

There are many books by leading Orthodox theologians and scholars on all aspects of the Orthodox Church and this leaflet series provides some basic information in the hope that it might prompt further enquiry.

**LEAFLETS IN THIS INTRODUCTION TO
ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY SERIES:**

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All text in these leaflets is mine except where indicated, therefore any errors of fact or in grammar are mine. I should be grateful to have those errors pointed out so that corrections can be made.

Fr.Nikitas - frnikitas@hotmail.com

“The Orthodox Church.....has preserved unadulterated the first and most ancient ecclesiastical tradition and teaching, has avoided innovations and personal interpretations of the Holy Scriptures and dogmas of the faith, and is administered according to the ancient synodical system under local bishops in collaboration with the faithful and successive groups of both local and broader episcopal synods, of which the highest is the Ecumenical Synod, that of the Orthodox worldwide. The basic administrative canons, the details of which are regulated according to local needs, have been determined by the seven ecumenical synods. The Church is not managed by regional states in which it resides, although it collaborates in good works when asked to do so.

Within the entire Orthodox Church there is absolute cooperation in goodwill and mutual respect. Perchance minor human problems are addressed successfully through the application of the evangelical spirit.”

*Bartholomew, Patriarch of Constantinople, from
“Encountering the Mystery.”
ISBN 978-0-385-51813-0*

Orthodox Community of Archangel Michael
and Holy Piran, Cornwall.
www.orthodoxincornwall.org.uk

In the Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain.
Exarchate of Western Europe and Ireland.
www.thyateira.org.uk

Ecumenical Patriarchate.
Οικουμενικόν Πατριαρχεῖον.
www.ec-patr.org



Agia Sophia (Holy Wisdom) Constantinople.
Fr.N.03. r05/24

Introduction to Orthodox Christianity: In the U.K



Saint Piran's Cross, Cornwall



Icon of the Saints of the
British Isles

From an historical perspective it can be said that Orthodoxy as now present had a long period of absence from the UK/Ireland. How did this come to be so?

To answer this we have to return to the times leading to and culminating in the year 1054, known as the year of the **Great Schism**. The Church up to that time was united but when Rome and Constantinople had significant disagreements a parting of the ways occurred with the Patriarchate of Rome becoming separated from the other four ancient patriarchates: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. (Together with Rome these made up the **Pentarchy**).

Thus was confirmed the Latin West under Rome and the Greek East under Constantinople with sister Orthodox Churches. In the west subsequent centuries brought considerable controversy resulting in the emergence of Protestantism and a proliferation of sects.

In the 17th century a firm presence of Orthodoxy returned to London but not without opposition from the established church. In the 19th and 20th centuries that presence chiefly from Greek and Russian peoples was established in other parts of the UK. Those settling here from traditionally Orthodox countries brought with them their ancient and apostolic Christian faith and practices.

These, together with indigenous people who have become Orthodox, means that the Orthodox Church forms a substantial part of the Christian presence here although this may not be widely known. Because these islands to the time of the Great Schism were part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church - there is a great sense in Orthodoxy of being one with the Christians of that age - the saints of Cornwall, of Wales, Ireland, Scotland and the English regions of those times, and of "closing the gap"

NB. The following information is taken from the Year Book of the Holy Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain. The small number of monasteries are not included.

Oecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

www.ec-patr.org

www.thyateira.org.uk



His Eminence Archbishop Nikitas of Thyateira and Great Britain, Exarch of Western Europe.

Senior Orthodox bishop in the UK/Ireland.

The Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain has three assistant bishops, 114 priests & 11 deacons, serving communities throughout the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate's Ukrainian Orthodox Diocese in Great Britain has one bishop (non-resident) & 5 priests.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate's Archdiocese of Orthodox Parishes of Russian Tradition in Western Europe has one archbishop (non-resident), 26 priests & 9 deacons.

With frequent changes in numbers of clergy, the following have large or small numbers within the United Kingdom and Ireland. An internet check will easily provide the statistics.

Patriarchate of Antioch

Patriarchate of Moscow (Including ROCOR)

Patriarchate of Serbia

Patriarchate of Romania

Patriarchate of Bulgaria

Patriarchate of Georgia

The hierarchs (bishops) of the Orthodox Churches in the UK and Ireland have assembled from time to time to discuss issues of mutual concern.

At the time of preparing this leaflet the following Churches of Orthodoxy do not have clergy or communities in the UK and Ireland.

**Patriarchate of Alexandria.
Patriarchate of Jerusalem.**

**Church of Cyprus.
Church of Greece.
Church of Poland.
Church of Albania.**

**Church in the Czech Land and Slovakia.
Church of Finland.
Church of Estonia.**



The English Historian Sir Steven Runciman (+2000) wrote:

"The Orthodox Church has not yet abandoned itself to an orgy of modernism; and I hope that it never will. Reforms and adjustments may from time to time be necessary; for the Church is in the world. But it is concerned with eternity, and it respects the strength of tradition. I sometimes think that in a century's time the only great Christian Church to survive will be the Orthodox Church because it has not submerged itself in transient fashions. It is therefore of value to us in this country to have among us a Church which has not abandoned its traditions and its age-long standards and at the same time lives on and with God's grace will live on to fulfill the needs of its people."

Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance, granting to faithful Christians victories over their enemies, and protecting your commonwealth by your Cross
Apolytikion - September 14th - Holy Cross.