



and the Holy Spirit, working in the local community of believers with His Apostolic Doctrine, ministry (hierarchy) and Sacraments, thus lacking nothing to participate fully in the Kingdom of God.

To believe, then, that the Church is Catholic is to express the conviction that the fullness of God is present in the Church and that it lacks nothing of the "abundant life" that Christ gives to the world in the Spirit (John 10:10).

It is to confess exactly that **the Church is indeed the fullness of the All-Filling in All.** (Ephesians: 1:23; Colossians: 2:10).

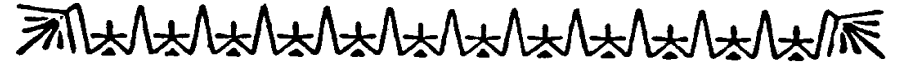
ONE UNTIL THE END

According to the promise made by Christ, His Church has remained strong as a rock, and for more than 2000 years it has been faithful to the deposit entrusted to it, adding or subtracting nothing.

A huge crowd of groups and "churches" believing in what they are told it is, have ended up believing in what never was. And they have believed in the greatest of the Devil's lies: that the Church split or disappeared at some point in history. **The Body of Christ cannot be divided** and as the Lord Jesus Christ promised, **the gates of Hell have not been able to defeat it.**

Christ lives in the Orthodox Church, which is His Body, and the Holy Spirit is its Teacher and Enlightener.

This is the Church of God, the pillar and bulwark of Truth.



ONLY ONE CHURCH

The Church is One, because God is One, and because Christ and the Holy Spirit are One.



There can only be one Church and not many. And this Church, since its unity depends on God, Christ, and the Spirit, can never be separated or broken.

Thus, according to Orthodox doctrine, **the Church is indivisible; men may be in the Church or outside of it, but they cannot divide it.**

According to Orthodox teaching, the unity of the Church is the free unity of man in the truth and love of God. Such unity is not achieved or established by any human authority or juridical power, but by God alone. In so far as men are in the truth and love of God, they are members of the Church.

Orthodox Christians believe that in the historic Orthodox Church there is full possibility of full participation in the Church of God, and that only sins and false human choices (heresies) separate men from this unity.

The Orthodox hold that in non-Orthodox Christian groups there are certain formal obstacles which vary among the different groups, which, if accepted and followed by men, deny their perfect unity with God and destroy the genuine unity of the Church.

Within the Unity of the Church, man, though a mere creature, can grow for all eternity in divine life, in communion with God, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit.

The unity of the Church is uninterrupted by time or space and is not limited to those who live on the face of the earth.

The unity of the Church is the unity of the Holy Trinity and all who live with God: The Holy Angels, the righteous who have died, and those who





live on earth according to the commandments of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has founded only one Church.

The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, which to this day is represented by the Orthodox Church. The meaning of each of the above characteristics is, namely:

ONE: The Church is one, because *it is one spiritual body, has one head: Jesus Christ, and is animated by one Spirit of God* (Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 1:22-23). The unity of the Church is expressed in the confession of faith itself, in communion, in prayers and in the sacraments.

HOLY: It is holy because of its foundation, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and because *in it dwells the Holy Spirit, who always sanctifies it* (John 14:16).

CATHOLIC: (Universal or Ecumenical) (from the Greek *Katholikos*). (Universal of *Kata*: conforms to; and *olos*: all). Because her message is intended for all the faithful of all places, times, and peoples, because she is not limited by any place, time, or people, but on the contrary, she is open to all who wish to join her (Matthew 28:18). It should be said that this term is not only geographical in nature, but transcends time and space and its doctrine is permanent.

This expression is proper to the Orthodox Church. They use it to call themselves other Christian denominations, such as the Church of Rome and the Church of England, but its Hellenic origin reminds them that they use a term borrowed from the original, undivided, Orthodox Church.



APOSTOLIC: Because *it preserves without interruption the doctrine and succession of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, since the time of the Apostles* (Eph. 2:19-20).

Along with the above notes, our Church has been awarded the adjective Orthodox (from the Greek: Orthodox: True Belief) (from *Orthos*: Straight and *Doxa*:



Belief, Practice, Worship) to indicate that *in it resides the true faith, in harmony with the original teachings of Our Lord. The regulator of this harmony and continuity is Christ Himself, according to His promise* (Matt. 28:20; Mark. 16:20) *The Holy Spirit is with the Church and guides it in the truth* (John 14:26).

The uninterrupted succession of Bishops has maintained a historical and sacramental continuity that other Christian groups can hardly claim easily and justly.

CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Church is Catholic also because of its relationship with God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The word catholic means full, complete, entire; That nothing is missing. God alone is full and total reality; and it is only by being in God that nothing is lacking. Sometimes the catholicity of the Church is understood in terms of its universality in time and space.

It is true that the Church is Universal — for all men at all times and places — but this universality is not the real meaning of the word "Catholic" when used to define the Church.

The term "Catholic" as it was originally used to define the Church (as early as the first decades of the second century) was a definition of quality rather than quantity. **To call the Church Catholic is to define what it is, that is, full and complete, encompassing everything, and lacking nothing.**

Even before the Church spread throughout the earth, it defined itself as Catholic. The Church of Jerusalem, originally of the Apostles, or the early Churches of Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, or Rome, were Catholic.

These Churches were Catholic—as every Orthodox Church is today—because they lacked nothing essential to be the true, Church of Christ. God Himself is fully revealed and present in every church through Christ

