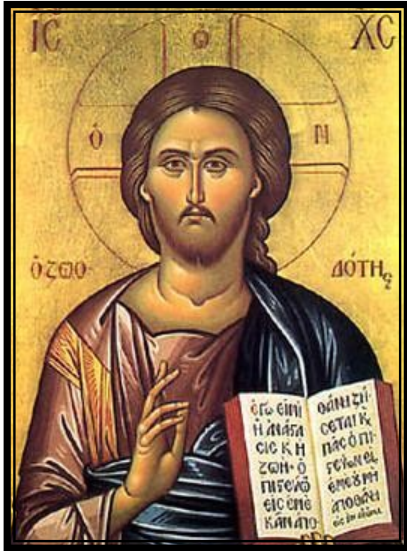


ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN MALTA



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Compiled by Mgr George Mifsud Montanaro
on behalf of the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission,
Malta 2010



It is important to remember that the Orthodox Churches possess the seven sacraments, like the Roman Catholic Church. In other words, there is a mutual recognition of the sacraments, bishops, priests and deacons. The main doctrinal difference existing between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches lies in how to understand the implications of papal primacy, and how to reconcile Roman primacy with the local bishop's jurisdiction.

For those actively engaged in pastoral life in our Catholic parishes, the following legislation is to be borne in mind:
Can. 844, §3. Catholic ministers administer the sacraments of penance, Eucharist, and anointing of the sick licitly to members of Eastern Churches which do not have full communion with the Catholic Church if they seek such on their own accord and are properly disposed. This is also valid for members of other Churches which in the judgment of the Apostolic See are in the same condition in regard to the sacraments as these Eastern Churches.

Ethiopian and Eritrean Orthodox Christians

These are under the jurisdiction of the Ethiopian Orthodox and Eritrean Orthodox Patriarchates, respectively. There may be some 500 altogether in Malta. They have no locally resident priest but regularly hold services under the leadership of a deacon, at St. James Church, Merchants Street, Valletta, on Sunday mornings.

Armenian Orthodox Christians

These are few in number in Malta and without their own priest. Armenians have attended services, both Greek-Catholic and Russian Orthodox, at the Greek-Catholic Church of "Our Lady of Damascus" in Valletta.



Other Orthodox Christians

No precise information is available. But Orthodox Christians from the Near East, Georgia, Finland, Hungary, Great Britain and North America, have attended services at the Church of “Our Lady of Damascus” in Valletta.

II. Orthodox (Non-Chalcedonian) Christians in Malta

Coptic Orthodox Christians

There are between 100 and 150 Coptic Orthodox Christians in Malta. They are under the jurisdiction of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and are under the care of their own pastor, the Priest-Monk Father Boulos Elsouriany, who holds regular services at the chapel of San Gakbu (limits of Zebbug), and resides at St. Anthony, Fl. 54B, Triq il-Monsinjur Dandria, Msida (Mob. 79924000).



General Information about our Orthodox brethren

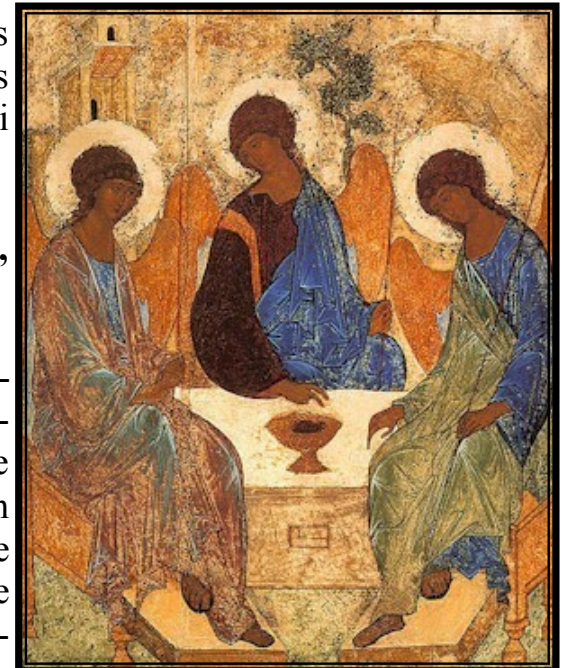
I. Orthodox Christians in Malta

Greeks, Cypriots

These are small in number, perhaps fifty residents, but by the influx of large numbers of tourists at high feasts (Christmas and, especially, Easter) they sometimes reach the figure of some 1000. They have their own church in Valletta: The Greek Orthodox Church of St. George, (at 83 Merchants Street), founded in 1816. They are under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and, more precisely, of the Sacra Arcidiocesi Ortodossa d'Italia e di Malta, centred in Venice. There is no Greek Orthodox priest in residence in Malta but only visiting priests. The President of the local Greek Orthodox Community is Mr. George Sclivaniotis (10 Nelson Flats, Dingli Circus, Sliema).

Russians, Ukrainians, Bielorrussians

These are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow and are constituted as a parish dedicated to the Apostle St. Paul, under the care of a regular pastor, Fa-



ther Dimitri, who resides and serves a parish in Tunis and who comes to Malta on major festivals, and who holds services in the Greek-Catholic Parish Church of “Our Lady of Damascus” (Archbishop Street, Valletta). There are between 800 and 1000 residents of this groups in Malta. In addition to these, there are others with Maltese nationality, by marriage to Maltese partners, with children some of whom are Orthodox, so that there may be between 1500 and 2000 in Malta. The Russian community is keen on providing itself with a church of its own in Malta.

Serbians, Montenegrins

These are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Serbia and, more precisely, of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Great Britain, Scandinavia and Malta. They are over a 1000 in Malta. They are organized in a parish, dedicated to the Apostle St. Paul, and they are under the care of their own resident priest, Father Alexander Zerajic`, who resides at 45 Zafriz Court, Flat No. 6, Stuart Street, Gzira (tel. 21322602). They hold services (Eucharistic Liturgy) on Sunday mornings at St. Nicholas’ Church (tal-Erwieh), Merchants Street, Valletta.



Bulgarians

These are under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Patriarchate, Diocese of Central and Western Europe, Vicariate of Italy, San Marino and Malta. The Vicar-General of this diocese is the Priest-Monk Clement Bobchev, resident in Rome. There are around 580 Bulgarians in Malta. Father Bobchev visits Malta and holds services for his community at the Greek-Catholic Church of “Our Lady of Damascus” (Archbishop Street, Valletta). (President of the Bulgarian-Maltese Cultural Association is Mr Valentin Valchev – tel. 27320183, Mobile 99295727).

Rumanians

These are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Romania. In Malta they are around 300 in number. So far no Romanian Orthodox priest has visited Malta.