



A Generational Embrace

Reflections on the significance of Papal-Patriarchal Encounters in Jerusalem following the May 2014 meeting of Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew

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November 2014 Special
Edition Newsletter



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Introduction

Dan Koski, Tantur Staff

What is the significance and lasting importance of the May 2014 embrace of Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, meant to commemorate the “first embrace,” one that took place fifty years before on the same location between Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras?

In the following pages, four different voices from the Christian presence in the Holy Land, explore this question, each in their own way.

Fr. Russ McDougall, CSC reflects on this question both as rector of Tantur and drawing upon his own journey within his religious and vocational profession. Dr. John Tleel, a lifelong resident of the Old City of Jerusalem and tireless advocate for ecumenical Christian understanding, carries the Palestinian voice of the Greek Orthodox community; while Dr. Alexander Zanemonets, a prominent representative of the Russian Orthodox Christian community of Israel, provides another important perspective. Dr. Yazid Said, an Anglican by confession, a scholar by vocation and Arab-Israeli citizen by birth, weighs in as a committed Christian looking at the greater significance of this visit for the Holy Land.

Fifty years ago, Tantur Institute began with an embrace between Pope and Patriarch.

Though in times of conflict and growing pressure that Jerusalem at present faces, that work may seem hopelessly lost, and at times impossibly trivial, we remain not only committed to it, but continue to believe in the power of that embrace, carried from one generation of Christian leaders unto the next.

A Journey that Leads through the Cross

Reflections on the Jerusalem meeting of Pope and Patriarch
Russ McDougall, CSC

This past summer, during the most recent ground invasion of Gaza, I read an interview given by Amos Oz, the acclaimed Israeli writer. In the course of the interview he said that he didn't view the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a matter of right vs. wrong, as if one party to the conflict had justice on its side alone. Nor, he said, did he understand the conflict in terms of right vs. right, as two competing narratives with equal claims to validity. Instead, he now viewed the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, which has developed into an ongoing cycle of violence, as a matter of wrong vs. wrong.

Oz's judgment appears to be borne out by recent events in Jerusalem, in which four Jewish Israelis gathered for morning prayer were massacred, ostensibly in retaliation for the suspicious death of a Palestinian driver found hanged in his bus. Within hours one young Palestinian was stabbed in north Jerusalem and another shot by a settler in the West Bank, and Israeli settlers attempted to attack a Palestinian school near Nablus, prompting clashes with Palestinians defending the school, for which they were tear-gassed by Israeli soldiers.

It's a humble spirit that accepts the possibility that in one's long-standing disagreement with another both might be wrong, or even that the other may be right. That, it seems to me, is the spirit that animated the Christian leaders who gathered in 1910 in Edinburgh for the World Missionary Conference that launched the modern ecumenical movement. And it is the spirit that animated Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul when they met in Jerusalem fifty years ago, setting Orthodox and Catholic Christians on a journey of reconciliation that, while far from complete, has seen remarkable progress.

That journey began with significant gestures: the embrace of pope and patriarch on the Mount of Olives in 1964 and the subsequent renunciation in 1965 of the mutual excommunication that had existed between the Sees of Rome and Constantinople for more than nine hundred years. No less important for Christians of the Holy Land, however, was Pope Paul's authorization in 1965 of the return of the relics of Mar Saba—St. Sabbas—which had been stolen by Crusaders and taken to Italy. Implicit in each of

these gestures was the acknowledgement that the road to reconciliation and closer communion passes through repentance.

Under the leadership of Patriarch Dimitrios and Pope John Paul II, who initiated a “theological dialogue of truth” between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the journey toward closer communion continued. The Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue they established has highlighted substantial theological agreement on issues such as the sacramental nature and structure of the Church. Among the practical consequences: as Orthodox and Catholics have grown in their ability to recognize each other as sister Churches, the Commission has judged “Uniatism,” understood as a form of proselytizing, no longer acceptable “either as a method to be followed [or] as a model of the unity our Churches are seeking” (JIC document on “Uniatism,” June 1993, par. 12). While respecting the consciences of Eastern Christians whose journeys of faith have led them to visible communion with Rome, this declaration was another sign of healing within the wounded Body of Christ.

