

THE STEPS FORWARD FOR A MULTI-LATERAL GATHERING ON CONCILIARITY & COMMUNION

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As stated in introductory memorandum, the time has come to undertake steps to engage the leadership of the catholic communion of churches in an pastoral and conciliar plan that addresses the identity and unity of the faith communities in the catholic tradition not in union with Rome.

It is clear from the many conversations that the concerns for the future of the unity of the church cannot be resolved by a non binding gathering. A standing conference whose goal is to set the stage for the calling of a historic Ecumenical Council in the style, form and substance of the ancient undivided church would result in the following for the Orthodox Communion:

1. Creedal orthodoxy.
2. Renewed ecclesiology,
3. Renewed missiology,
4. Authentic Pastoral leadership

A MULTI-LATERAL GATHERING ON CONCILIARITY AND COMMUNION OFFERS THE CHURCH CLARITY AND DIRECTION

a) **THE AIM** is to call for bishops to gather as a council of the church not just to intercede in a crisis. This is the pattern since Acts 15 for the church to address the crises and to champion the faith once delivered. As it did in ancient church it will ignite and empower a renewed orthodoxy for the faith.

b) **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?** This can be done by orthodox bishops of like mind who desire communion with other historic orthodox Sees of the Church. It was a college of regional bishops who enacted the earliest of Church Councils.

c). WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

1. *Call a for a Trilateral Conference based on the Historic Models of Collegiality*
2. *State the Cause or the Nature of the Question that demands action.*
3. *Engage in the process of conciliar resolution to be undertaken by a future Council.* This is accomplished through the very specific process that was part of the ancient synods and is known through four movements.

- i. **Relatio** - Presentation of the Issue for consideration
- ii. **Sententia** - Each member of the assembly is asked to respond
- iii. **Censere** - Act of Voting based upon critical reflection
- iv. **Resolvo** - Resolution is prepared conveying the Council's decision

d) FRUITS OF A TRILATERAL CONFERENCE ON CONCILIARITY AND COMMUNION

1. To frame a clear statement of what the orthodox communions hold in faith and beliefs, morality and spirituality throughout life's journey as the norm.
2. To establish conciliar/canonical principals as norms for a future life of the Church.
3. To promote the formation and growth of the church's mission to accomplish the work of evangelism.

