

The KING'S WAY

Christ the King Parish -- McFarland, WI 53558
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THE EASTERN RITES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH **Ancient Rites That Are Distinct From Our Latin Rite**

During ceremonies broadcast on television from the Vatican, American Catholics see bishops wearing the miter, the distinctively shaped headpiece of bishops and abbots. Many are surprised to see a few men walking with these bishops and wearing headgear shaped more like a crown. Viewers may wonder, "Who are these people?"

While American Catholics are accustomed to believe that all Catholics are Latin Rite Catholics, the Catholic Church includes a number of Eastern Rites – also known as Oriental Rites or Byzantine Rites. The Catholic Church encompasses 23 rites, only one of which – but by far the largest – is the Latin Rite. The other 22 are just as "Catholic" as our Latin Rite and are in full communion with the Latin Rite Church and in union with the Pope. These rites have distinct liturgies, different canon laws and distinct jurisdictions overlapping those of the predominant Latin Rite.



Eastern Rite Catholics are distinct from Orthodox Christians, and some have suffered from persecution by Orthodox Christians. Catholics consider Orthodox Christianity to be a schism – a separation not based so much upon theology as upon authority. Orthodox Christians recognize the Pope as the Patriarch of Rome, but not as the leader of all Christians. Recent ecumenical talks between Catholics and Orthodox have been stymied because the Orthodox Churches insist upon the dissolution of the Eastern Catholic rites into the Latin Rite before greater union.

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The great majority of American Catholics trace their ancestry to Western Europe. Eastern Rite Catholics trace their origin to Eastern Europe, the Middle East, India and northeast Africa. Beginning in the seventh century, Christians in the Middle East and northeast Africa suffered from invasions by Muslims, who insisted upon conversion or death. Beginning in the sixteenth century, Eastern Rite Catholics in Eastern Europe and Greece suffered persecution from the Orthodox,

who insisted that these Eastern Rites sever their relationship with Rome and return to union with the Orthodox Church.

Following World War II, the communist regimes seized the properties of Eastern Rite Catholic Churches in Eastern Europe and gave them to the Orthodox. The annual Ash Wednesday special collection held in American parishes helps to build new Eastern Rite churches, schools and seminaries.

What is a Rite?

A rite encompasses a Christian tradition that preserves early Church liturgical, devotional, and theological beliefs and practices. These various rites express traditions from centuries-old traditions of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, northeast Africa and India. Rites express different theological emphases, forms of liturgical worship and popular piety, and the terms and precepts of Church laws. While culturally distinct, the rites of the Catholic Church form a unity that recognizes the central role of the Bishop of Rome as the successor to St. Peter.



The official languages vary among the rites according to their histories. Latin is still the official language of the Latin Rite which makes liturgical use of the vernacular in most countries. The languages of other rites come from ancient languages, such as Greek and Arabic, and from newer languages such as Malayan, Albanian and Old Slavonic. While once limited to specific geographical areas, these rites have extended into many new areas through modern transportation and expanded immigration. Eastern Rite members in these new areas are called the Diaspora.

rites of the Eastern Catholic Church

ALEXANDRIAN RITE (Liturgy of St. Mark)

Coptic	Egypt & Near East	Syriac & Arabic or Coptic
Ethiopian	Ethiopia & Somalia	Geez & Arabic

ANTIOCHENE RITE (Liturgy of St. James)

Syriac	Near & Middle East	Syriac & Arabic
Maronite	Middle East & Diaspora	Syriac & Vernacular
Malankarese	India	Syriac

ARMENIAN RITE (Greek Liturgy of St. Basil)

Armenian	Near East & Diaspora	Greek & Armenian
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CHALDEAN RITE (Derived from Antiochene Rite)

Chaldean	Near & Middle East	Syriac & Arabic
Syro-Malabar	India	Syriac & Malayan

BYZANTINE RITE (Liturgy of St. James, St. Basil & Others)

Albanian	Albania	Albanian & Greek
Belarussian	Belarus	Old Slavonic
Bulgarian	Bulgaria	Old Slavonic
Czech	Czech Republic & North America	Old Slavonic & Vernacular
Georgian	Georgia & Asia Minor	Georgian & Greek
Hungarian	Hungary & USA	Greek & Vernacular
Italo-Albanian	East & South Italy	Greek & Vernacular
Krizevci	Croatia	Old Slavonic & Vernacular
Melkite	Greece & Diaspora	Greek & Vernacular
Romanian	Romania & USA	Greek & Vernacular
Russian	Russia & Diaspora	Old Slavonic
Ruthenian	Ukraine & North America	Old Slavonic & Vernacular
Slovakian	Slovakia	Old Slavonic
Ukrainian	Ukraine & Diaspora	Old Slavonic & Vernacular