Significant points of disagreement remain. The exercise of primacy at the level of the Church catholic remains an issue that divides the Catholic from the Orthodox Churches, as well as from the ancient Churches of the East and from the Churches of the Reformation in the West. Broader discussion of Church order reveals fault lines not only between the Churches but within them as well. Members of the Joint International Commission representing the Orthodox and Catholic Churches were able to state that “our Churches remain faithful to the historical and theological tradition according to which they ordain only men to the priestly ministry” (JIC document on “The Sacrament of Order in the Sacramental Structure of the Church,” June 1988, par. 32). But a study undertaken by the Pontifical Biblical Commission, the broad results of which were leaked publicly in the summer of 1976 but not published, concluded that the New Testament does not clearly settle the question of whether women can be ordained or not. The question of women’s leadership in the Church has continued to generate heated debate within and among the Churches of the West in particular, but has occasioned some discussion in the Orthodox world as well—a reminder that questions that arise within one part of Christ’s Body inevitably impact all its members. As long as careful study and prayerful discernment persuade the minds and hearts of significant numbers of Christians that this question—or any of the issues that have been the source of discord within the Body of Christ—hasn’t been fully answered, it won’t go away.

In their meeting on the Mount of Olives this past May, Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Francis acknowledged that the search for full communion between Catholics and Orthodox has been “no mere theoretical exercise, but an exercise in truth and love...Theological dialogue does not seek a theological lowest common denominator on which to seek a compromise, but is rather about deepening one’s grasp of the whole truth that Christ has given to his Church” (“Common Declaration,” 25 May 2014, par. 4). Both educated by Jesuits, Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew are aware that the insight theological dialogue seeks is achieved through discernment, and demands conversion of heart. The meeting of pope and patriarch on the Mount of Olives this year, as fifty years ago, is a witness to the whole Body of Christ that the path toward fuller communion among Christians is a journey that leads, unsurprisingly, through the cross.



A Tribute and a Common Dream

Dr. John N. Tleel, author of *I Am Jerusalem*

In Constantinople (Istanbul) two chosen people had a vision, they dreamt to meet one day in Jerusalem, the Holiest City in the world. The first was an Ambassador and the second was Patriarch Athenagoras. The Ambassador was promoted and became a Pope, John the XXIII. He was a great Pope and lately he was canonized and was declared a Saint. Pope John died before seeing his dream coming true. His Successor Paul VI took his place. In January 4-6 1964, he met two Patriarchs, the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople and Patriarch Benedictos of Jerusalem, a western Roman Catholic and two eastern Roman (Rum) Orthodox. That was the cosmo-historic pilgrimage-visit that ever took place in the City of Peace.

Two meetings took place at the Mount of Olives Apostolic Delegation, and two at the Mount of Olives *Viri Galilaie* official Residence of the Patriarch of Jerusalem Benedictos, both no distance at all. I was present at the two meetings, the first rendered by the Pope to Patriarch Benedictos of Jerusalem and the second to Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras.

On Saturday, 4 January 1964, Pope Paul VI left his Vatican Seat, and arrived at 1:00 p.m. in Amman, the Jordanian capital. The Pope was met and received at the airport by King Hussein of Jordan. The Pope then travelled by car to Jerusalem arriving at 5:00 p.m. He was greeted with an official and grandiose reception by all the population of Jerusalem outside the Damascus Gate. It was a clear day, but the easterly winds were very cold. Jerusalem was divided, and many times Israeli snipers were shooting from the not distant Notre Dame. He entered the Old City, but the Pope did not have to walk; he was carried by the waves of the people to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It was a spectacle I saw with my own eyes.

