

Questions after part 1 of Bishop Basil's talk:

*Has our present situation made relations between Patriarch of Constantinople and the Patriarch of Moscow more difficult? Or is it just another little blip in their relationship?*

**Archbishop Gabriel:** I think we have to be aware first of all that for the last twenty years, ever since *perestroika* started, there has been conflict between Constantinople and Moscow about the diaspora. Vladyka has told us about two ecclesiologies that are opposed. This is very important. Here in Western Europe, we are in the territory of the Church of Rome, and you in England are in the territory of the Anglican Church. We are not united because the Church of Rome and the Church of England are no longer Orthodox so they cannot take care of us. So it is right that if the first Rome cannot take care of us, the second Rome, Constantinople, should take care of us. Moscow has a different opinion - they say 'We are the biggest Church in the world so we will take over. ....' They have said they wish to speak with Constantinople'. I don't know the content of this conversation will be, but I know one thing: Constantinople has the ability to protect us, and it has the will to protect us today and tomorrow.

*Is it correct that Metropolitan Evlogii asked for protection of Constantinople as a temporary measure? If so, what was his expectation? Should we be considering that?*

**Archbishop Gabriel:** Metropolitan Evlogii asked for protection from Constantinople and their answer was to create the Exarchate as a temporary institution. But at that time the whole position of the Russian Orthodox in Western Europe was temporary, because the émigrés always expected to go back. They were only here because of the Revolution. But after the Second World War, things were different. Many Christian people understood then that they would be in Europe to the ends of their lives. And the situation of the Exarchate changed in 1965. We had a very difficult time because the Ecumenical Patriarch said to us, 'Now we have to work together with the Church of Russia, because of the ecumenical movement.' And Russia said, 'Yes, we will work with you, but you have to give back the exarchate.' And the Ecumenical Patriarchate asked Paris to go back in obedience to Moscow, and Paris said, 'No, we cannot do that.'

After a short time the Ecumenical Patriarchate agreed to take us back, but not as an Exarchate, only as a diocese.' And that was the situation until we once more became an Exarchate. But the temporary aspect finished in the 1960s. So the argument that it was temporary and therefore we should go back to Moscow is no longer tenable. Our home is here. You are British, I am Belgian. Our homeland is here in Western Europe. I am very happy this question was asked because people still use this argument today, and it is not credible any more.

*Vladyka mentioned Canon 34 as being important to Metropolitan Anthony. What is in the canon, why is it important?*

Metropolitan Anthony's talk.

**Bishop Basil:** It is probably good to remind people that the London parish divided at a very early stage between the Church in Exile and the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Evlogii, so to begin with the London Parish was with the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In the euphoria that followed World War II not only did many Russians return mistakenly to Russia, and ended up in the camps or in Siberia, but there was a strong movement to return the parishes in Western Europe to the Patriarchate of Moscow. Metropolitan Evlogii at that time agreed with this and moved back towards the

Moscow Patriarchate. This was around 1946. At that time the London Parish, which was with him, returned to the Moscow Patriarchate but when Evlogii left the Moscow Patriarchate to go back to Constantinople they stayed with Moscow. That is, we began in the Constantinople jurisdiction. It was only in the post-war euphoria that parishes in Western Europe went back to Moscow, and when that euphoria died down, most of them returned to Constantinople. London stayed behind with Moscow. And that is really why we were with Moscow. When Metropolitan Anthony came here in 1947/48, he found here a Patriarchal parish.

*Did Archbishop Gabriel say that geographically since we are in the West we should normally be under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, but because the Bishop of Rome is no longer Orthodox we belong with the second Rome, which is Constantinople?*

**Archbishop Gabriel:** Yes. Let me give you an example. In 1911, before the Revolution, as Vladyka said, after the construction of the rue Daru cathedral and the churches in Florence, Biarritz, Nice and so on, the Church in Russia had the idea of sending a bishop to Western Europe to take care of these churches.

Before they ordained someone they informed Constantinople and the answer from Constantinople was 'No' – so there was no Russian bishop in Western Europe. So the conviction exists that the person responsible for Western Europe was the Patriarch of the second Rome. But after the Revolution, by *economia*, Constantinople could not say 'You cannot have your priests and your bishops'. It was the same with the Romanians and the Bulgarians.