Union of Brest, 1595-1596

The Council of Florence (1439) began a process of reconciliation between Latin Rite Catholics and Orthodox Christians. Progress was made in the “ex filio” wording of the Nicene Creed, the doctrine of purgatory and the prerogatives of the pope. On June 6, 1439, an agreement was signed by Patriarch Joseph II of Constantinople and – with a single exception – all the Orthodox bishops attending the council. When the Orthodox bishops returned home, they found that the new agreement was unacceptable to their people, and it has never been implemented.

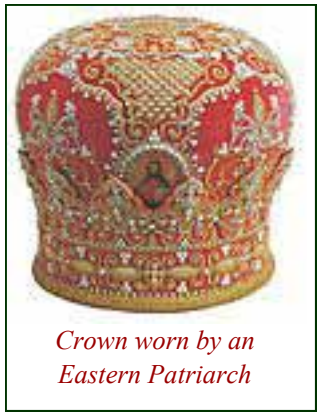
In 1595-96, the leadership of the Ruthenian Orthodox Church met in the city of Brest (Brześć) to break relations with the Patriarch of Constantinople and reunite with the Latin Church. They composed 33 articles of Union that were accepted by Rome and thus ended their schism. The Ruthenians were to maintain their own rite and customs as long as they were not opposed to Catholic doctrine. The rights of the Ruthenian bishops were defined, as was their relationship to the Holy See.

In concessions to the Ruthenians, the Church



*Painting depicts discussion
at Brest*

stipulated that they would not be required to insert “*filioque*” (“and from the Son” – see note at end) into the Nicene Creed, and the Gregorian calendar would not be imposed in place of their Julian calendar. This began the Eastern European (Byzantine) rites of the Catholic Church. The term “Ruthenian” refers to Slavic people in Southern Russia, Galicia and Bukowina in Austria, and northeastern Hungary. They trace their conversion to Christianity directly to ninth century missionary saints Cyril and Methodius. The Ruthenian Archeparchy (archdiocese equivalent) of Pittsburgh and the eparchies of Passaic, N.J., Parma, Ohio, and Phoenix, Ariz., serve Ruthenian Catholics in the United States. The 2008 Official Catholic Directory lists 89,729 members in the American Ruthenian Rite. Annunciation Parish in Homer Glen, Ill., is our closest Ruthenian Rite parish.



In addition to the Ruthenians, members of other Eastern Rites emigrated from Eastern Europe. The 2008 Official Catholic Directory lists 59,650 as the membership of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States. Their faithful are served through the Archeparchy of Philadelphia and the eparchies of Chicago, Ill., Stamford, Conn., and Parma, Ohio. St. Michael’s in Milwaukee is the only Ukrainian Catholic parish in Wisconsin. Syriac, Maronite, Armenian, Romanian, Chaldean and Syro-Malabar Eastern Rites have eparchies (dioceses) centered in American cities.

Not all Eastern Rites needed to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church. The Syro-Malabar, Malankarese, Maronite and Italo-Albanian Rites never severed full communion and were always united to the Latin Church.

Cum Data Fuerit and the Controversy about Married Clergy

Mandatory celibacy has not been part of the discipline of the Eastern Rites. As Byzantine Rite Catholics immigrated to the United States in the late-19th and early 20th centuries, they brought married priests, much to the consternation of the American Latin Rite hierarchy, who felt this as an affront to the Latin Rite tradition of celibacy. The Latin bishops appealed to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, which on May 1, 1897, applied rules to the Eastern Rites that would permit only celibate or widowed priests, without their children, to serve in the United States.



On March 1, 1929, “*Cum Data Fuerit*” renewed this rule for another ten years and the rule remains in place today. In 1930 these rules were extended to Eastern Rite Churches in Canada and, following World War II, to Eastern Rites in Australia (revoked there in 1998). The reaction to this decree led to the formation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the United States. Reportedly, in the 1930s, 250,000 Ruthenian Eastern Rite Catholics left their rite – most likely as a result of the publication of “*Cum Data Fuerit*”— and formed the Russian Orthodox Church in the United States.