At 7:30 p.m., the first meeting took place between Orthodoxy and Catholicism in 500 years, between Patriarch Benedictos and Pope Paul VI, at the residence of the Apostolic Delegate on the road to the Mount of Olives. Arriving at the iron gate of the Delegation premises, I was unable to enter. I was pushed by the thronging people and the gates had to close. An hour later the Pope visited Benedictos at his *Viri Galilaie* residence and there, I was privileged to witness an unprecedented piece of the so many histories of the City of the olive branches of Peace. Without

the meeting of Pope VI and the Patriarch of Jerusalem Benedictos, local and important communal changes would not have taken place. Humbly, as a Jerusalemite, I am proud for that meeting having taken place, and I hope that this year's 2014 meeting, we, in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, who were fortunate to live and experience the atmosphere around this meeting, will bring more and deeper new changes, we so much need and deserve under the present circumstances. For history, the Pope Paul VI - Patriarch Benedictos meeting, was a last minute intervention of the the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday, 5 January, 1964, at 12:30 p.m., Athenagoras, the Archbishop of Constantinople and Ecumenical Patriarch, arrived at Jerusalem's Kalandia airport. The Ecumenical Patriarch was met at the airport by King Hussein of Jordan. The King came from Amman to personally receive the Ecumenical Patriarch. At 8:30 p.m., the Ecumenical Patriarch went to the Apostolic Delegation where old Rome and New Rome embraced and reconciled.

On Monday, 6 January, 1964, eve of the eastern Orthodox Christmas, and before the two Patriarchs, Athenagoras and Benedictos, leaving for Bethlehem to celebrate the Rum Orthodox Christmas, at 9:45 a.m., Pope Paul VI paid back his visit to Patriarch Athenagoras at the Mount of Olives residence of Patriarch Benedictos. I was present and privileged again and for a second time, to feel proud and among those, who were there and are no more. I thank God to have granted and blessed me with those exceptional moments, fifty years ago, in order to write and describe, as much as I can today, the originality of that event, which all the world of the year 2014 celebrates and commemorates the 50th Anniversary.

Two immediate and important events came out of the Paul VI-Athenagoras-Benedictos meetings in Jerusalem. The first - on October 26 1965, the holy relics of St. Sabbas were brought from the Church of St. Mark in Venice, back to Jerusalem and to the desert monastery of Mar Saba. They had been missing from their original resting place for a long time. The Translation of Mar Saba's holy relics was an event the Holy City has not seen in recent and present times. The second - in 1966, the opening of the first Academic Council of the Ecumenical Institute for Theological Research took place in the Hall of the Throne in the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. We hope that such events will come out of the 2014 Pope Francis-Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Patriarch Theophilos meetings.

2014, May 24-26. Bethlehem, Palestine

Jerusalem, Old City, and Jerusalem, Israel

**OCCURSUS
ROMANI PONTIFICIS FRANCISCI
ET PATRIARCHAE OECUMENICI BARTHOLOMAEI I
IN SANCTI SEPULCHRI BASILICA**

**Η ΣΥΝΑΝΤΗΣΙΣ ΜΕΤΑΧΥ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΠΑ ΦΡΑΓΚΙΣΚΟΥ
ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΥ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΟΥ**

ΒΑΡΘΟΛΟΜΑΙΟΥ Α΄

ΕΝ ΤΩ ΠΑΝΙΕΡΩ ΝΑΩ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΕΩΣ

die 25 Maii 2014

τη 25η Μαΐου 2014

Πατριαρχεῖον Ἱεροσολύμων

Custodia Terrae Sanctae

Fifty years, half a century, have passed, Jerusalem is under Israeli occupation. Bethlehem is separated from Jerusalem for the first time in its long, long history. The Pope came and the Old city was under strict curfew, it looked like a battlefield, the streets were empty and deserted. The perpetual insecurity and the security disease and sickness got worse and worse. The restrictions and the thousands police and soldiers were more than the handful faithful and more than the necessary. To reach the Holy Sepulchre, a five minute walk from my home, it was a humiliating ordeal.

