

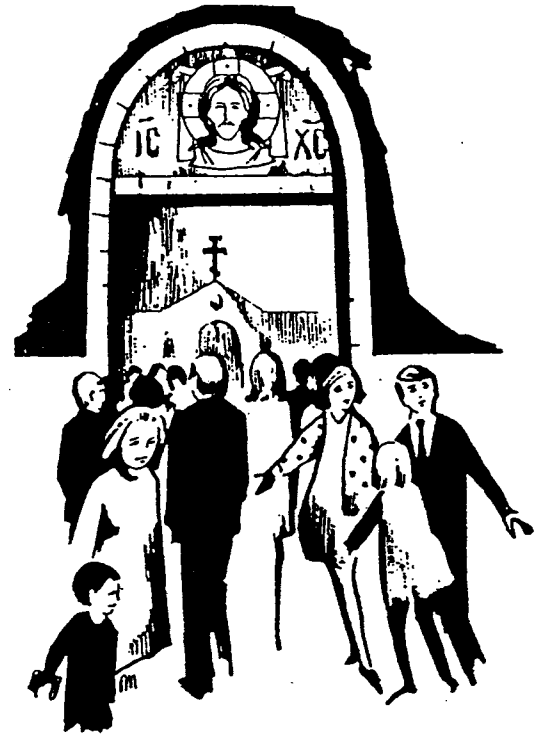
ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

is not a religion, an institution or an organization. It is, to the contrary, the way of life initiated by Jesus Christ and a living organism composed of those who believe in Him.

THE CHURCH IS PEOPLE — GOD'S PEOPLE — WHO

- gather together in His name, thereby calling themselves *Christian*;
- share a common faith and hope based on the love of God;
- affirm the truth, or *orthodoxy*, of their faith, belief and experience; and
- proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all.

An Orthodox Christian, then, is one who fully lives and proclaims God's Truth as it has been revealed by Jesus Christ and experienced everywhere and at all times by His People, the Church.



THE CHURCH

IS MADE UP OF GOD'S PEOPLE...

...you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. Once you were no people, but now you are God's people (1 Peter 2:9,19).

...WHO BELONG TO CHRIST AND TO ONE ANOTHER.

We, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another (Romans 12:5).

JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH...

He is the head of the body, the Church (Colossians 1:18).

...AND IN HIM WE ARE FIRMLY ROOTED.

...you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord (Ephesians 2:19-21).

AS THE CHURCH, WE EXPERIENCE THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US.

...Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the Church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:25-27).

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

- began on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles;
- subsequently spread to every corner of the world; and
- was established in North America in the late eighteenth century.

Today there are over a million Orthodox Christians in some two thousand parishes and missions throughout the United States and Canada.

COMING TO TERMS

CHRISTIAN: one who believes in Jesus Christ and emulates His life.

CHURCH: the People of God and the body of Christ.

ORTHODOX: correct or right belief, doctrine, vision.

THE CHURCH

As God's Church, we are called to continue the work of Jesus Christ and the apostles in this world.

GOD'S PLAN FOR HIS CHURCH

Jesus outlined His plan for the Church in Luke 24:46-49.

46 *Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.*

47 *and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*

48 *You are my witnesses of these things.*

49 *And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you...*

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH PROCLAIM?

- The good news of Christ's resurrection
- The reconciliation of man with God
- Salvation through faith, repentance, forgiveness and the lifestyle for which Jesus Himself is our example

HOW DOES THE CHURCH ACCOMPLISH THIS?

- By living and preaching in the name of Jesus Christ
- By witnessing to all

WHO IS CALLED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS?

- All of God's People
- Clergy and laity alike

WHEN WAS THIS WORK INITIATED?

- On Pentecost, after the Holy Spirit, "the promise of my Father," was sent to guide and lead us in the work of proclaiming God's revelation to all



THE CHURCH IS ONE BECAUSE

- as *the Body of Christ* it cannot be divided;
- it possess a **single purpose** — to bring about the salvation of all; and
- its many members are **united together** in one and the same faith, experience, purpose, and vision of life in the Trinity.

THE CHURCH IS HOLY BECAUSE

- God is **Holy**;
- it continues Christ's work of sanctification; and
- it is **guided** in all things by the Holy Spirit.

THE CHURCH IS CATHOLIC BECAUSE

- it is **whole, complete and lacking in nothing**;
- it is the **total revelation** of God's life, love and Truth, given to *all* humanity in *all* places and at *all* times; and
- its message, mission and work are **changeless**, just as God Himself is changeless.

THE CHURCH IS APOSTOLIC BECAUSE

- it continues to **proclaim** that revealed by Jesus Christ to His apostles;
- it continues to **evangelize** in the same Spirit which characterized the apostolic era.

The Church is one, however widely she has spread among the nations through her fruitful growth... The Church is bathed in the light of the Lord, and pours her rays over the whole world. It is one light that is spread everywhere, and her unity is undivided.

— Saint Cyprian of Carthage

The Church, instituted by the Lord and confirmed by the apostles, is one for all men...

— Saint Hilary of Poitiers

...wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Church.

— Saint Ignatius of Antioch