In the wake of “*Cum Data Fuerit*,” members of the Eastern Rite Churches were understandably disturbed by this repudiation of their married-priest tradition, dating to the very dawn of Christianity. Eastern Rite Catholics cited Article Nine of the Union of Brest, which states: “That the marriage of priests remains intact.” Revoking this principle, they argued, tears at the very union of the Latin Rite with the Ruthenian and all Eastern Rites. They were equally upset that some in the Latin Rite simply tolerated married priests rather than honored them. Some ridi-

culed the wives of Ukrainian Rite married priests in Poland as “concubines” – and in language worse than can be printed in this article. In point of fact, most of these women did not marry priests. They married men who would become ordained Catholic priests.

Improved Relations with the Eastern Rites

Even before Vatican II, certain important statements were made to soothe the relationship with the Eastern Churches. Pope Benedict XV wrote in “*Dei Providentis*” (1917) that “the Church of Jesus Christ is neither Latin nor Greek nor Slavic but Catholic.” He also founded the Oriental Institute and the Congregation of the Eastern Rites. Pope Pius XII wrote in his 1944 encyclical “*Orientalis Ecclesiae*” (“The Churches of the East”) that “each and every nation of the Oriental rite must have its rightful freedom in all that is bound up with its own history and its own genius and character, saving always the truth and integrity of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.”

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The Second Vatican Council marked a definitively positive step forward in improved relations between the Latin and the Eastern Rites. It issued the 1964 decree “*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*” (“The Eastern Churches”), one of the shortest documents of Vatican II, which firmly stated the equality of Eastern Rites within the Universal Church.

“These individual Churches, whether of the East or the West, although they differ somewhat among themselves in rite (to use the current phrase), that is, in liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline, and spiritual heritage, are, nevertheless, each as much as the other, entrusted to the pastoral government of the Roman Pontiff, the divinely appointed successor to St. Peter in primacy over the universal Church. They are consequently of equal dignity, so that none of them is superior to the others as regards rite and they enjoy the same rights and are under the same obligations, also in respect of preaching the Gospel to the whole world (cf. Mark 16:15) under the guidance of the Roman Pontiff.” (Section 3)

“*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*” continues:

“History, tradition and abundant ecclesiastical institutions bear outstanding witness to the great merit owing to the Eastern Churches by the universal Church. The Sacred Council, therefore, not only accords to this ecclesiastical and spiritual heritage the high regard which is its due and rightful praise, but also unhesitatingly looks on it as the heritage of the universal Church.” (Section 5)

On Oct. 18, 1990, the Church issued the new edition of “The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches” (“*Sacri Canones*”). This guides the church laws of 22 of the 23 *sui juris* (self-governing) rites of the Catholic Church. The Latin Rite had issued a revised “Code of Canon Law” on Jan. 28, 1983. These two codes express the laws that govern the procedures of the Universal Church. In some sense, the two documents are quite similar. Yet the Eastern Rites do have specific procedures that are distinct from those of the Latin Rite. On Jan. 6, 1996, the Congregation for the Eastern Churches issued the “Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches.” This presents the guiding principles for liturgical practices for the Eastern Rites.



Pope John Paul II and the Eastern Rites

Pope John Paul II was a Slav and an Eastern European. While always a member of the Latin Rite, he understood the Eastern Rites of the Catholic Church as more than a theoretical entity. Eastern Rite Catholics were his friends and neighbors. As pope, he was particularly sensitive to the history and perceived grievances of the Eastern Rites. And during his papacy were issued both the new Eastern Rite Code and new Application of the Code to the Liturgy. These codes showed great sensitivity to some of the traditions of the Eastern Churches.

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Canon 373 of the “Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches” reads:

“Clerical celibacy chosen for the sake of the kingdom of heaven and suited to the priesthood is to be greatly esteemed everywhere, as supported by the tradition of the whole Church; likewise the hallowed practice of married clerics in the primitive Church and in the tradition of the Eastern Churches throughout the ages is to be held in honor.”

Extending Canon 373 even further by clearly speaking of the witness that the married cleric offers to the wider community, Canon 375 states: “In leading family life and in educating children married clergy are to show an outstanding example to other Christian faithful.”



Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and Pope John Paul II

On May 2, 1995, Pope John Paul II released an apostolic letter titled “*Orientalis Lumen*” (“The Light of the East”) on the centenary of Pope Leo XIII’s apostolic letter “*Orientalium Dignitas*” (“The Dignity of the Eastern Churches”). In this work, Pope John Paul II called for a greater appreciation of all rites of the Church. The Pope made clear that the Church’s Catholicity can never be expressed by a single tradition or rite.