Cosmetic brotherly gestures, we saw, orderly and coordinated, Greek and Latin and a little Arabic religious hymns we heard, not the usual antagonistic singing and shouting we always hear in the Church, especially on Sundays and feasts. For the first time loud speakers were installed, by mutual consent for the occasion, something new and amazing to us. All religious leaders, and many members of the different lay communities were invited and seated according to the existing space and in a civilized manner. All took place in the Rotunda around the Edicule of the Holy Sepulchre. The Rum/Greek Orthodox Patriarch, Theophilos, the Custos of the Holy Land, Petrus Pizzaballa ofm and the Armenian Patriarch Nourham, the three Heads of the responsible main communities in the Holy

Sepulchre, received the Pope and the Ecumenical Patriarch at the entrance of the Basilica of the Anastasis, Resurrection. A member of the Arab Muslim Nusseibeh family was also present, according to a long standing tradition and the existing Status Quo.

The gospel, John, 20, 1-9, was read in Greek, and Mt. 28, 1-10 in Latin, in front of the Edicule, and three speeches were said. First spoke the host, Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem. It was the inaugural and welcoming address to Jerusalem and inside the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, in English, and following the readings of the gospel, Patriarch Bartholomaos spoke, also in English. To me this was a sign of Ecumenical spirit. Pope Francis used the Italian. The centuries old columns of the Rotunda trembled, they did not understand what the Pope said.

There are no greats in the Holy Old City. All are small. All remove their crowns. There is a man on the Hill of the Crucifixion, his head is adorned with a simple crown of thorns. The 1964 Encounter, simplicity and humility impressed me and moved me.

Living in Jerusalem, I was born in 1928, and witnessing three consecutive rulers and regimes, 1917-1948 British Mandate, Jordanian Hashemite rule in the Old city and West Bank, 1948-1967, and becoming a Palestinian refugee, by entering the New Gate, just a corner outside the Walls and then inside the Walls, in the Old City, all the Arab-Israeli wars and times and a long and continuous occupation since 1967, and seeing one leaving and one coming, another leaving and a new one coming, and only the Church of Jerusalem, being the uninterrupted history for 2000 years, I can say: that the so desired Christian unity, will come only from Golgotha, the Hill of the Crucifixion, only from the Holy Sepulchre, and the Nativity of Bethlehem, so also, the peace in Jerusalem, in the region and in the world, only from Jerusalem, the city of peace.

“Yet Christian unity in Jerusalem means world Christian unity. It is therefore high time for the Christian West, Catholic and Protestant to acknowledge adequately the debt it owes to the Christians of the East and this time to act responsibly and positively”.



Fifty Years Later: The Ecumenical Patriarch and the Pope of Rome in the Holy Land

Dr. Alexander Zanemonets, Deacon and Lecturer at the University of Haifa

Despite the significance of pilgrimage to Jerusalem, not all Popes and Patriarchs have visited the Holy City. Historically, pilgrimage was largely connected to catechesis and missionary work, so not many bishops in the olden times thought it necessary to participate in it, leaving their dioceses. After all, if you prayed well, you could have “both Athos and the Holy Land” in your cell. Primates of the Churches usually came to Jerusalem on very special occasions.

Sometimes it was for the consecration of important churches. Thus, St. Cyril – one of the Fathers of the Church and a Pope of Alexandria – was in Jerusalem in 438 (439) for the consecration of the new basilica in honor of the Protomartyr Stephen. Others came for Councils of Bishops, gathering bishops of various local Churches. Thus, the Council of Jerusalem of 1443, which was attended by all the Eastern Orthodox Patriarchs or their representatives, was one of the most important stages in the rejection of the Union of Florence.

