

Saints Cyril and Methodius: Co-Patrons of Europe

ST. METHODIUS

869 – Consecrated Archbishop for Diocese of Pannonia

Named Papal Legate “ad gentes” (for the Slav peoples)

Held the Episcopal See of Sirmium

“For full catholicity, every nation, every culture has its own part to play in the universal plan of salvation. Every particular tradition, every local Church must remain open and alert to the other Churches and traditions and, at the same time, to universal and catholic communion; were it to remain closed in on itself, it too would run the risk of becoming impoverished.”

(Slavorum Apostoli, §27)

Tribulations:

- ✠ Imprisoned for 2 years, charged with invading the Episcopal jurisdiction of another
 - Set free by Pope John VIII
- ✠ New sovereign of Greater Moravia, Prince Svatopluk, was hostile to his work
 - Svatopluk was opposed to the Slavonic liturgy
 - He spread doubts in Rome as to Methodius’ orthodoxy
- ✠ **880** – Methodius is called to defend himself from these sorts of charges
- ✠ He is cleared by Pope John VIII who issues the Bull *Industriae Tuae*
 - This bull restores prerogatives granted to the liturgy in Slavonic

881 or 882 – Methodius goes to Constantinople

Receives similar recognition of legitimacy and orthodoxy from Byzantine Emperor and Patriarch Photius

Last years of life – continues making translations of Sacred Scripture, liturgical books, works of the Fathers of the Church, and the Nomocanon (ecclesiastical and Byzantine civil laws)

“The conviction held by the holy Brothers from Salonika, namely that each local Church is called to enrich with its own endowments the Catholic ‘pleroma’, was in perfect harmony with their evangelical insight that the different conditions of the life of the individual Christian Churches can never justify discord, disagreement and divisions in the profession of the one faith and in the exercise of charity.”

(Slavorum Apostoli, §13)

They allowed their catechetical methods to be *tested by the Church*.

Went to Rome to submit to examination

Submitted to the approval of the Holy See

Confirming the mission they had been given by patriarch of Constantinople

Points to universality of the Church

Calls for us to seek unity with the Eastern Orthodox

Precursors of ecumenism

Strove for unity

Influence of Saints Cyril and Methodius

Direct influence: Greater Moravia

Moravia, Slovakia, Pannonia

Wider influence: by their pupils

Bohemia especially

First Prince of Bohemia, Bozyvoj (Borivoj) – probably baptized acc. to Slavonic Rite

After fall of Greater Moravia, Bohemia assigned to Bishop of Regensburg

Latin begins to be used

Still a mixture of Slavonic with Latin in the liturgy

Christianity spread to Poland through Bohemia

Other places too, including Russia

“not only carried out their mission with full respect for the culture already existing among the Slav peoples, but together with religion they eminently and unceasingly promoted and extended that culture. By analogy, today the Churches of ancient origin can and must help the young Churches and peoples to mature in their own identity and progress in it.”

(Slavorum Apostoli, §26)

“The Church ... the universal sign and sacrament of salvation and of the unity of the human race” *(Slavorum Apostoli, 27)*