The reality now is that if we want a solution we all have to accept that we have to work together and we need the Ecumenical Patriarchate to give us a proper structure. In the 60s when we had the difficulties with Constantinople and they said we had to go back to Moscow, we had a difficult time, and to be honest the relationship between rue Daru and the late Metropolitan Anthony was not very good. We should not forget that, but we have to accept that everyone was working for the good of the Church, including Metropolitan Anthony, and later there was no longer any problem.

But now it is not a condemnation to be together but a blessing. And we have the work of Metropolitan Anthony. We have the work of St Serge in Paris. We are from one family. There were conflicts and difficulties for historical reasons. But now we can all work together and live together. I can tell you that in Holland the influence of Anne-Marie and Fr Michael Fortounatto in the music was immense. We had a week of singing and learning every year. There was excellent cooperation, but we did not speak about the situation between Moscow and Constantinople.

*Should Constantinople not be reminded of the dangers of Papalism? My impression is that in the last sixty years we have been moving towards a form of Papalism on the part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.*

**Archbishop Gabriel:** We should not speak too lightly about Papalist attitudes of Constantinople. I do not want to compare the attitudes of Moscow and Constantinople over this. We Orthodox need someone who is the most responsible person. We are all brothers, and we are afraid to accept that responsibility. The attitude of Constantinople is not like that of the Vatican. The Patriarch has no power – he can only ask his brothers to come together to look for a solution., Let us be clear that with the Ecumenical Patriarch we are completely free to do what we have to do . We – Vladyka Basil and I – do not have to ask permission to ordain a deacon or a priest – we are free. And that means we are also responsible. Our experience at rue Daru is

that we are free and responsible for the future of Orthodoxy in Western Europe, and here in Britain.

*Within the last month it has been reported in the press that the Turkish Government has criticised the Patriarch of Constantinople who is a Turkish citizen, and therefore has no right to make any claim to any kind of universal jurisdiction. And in ecumenical discussion the Patriarch of Moscow has accused the Ecumenical Patriarch of arrogating to himself the rights of a papal figure.*

**Archbishop Gabriel:** What you have said is true, and they need our prayers and our help, because it is important that the Ecumenical Patriarchate exists, not in Switzerland but in Constantinople. Patriarch Bartholomew always says, 'I will stay here because I am a citizen and pay my taxes. I want to live here and one day I will die here.' This difficulty also exists with the Armenian Christians – their bishops and their patriarchs have a very difficult situation – we have to pray for all of them. That is why his Holiness always says it is a political question and not a spiritual question, and he is hoping that if Turkey is accepted into the European Community then they will have to practise liberty for everyone.

I prefer a poor church, without political influence or power, because she is spiritual, and the job of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is to be spiritual, not political. The Tomos of the Patriarchate says that the autocephaly of Russia ends at the borders, and the same with Romania and Bulgaria. But many of their people are in Western Europe and we have to take care of them, and allow the Moscow Patriarchate to do so. But that is always by *economia*. The whole tradition is that Constantinople is responsible for all of us. That is why the statutes of the Church of Moscow say that every Russian citizen, in Russia or outside Russia, if he is Orthodox is a member of the Russian Church, and that is why they say they have the right to do anything for them anywhere in the world. But I think that is not true. It is not a question of nationality but a territorial question. We have to work and to pray to make the local Church in Western Europe.

*Can you comment in the movement in Russia to be the Third Rome?*

**Archbishop Gabriel:** May God forgive the man who first said that Moscow would be the Third Rome. Not long ago there was a conference in Moscow, and a Russian speaker said, 'Every time we speak about the Third Rome it is a catastrophe for the Russian Church and the Russian people. 'We have to accept the old tradition of territory. We have many problems in Orthodoxy, and people are always wanting a new Council, but I say that the old canons contain the solutions to all our problems. No one can tell the Bulgarians or the Romanians that they cannot serve their people in the Western world, but we can in consultation together. The time of Metropolitan Anthony was a time when the Church of Russia was not free, but we had spiritual freedom. And now we have the problem that the Church of Russia creates their own dioceses and bishops and priests, and this is a difficulty.

*Bishop Basil stressed that Orthodox Church structures are collegial, and it seems to me that if we have any concerns about Papalism, all we have to do is respond in a collegial manner.*

**Bishop Basil:** It is almost impossible when talking about Church structures to avoid talking about higher or lower, but if you look at the 34<sup>th</sup> Apostolic Canon, there is no mention of higher or lower. If you cannot solve a problem locally, you don't go to a higher authority, you go to a broader authority. Eventually you ask the Patriarch to get

a consensus. The Ecumenical Patriarch is not above the other Patriarchs – he is at the centre.