seat in 2000 after his Republican predecessor was sandbagged when then-House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert reneged on a pledge and pulled the bill from the floor after a last-minute plea from President Bill Clinton.

Schiff, who defeated Rep. James Rogan after Hastert killed the floor vote, said the deaths so long ago still resonate with Armenians. "It is an insight you get when you have lots of Armenian constituents," he said, saying it reminded him of conversations he had while growing up Jewish. "But imagine losing the entire family and having the successor state say it never happened."

Few people deny that massacres killed hundreds of thousands of Armenian men, women and children during and immediately after World War I.

But Turkish officials and some historians say that the deaths resulted from forced relocations and widespread fighting when the 600-year-old Ottoman Empire collapsed, not from a campaign of genocide—and that hundreds of thousands of Turks also died in the same region during that time.

"This is the greatest accusation of all against humanity," said Turkish Ambassador Nabi Sensoy, referring to genocide. "You cannot expect any nation to accept that kind of labeling." He said the reaction in the Turkish parliament would be one of fury, noting that the Turkish military cut contacts with the French military and terminated defense contracts under negotiation after the French National Assembly voted in 2006 to criminalize the denial of Armenian genocide.

Pelosi had long been a co-sponsor of the resolution. The Armenian National Committee, one of the many Armenian organizations that have sought passage of the measure for years, has given her an "A" grade for her stance on Armenian issues.

Now as speaker, Pelosi will face a choice between her role as a national leader and her previous campaign pledges as a member of Congress. U.S.-Turkish relations are already under some strain because Kurdish militant groups have attacked Turkish targets from bases in Iraq, with Ankara suggesting it may launch its own attack. Turkey plans to hold a "neighbors" conference on Iraq pushed by the United States later this month, but a recent poll by the nonpartisan group Terror Free Tomorrow found that 83 percent of Turks would oppose assisting the United States on Iraq if the Armenia resolution passed.

It is a problem that has caused other politicians to flinch. As a presidential candidate in 2000, George W. Bush pledged to ensure that "our nation properly recognizes" what he called "a genocidal campaign that defies comprehension." But, angering Armenian groups, Bush refused to use the term in the annual presidential statement on the subject made on April 24, generally considered the beginning of the killings in 1915. President George H.W. Bush and Clinton also refused to refer to genocide in their annual statements, for fear of offending Turkey.

Among other things, the resolution calls on the president to use his annual message to "accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide."

In the Senate, where one-third of its members are co-sponsoring the resolution, Majority Leader Harry M. Reid (D-Nev.) supports the measure, as do the two leading candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination: Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (N.Y.) and Barack Obama (Ill.).

The State Department, which collected the signatures of the former secretaries of state, has lobbied against the resolution, with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Undersecretary of State R. Nicholas Burns, Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried and U.S. Ambassador Ross Wilson calling lawmakers yesterday to "urge them not to vote for this," according to an interview Fried gave the Anatolia news agency.

The Turkish Embassy is paying \$100,000 a month to lobbying firm DLA Piper and \$105,000 a month to the Livingston Group, and it recently added communications specialists Fleishman-Hillard for nearly \$114,000 a month, according to records filed with the Justice Department. Turkish lawmakers were on Capitol Hill yesterday, warning that passage would put military cooperation with Turkey at risk.

Meanwhile, leading the charge for the resolution are grass-roots groups such as the Armenian Assembly of America, with 10,000 members, a budget of \$3.6 million last year and phone banks that are running on overtime calling members of Congress. The organization has signed up 53 non-Armenian ethnic groups, including a number of Jewish groups, to support the resolution.

Some Jewish groups have found themselves in a bind because Turkey is one of the few Muslim nations to have diplomatic relations with Israel.

STEELER FUNNY

Once upon a time, long, long ago, there was a season when neither the Browns nor the Steelers made the post season playoffs. It seemed so unusual that the management of both teams got together and decided that there should be some sort of competition between the two teams, because of their great rivalry. So, they decided on a week long ice fishing competition. The team that catches the most fish at the end of the week wins.

So on a cold freezing day on Lake Erie they began their contest. The first day after 8 hours of fishing the Browns had caught 0 fish and the Steelers had 100. At the end of the 2nd day the Browns had caught 0 fish and the Steelers 200.

That evening the Browns coach got his team together and said, "I suspect some kind of cheating is taking place." So the next morning, he dressed one of his players in black and gold and sent him over to the Steelers camp to act as a spy. At the end of the day he came back to report to the coach.

The coach asked, "Well, how about it, are they cheating?"

"They sure are!" the player reported, "They're cutting holes in the ice!"

A man in Topeka, Kansas decided to write a book about Churches around the country. He started by flying to San Francisco and started working east from there.

Going to a very large church, he began taking photographs and making notes. He spotted a golden telephone on the vestibule wall and was intrigued with a sign, which read "Calls: \$10,000 a minute." Seeking out the pastor he asked about the phone and the sign. The pastor answered that this golden phone is, in fact, a direct line to heaven and if he pays the price he can talk directly to God.

The man thanked the pastor and continued on his way. As he continued to visit churches in Seattle, Dallas, St. Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee, and around the United States, he found more phones, with the same sign, and the same answer from each pastor.

Finally, he arrived in Pennsylvania, upon entering a church in Pittsburgh Behold - he saw the usual golden telephone. But THIS time, the sign read "Calls: 35 cents."

Fascinated, he asked to talk to the pastor, "Reverend, I have been in cities all across the country and in each church I have found this golden telephone and have been told it is a direct line to Heaven and that I could talk to God, but in the other churches the cost was \$10,000 a minute. Your sign reads only 35 cents a call. Why?"

The pastor, smiling benignly, replied, "Son, you're in Pittsburgh, now..... You're in God's Country. It's a local call."

Two friends, Ismail and Ibrahim, were walking through the desert. As the sun was beating down on them, and they were thirsty for water, they began to argue. The argument got more and more heated and eventually Ismail struck Ibrahim across the face. Ibrahim felt hurt inside. Without saying anything he wrote in the sand: "Today, my best friend slapped me in the face."

They kept on walking, until eventually they came across an oasis, where they decided to stop, refresh and bathe. Ibrahim jumped in and began to wash, while Ismail sat back and relaxed. Suddenly Ibrahim began to scream and shout. He had developed a cramp and was having difficulty keeping his head above water; he was drowning.

Ismail dived in after him, and brought him gently to shore. When Ibrahim recovered from the shock, he scratched a message on a nearby stone: "Today, my best friend saved my life"

Ismail, who had both slapped and saved his best friend Ibrahim, asked him, "Why, after I hurt you, you wrote in the sand, and now you write on a stone?"

Ibrahim, smiled and replied:

"When a friend hurts us, we should write his deeds in the sand, where the winds of

forgiveness can blow it away, and when a friend does something good, we should engrave it in stone, where it shall remain for eternity."