



What Is a Rite; What Is a Church?

The distinction between the words “rite” and “church” is an important one. In the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, a particular term is used to describe the Eastern Catholic Churches: it is “**church sui juris**,” or “self-governing church.” More precisely, the Code of Canons, in canon 27, defines “church *sui juris*” as follows: A group of Christian faithful united by a hierarchy according to the norm of law which the supreme authority of the Church expressly or tacitly recognizes...”

In the same Code of Canons, canon 28 defines “rite” as: “the liturgical, theological, spiritual, and disciplinary patrimony, culture and circumstances of history of a distinct people, by which its own manner of living, the faith is manifested in each Church *sui juris*.” The Code of Canons goes on to state that the [Eastern Catholic] “rites” referred to in the code arise from the Alexandrian, Antiochene, Armenian, Chaldean, and Constantinopolitan (Byzantine) traditions. Each “**church sui juris**” follows one of these **rites**.”

Thus, we can see that a *rite* refers to the way in which one expresses one’s faith, while *Church* refers to the Christian *community* united to its duly presiding hierarchy.

Therefore, every Eastern Catholic “Church” is entrusted with the Great Commission: to preach the Good News and to “make disciples of all the nations.” Eastern Catholic Churches do this while remaining faithful to the legacy of a holy tradition, called a *rite*, through which Christ is known and worshiped.



The Byzantine-Ruthenian Church (*sui juris*) is a member of the Catholic Community of Churches, professing one faith but expressing that faith through the ancient and beautiful Byzantine Tradition, a tradition flavored for more than 1,000 years by the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe.

With our Archeparch, Archbishop Judson, of the Pittsburgh Metropolita and our Eparch, Bishop Andrew, of the Eparchy (Diocese) of Passaic, we are in union and in communion with the Church of Rome and all other Eastern Catholic Churches.

Remarks from Pope John Paul II Regarding the Eastern Catholic Churches in America

SPEAKING TO A GROUP OF AMERICAN BISHOPS FROM PENNSYLVANIA AND NEW JERSEY who were in Rome for their *ad limina* visit on March 12, 1998, Pope John Paul II said this about the presence of Eastern Catholics in the U.S.:

“A particularly rich form of the diversity which builds up the Body of Christ is found in the Eastern-rite Churches present alongside the Latin Church in many parts of your country. I am especially pleased to greet the Archeparchs [archbishops] and Eparchs [bishops] taking part in this *ad limina* visit. The Eastern Catholics who live in the United States constitute a natural bridge between East and West. On one hand they make known by direct experience the Christian East and, on the other, they contribute to the development of the Oriental Churches in their countries of origin by witnessing to the acquisitions of the West and by providing spiritual and material support for people in their homeland. In order to fulfill this twofold task, it is essential that they maintain and deepen the sense of belonging to their specific ecclesial tradition...

The pastors of the Eastern Churches face new and demanding challenges in ensuring that the faithful recently arrived in the United States are properly integrated into their respective ecclesial communities. **Serious consideration must also be given to ways of addressing the problems arising from the dispersal of the faithful, who**

continue to leave the areas where their community was traditionally present and where their ecclesial identity was more easily preserved, to live in other parts of the country.”

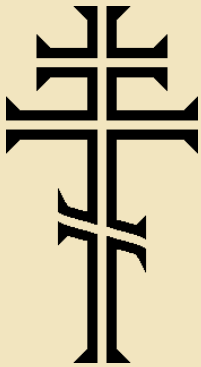
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POPE JOHN PAUL II addressed the members, officials and staff of the **PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY** when he received them in an audience during their plenary assembly on February 19. Excerpts from his speech:



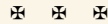
“In my encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint*, I wished to stress the importance of one of the fruits of the ecumenical movement: rediscovering brotherhood.

These aspects highlight the great need for close collaboration between Latin and Oriental Bishops in order to safeguard and guarantee the legitimate diversity which constitutes the richness of the Church’s universality. **I urge my Brother Bishops of the Latin rite to foster greater knowledge and appreciation of the Eastern Heritage which is an integral part of the Catholic expression of the faith. In this way all the faithful will have a more thorough understanding of the Christian experience, and the Catholic community will be capable of giving a more complete Christian response to the expectations of men and women of today.”**



Byzantine Catholic Mission of Upper Montgomery County

A Mission of Epiphany of Our Lord Byzantine Catholic Church
Annandale, Virginia



Very Rev. Fr. John G. Basarab, Administrator
Fr. Alexei Michalenko • Fr. Daniel Grigassy, O.F.M.

✠ *Our mission community...*

was established in October 1996 to meet the spiritual needs of Byzantine Catholics living in northern Montgomery County, southern Frederick County, and adjoining areas and to continue the movement toward Christian unity.

✠ *We celebrate our faith...*

in a diverse community. We welcome all, regardless of ethnic or religious background who are committed to develop a deeper understanding of the Christian faith expressed in the Byzantine tradition and spirituality, and who wish to work towards the full communion of the Catholic and Orthodox Churches as sister Churches of the One Universal Church.

✠ *We root our faith...*

in the Holy Scriptures, the Apostolic Tradition, and the Holy Tradition of the Byzantine Church.

✠ *We profess our Christian faith...*

in its universal dimension, in communion with our Holy Ecumenical Pontiff, the Pope of Rome.

✠ *We reach out...*

to those in need, the lonely, the marginalized.

✠ *We care...*

for and about all those in our community and all those who choose to join us in worshipping the Thrice-Blessed Trinity ...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

✠ *We continually resolve...*

to gather in His Name, share the truth of our Faith, and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to everyone.

***Glory to Jesus Christ!
Glory Forever!***

Montgomery County Mission

Currently meeting at:

Mother of God Community School

20501 Goshen Road

Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879

301-482-0282

www.montgomerybyz.org

Epiphany of Our Lord Church

3410 Woodburn Road

Annandale, Virginia

703-573-3986 • 703-573-0344 (fax)

Parish Office Hours:

10 am - 2 pm Monday-Friday

9 am - 1 pm Sunday



The Byzantine Christian Mission

"As the Greeks did for the Slavs, so we must do for America."

*Judson M. Procyk,
Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh,
Byzantine-Ruthenian Catholic Church in America*

As SS. Cyril and Methodius brought the Christian Faith from Constantinople to the Slavic peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, and as they brought it to America, we are called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to witness our Byzantine Catholic Faith to everyone in America.

*"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations.
Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit."*

Matthew 28:19