This applies to heads of the Russian Church. The visit to the Holy Land in 1924 of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, was undertaken to “rescue” the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem and to determine its status in the new conditions of emigration. The first visit to the Holy Land of Patriarch Alexy I of Moscow took place in 1945, marking a new stage in the life of the Church in the Soviet Union, as well as the entry of the Moscow Patriarchate into the “international arena.” The last visit of Patriarch Kirill was connected with the consecration of a large cathedral in honor of All Saints of Russia in Jerusalem.

Not all Patriarchs of Constantinople visited Jerusalem, either, although in the twentieth century the simplification of methods of transportation made possible the visits of neighboring Churches without having to leave them for a long time. One of the most notable visits was the pilgrimage of the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras to Jerusalem in 1964. On this occasion he coordinated his visit to the Holy Land with that of Pope Paul VI of Rome.

The Pope’s pilgrimage is primarily associated with visiting the Arab countries of the region. It begins in Jordan. Then the Pope, bypassing Israel, will fly to the “Palestinian state,” as it appears on the official program, and visit Bethlehem. Although Bethlehem is separated from Jerusalem by only a small ravine, and pilgrims usually move from Bethlehem to Jerusalem in ten minutes through one of

the checkpoints of the future border, the Pope will fly from Bethlehem by helicopter to Tel-Aviv, to the “Ben Gurion International Airport.” In the Tel-Aviv airport will take place the official meeting of the Pope in Israel, and from there he will fly by helicopter to Jerusalem. A large Mass will also not take place in the Kidron Valley in Jerusalem, as before, but in a stadium in Amman and in the Bethlehem basilica.

Why does the pilgrimage begin in Amman? Perhaps there is a remembrance here that, before the unification of Jerusalem in 1967, most of the pilgrims visiting the Holy Land as part of Jordan, not Israel, and first came to Amman: the main shrines were then on Jordanian territory. Visiting the “Palestinian state” undoubtedly has a political aspect: the Catholic Church de facto recognizes it before the rest of the world. And the visit to Israel will begin not in Jerusalem, which is two steps away, but from the Tel Aviv airport. Might such a policy “appease” the Muslim world and mitigate the situation of Christians in Arab countries? In the Palestinian Authority itself (as it is still officially called), Christians make up less than one percent...

In Israel, the Pope will visit only Jerusalem. And here everything will take place not in stadiums, but in fact “behind closed doors.” Largely to blame is the “democracy” of Pope Francis: he refuses to ride in an armored car. But, as a result, all the approaches to the places of the Pope’s residence will be closed by police for several hours before the arrival of the head of the Catholic Church: the safety of the Pope in Israel will be monitored by several thousand police officers.

The most difficult point of the Papal program will be his visit to Mount Zion on Monday evening, May 26. Instead of a Mass, as with John-Paul and Benedict, Pope Francis will serve on Monday on Mount Zion with very few participants. During the Mass there will be two helicopters on Zion and snipers on the roof of the surrounding buildings. Representatives of radical Jewish organizations will be banned during the Papal visit (almost like during Roman times). The problem is that the top of Mount Zion is de facto divided between Catholics and Jews.

The status quo was broken long ago on Zion, and each side expects nothing good from the other. In such a situation, a Papal Mass in this place can hardly be considered a politically neutral event.

The Liturgy that will be headed by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem will take place in locations whose ownership by the Orthodox is unquestioned: in the main chapel of the Church of the Resurrection on Saturday and the Catholicon of the Church of the Resurrection (the Holy Sepulcher) on Sunday morning. The major companions of the Ecumenical Patriarchate will be several hundred Greek pilgrims from North America (they are the main sponsors of the Patriarchal pilgrimage) and a series of

bishops. First among them will be those who are perceived as the “European faces” of the Ecumenical Patriarchate: Metropolitan John (Zizoulas) of Pergamon, who at one time was a deacon of Patriarch Athenagoras; Archbishop Demetrios of America, Metropolitan Emmanuel of Gaul, and the recently elected Archbishop Job, the head of the Russian Archdiocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Western Europe, Rector of the St. Sergius Theological Institute in Paris.