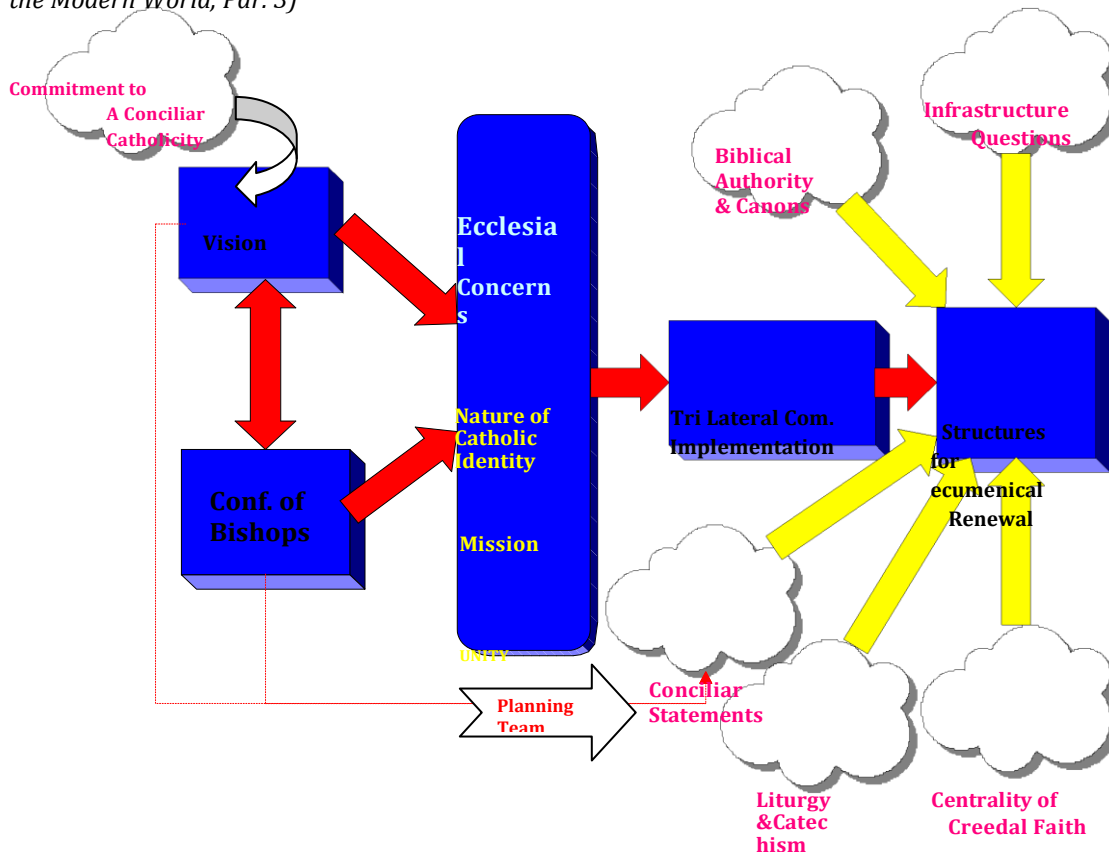
The Model for Planning

Conciliar action demonstrates the marks of the one holy catholic and apostolic faith; as well as presenting a foundational truth for those who observe the doctrine, discipline and tradition of churches that ascribe to the historic catholic faith. The local church is the mirror to the world of the faith, specifies the criteria for catholicity by functioning in the following three ways:

- (a) A universal church, which undergirds the local church.
- (b) A church, which is orthodox in its theology.
- (c) A church, which is extended throughout the world in mission

A WORKING MODEL FOR THE PROCESS OF TRILATERAL CONFERENCES ON CONCILIARITY AND COMMUNION

The Church... seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ Himself... to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not to sit in judgment, to serve and not to be served." (Gaudium et Spes: The Church in the Modern World, Par. 3)



Values for a Conciliar Ecumenical Vision of being the church catholic

In pursuit of the conciliar vocation, our work will be guided by these values, which have emerged from our discernment and from the conciliar tradition of the faith:

- To be the Church catholic in doctrine and tradition.
- To call forth courageous and committed leadership to the conciliar tradition.
- To utilize fully the richness of our diversity
- To be open, trusting and respectful of the Holy Spirit in matters of discipline and order
- To engage in a renewed of faith formation in a catechetical process that will build up this body.

A Multi-Lateral Conciliar Vision

*"The Church... seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ Himself... to give witness to the truth, to rescue and not to sit in judgment, to serve and not to be served."
(Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes: The Church in the Modern World, Par. 3)*

When the orthodox bishops of Anglican Lutheran, catholic and Orthodox traditions articulate a vision of the church they will now do so not as the lonely prophet but rather as a unity under God's Holy Spirit, as one who clothes with words what he sees and hears in the hopes and dreams of the people he serves.

What kind of catholic communion could emerge?

A faith-filled community ever richer in wisdom, talent and love that is a communion of churches though diverse is known for its clarity in faith as well as its warm hospitality, for its vibrant catechesis, for its joyful worship, for its compassionate service. Keeping the bond of union with one another we long to be a church that reaches out in ecumenical dialogue and cooperation as a renewed body of catholic witness.

In this Multi-Lateral vision, we seek to be a renewed community of faith that actively includes all members who desire to embrace the faith once delivered to the saints, and share the Gospel of grace with those who have fallen away or who do not belong to any church.

We seek to be to be a multi-lateral communion that prizes a diversity of cultures and gifts and uses those gifts to the fullest extent allowed in our conciliar tradition.

We envision of a church where old and young alike thirst for the Word of God. Faithful to the catholic tradition, we seek a Multi-Lateral Communion that lives out its beliefs in a daily spirituality and applies moral norms to the demands of everyday life.

We seek to be a people that celebrate life and love, healing and forgiveness through the sacraments as a worshipping community that praises God through the conscious, full and active participation of the entire assembly in the patterns of Historic catholic worship East and West

We are called to be a trilateral communion that wrestles with the difficult issues of the day with a radical spirit of faith. We claim a call to be a people that lives out the gospel of life, feeding the hungry and visiting the prisoner, sheltering the homeless and caring for the dying, offering hope to the addicted and support to those with burdensome pregnancies. It is a people that do not fear to raise a prophetic voice in pursuit of justice and peace for all.

Trusting that such a vision is no idle dream but the very promise of the Gospel, we call the orthodox faithful East and West in the spirit of conciliar tradition to pray for the making plans to move us towards the inheritance of the faith once delivered to the saints.