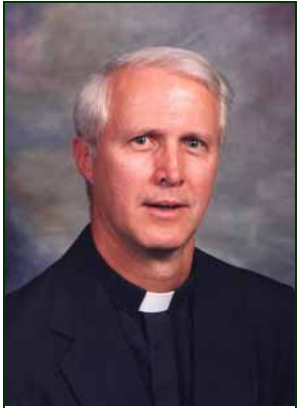
Pope John Paul II called for a deeper appreciation by Latin Rite members of the sense of mystery that is so strongly felt by the members of the Eastern Rites. He wrote, “His or her (a Christian’s) goal is participation in the divine nature through communion with the mystery of the Holy Trinity.” (Section 6) This spiritual richness, he noted, finds its expression especially in monastic practices “which lift up the whole man to the contemplation of the divine mysteries.” (Section 6)

Only 23 days after the publication of this apostolic letter, the Vatican published the encyclical “*Ut Unum Sint*” (“That They All May Be One”), Pope John Paul II’s encyclical on ecumenism. “*Orientalis Lumen*” voices this same sentiment for the reunification with the Orthodox Churches, which are truly Eastern Churches. The pope called upon the Latin Rite bishops to show a greater concern for the Diaspora of the Eastern Rite Churches in Latin Rite countries, especially where Eastern Rite members’ numbers are small.

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Challenges for Eastern Rite Members in the United States

The majority of American dioceses – including the Diocese of Madison – do not have an Eastern Rite parish. American Catholics are not restricted to remain in the geographic areas in which they were reared. A prime example is Bishop Morlino, who was bi-ritual. His parents in Pennsylvania were of the Latin Rite and Ruthenian Rite. As a priest he was bi-ritual: he could celebrate the Eucharist in both rites. Bishops may not be bi-ritual, although Bishop Morlino still maintains his great love for the Ruthenian liturgy.



Bishop John Pažak

Parishioner Kathy Pazak was reared as a Czech Rite Catholic. Her brother is the Czech Rite Eparch (Bishop) of North America, Bishop John Pažak, whose eparchy covers all of North America and has its headquarters in Toronto. Parishioner Terrance Lawrin is a Ukrainian Rite Catholic who moved with his family from the Chicago area.

Eastern Rite members who move around the United States – into areas where there are no parishes of their rite – usually join Latin Rite parishes. In general, Catholics may not transfer between rites. Inter-marriage between members of different rites can present some difficulties. When a Latin Rite Catholic marries an Eastern Rite Catholic, one member may change rite. Their children would then be reared in a single rite. But this is not an imperative. For mixed-rite Catholics, a choice must be made into which rite children should be baptized and reared. Prior to the 1983 Code of the

Latin Church, children were always to be baptized into the rite of the father. Now children may be baptized into the rite of either parent.

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More significantly, the very existence of Eastern Rites needs to be protected and not melded into the Latin Rite. For Latin and Eastern Rites complementarily express the fullness of the Catholic faith. Pope John Paul II gave voice to this insight at a meeting with the Ukrainian Catholic Episcopate on June 24, 2001:

“Here the Church breathes with two lungs of the Eastern and Western traditions. Here is a fraternal meeting between those who draw from the sources of Byzantine spirituality and those who are nourished by Latin spirituality. Here the deep sense of mystery which suffuses the holy liturgy of the Eastern Churches and the mystical succinctness of the Latin Rite come face to face and mutually enrich each other.” (Section 3)

A Footnote: the “*Filioque*” Discussion

While to some this is just a minute question of semantics, the addition of the words “*filioque*” (“and from the Son”) to the Nicene Creed – along with the Orthodox denial of the primacy of the Roman pontiff, among other factors – initiated in the eleventh century the schism between the Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church. The *filioque* distinction addresses the theological question of whether the Holy Spirit proceeded only from the Father or from both the Father and the Son. This discussion considers the validity of what is called the Doctrine of the Double Procession of the Holy Spirit.

(Continued on back cover)

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The Doctrine of the Double Procession was declared a formal article of faith by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), the Second Council of Lyons (1274) and the Council of Florence (1438-1445). These councils point to Scriptures that indicate that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus (Galatians 4:6), the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9) and the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:19), just as the Spirit is called the Spirit of the Father (Matthew 10:20) and the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 1:11). Other references have the Son sending the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49, John 15:26, 16:7, 20:22, Acts 2:33 and Titus 3:6.) The Catholic Church maintains that the simple omission of the phrase from the original Nicene Creed does not deny its truth.



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