“Our fraternal encounter today is a new and necessary step on the journey towards the unity to which only the Holy Spirit can lead us, that of communion in legitimate diversity...”

“While fully aware of not having reached the goal of full communion, today we confirm our commitment to continue walking together towards the unity for which Christ our Lord prayed to the Father so ‘that all may be one’ (Jn 17:21).”

From the side it is sometimes unclear why the Ecumenical Patriarch has made so much effort for dialogue specifically with Rome. Is his “Eastern Papism” the reason? For the Russian Church, division with the Catholics has been a fact almost from the beginning of its existence. But for the Byzantines, and later the Greeks, the memory has been preserved of Rome as the main fraternal see from which the New Rome – Constantinople – takes its name. It has preserved memory of unity; it has preserved memory of the division that was “fixed” not abstractly between the Eastern and Western Churches, but concretely between the sees of Rome and Constantinople. The search for unity is a search for the healing of old wounds and the restoration of a unity that has never been forgotten. Just as for the Russian Church, the division with the Old Believers is not abstract, but real; just as in Ukraine the division with the Greek Catholics and many subsequent schisms are very real.

The head of the Catholic Church and the preeminent Orthodox Patriarch in Jerusalem have not said anything new, but they have inspired us to seek the lost unity where it was once broken, and not without our participation.

[This article](#) originally was published on May 28th, 2014 in the English-language version of Pravmir.com.



The Papal-Patriarchal Visit to Jerusalem and the Mission of the Church

Dr. Yazid Said, Mater Dei Institute of Education, Dublin

The Papal-Patriarchal visit to the Holy Land was undoubtedly of significance to all Christians and non-Christians of the Land. To begin with, there is no doubt that the Papacy alone registers valence for many in the world. But, this particular visit attracted special attention given its ecumenical nature, and the kind of image the world has been seeing of Pope Francis in particular. His choice of the name Francis signalled at least a desire to connect his vision of the Church to the monastic spirit of service and poverty. In this regard, there is no doubt that the Pope's small gestures in washing the feet of prisoners, including a Muslim woman, and carrying his own bags, have made a good deal of effect among many in the world, especially those who are not Roman Catholics. It should be taken for granted that any authority in the Church is that of service. But, the visit to the Holy Land raised, despite its brevity, more points that help promote shared understanding between Churches in the service of the Gospel and the goal of Christian unity. It was also an opportunity to point to the Gospel's questions that are of relevance and significance to the political reality of Israel/Palestine today.

This is meant to be an Anglican reflection on the visit. It is also a reflection from an Anglican who is a Palestinian-born Israeli citizen, teaching Islamic studies at a Catholic Institute in Ireland. It is not at all clear, however, for this Anglican writer what an Anglican reflection might mean in fact, given the variety of views that other Anglicans might wish to add. But, it might be worth mentioning here that the simultaneous appointment of Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin of Canterbury also provided an opportunity for reflections from different commentators.¹ In this regard, two common features appear to identify the Archbishop's and the Pope's action and preaching: a common stand against contemporary Capitalist ideology and a concern for Mission and Evangelism in the contemporary world. In his inaugural sermon at Canterbury Cathedral, the Archbishop said: 'In humility and simplicity, Pope Francis called us on Tuesday to be protectors of each other: of the natural world, of the poor and vulnerable'.² Archbishop Justin referred to the interdependence of Christian common mission with Christian unity;

¹ <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2013/03/23/3722235.htm> first posted 23 March 2013.

² <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5038/we-will-see-a-world-transformed-the-archbishop-of-canterburys-inaugural-sermon> first posted 21 March 2013.

as he put it: ecumenism is ‘the oxygen of mission and evangelism’.³ Whilst he noted in his address to synod that: ‘There is a new energy in ecumenism, not least shown by Pope Francis’,⁴ the Archbishop told Pope Francis during his first visit in June 2013 that:

the journey is testing and we cannot be unaware that differences exist about how we bring the Christian faith to bear on the challenges thrown by modern society. But, our goal is great enough to justify the effort of the journey’ (Benedict XVI *Spe Savli i*) and we can trust in the prayer of Christ (*ut omnis unum sint* (Jn 17.21)).⁵

Indeed, one of the powerful images that struck in my mind from the visit to the Holy Land was when Pope Francis kissed the hands of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in the Church of the Resurrection. In that moment, we saw a powerful symbol of that leadership that shows how Christians need one another if they are to proclaim the good news of the Resurrection to a broken world. Christians do not need models of leadership that are too much about command, decision or abstract theories. Instead, with prayer, critical faithfulness and friendship with one another as Christians and Christian leaders, we are called to open up to the new and living way that Jesus has opened for all of us in his death and resurrection. To grow into that insight of the way that Jesus opens for all those who are baptized in his name, we shall need one another. It was also a challenge to remind the Churches of Jerusalem, that when they fail in leadership it is because they fail to witness together to the new way that Jesus clears. The fact that this was also done in the Church of the Resurrection is a reminder that Jerusalem, unlike Rome and Constantinople, is the only Church that does not have a mother Church, being the place of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ from which the good news of God in Jesus Christ spread to the whole world.

The visit was not without its political challenges. There was the famous unplanned stop at the Bethlehem separation barrier and the unforgettable gathering with Palestinian refugees. But, there was also a stop to commemorate the Israeli victims of Palestinian violence, even a visit to Herzl’s tomb, the father of modern day Zionism. I think that what lies at the heart of all these gestures is the liturgical mission of the Church that celebrates that peace that we have with God made possible through Jesus who breaks

³ <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5066/archbishop-justin-on-ecumenism-the-oxygen-of-mission-and-evangelism> first posted 24 May 2013.

⁴ <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5098/there-is-a-revolution-archbishop-justins-address-to-synod> first posted 5 July 2013.

⁵ <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5076/archbishop-justin-meets-pope-francis-in-rome> posted 14 June 2013.

down all barriers. With the current pontiff's pastoral and pragmatic emphasis and behaviour, this peace appeared to be about active involvement, compassion, grateful receiving, generous offering and mutual enrichment, because this is the sort of peace that Jesus creates between God and the world, reflecting his own relationship with the Father. Because of him and through him, we are called to seek peace and pursue it and be ministers of reconciliation as Paul taught us in 2 Corinthians. And so the Pope and the Patriarch gathered again in Rome with Palestinian and Israeli leaders to pray for peace – an achievement that seemed impossible for any political leader to achieve in the current stalemate. This pursuit of peace does not apply for and among Christians only, but among all peoples. Not because of a sentimental idea based on secular Humanism, but because of our conviction that God's call is addressed to any community or society, a call for compassion, justice and responsible love of neighbour. That is always going to be a challenge for any church leader, trying to show the humanity, vulnerability and needs of both sides. The Pope and the Patriarch may have appeared in these gestures as unreliable allies for some, as they would have challenged both sides to see the humanity of the other side. But, to make those gestures more than just compromise, hesitation or dithering is a great prophetic challenge.

The Church can be this prophetic body in Israel Palestine and the world only if it is able to show to the world that it is 'one, holy, catholic, and apostolic'. But, what this means, as the gestures between Francis of Rome and Bartholomew of Constantinople suggest, isn't simply about having one Christian institution. It means more that we are all bound by the one and only holiness made possible in Jesus Christ, the one and only apostolic and catholic character that determine our relations, life and witness. Most importantly, Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, and other Christians, who find themselves today having to face many challenges of persecution, modern relativism, individualism, atheism, and greed in the Middle East and in Europe, cannot afford looking at their sister Churches with indifference whatever the differences may be between them. Instead, we are called to give each other the kiss of peace, show in word and action that we do actually trust in the hope of Christ's resurrection and all that it signifies for the world today.



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