

The Cross of Antioch

The following is an historical document from the archives of the Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch U.S.A. It was written by Bishop Lowell Paul Wadle who was a co-consecrator of the Rev. Father Herman Adrian Spruit on June 22, 1957 when Father Spruit was consecrated a bishop. Bishop Charles Hampton of the Liberal Catholic Church was his main consecrator.



The Cross of Antioch is one of the most profound expressions of the whole counsel of God, cast in metal and fashioned with a precious stone, it epitomizes a material and non-verbal form. This stylized Cross is the creation of the genius mind of Archbishop Lowell Paul Wadle, whose philosophy, as expressed in this symbolic rendition of Christendom's central emblem redirected the thrust of our Faith into the earlier Gnostic and Kabalistic direction. In this one act he restored the thinking of this Mother Church of Christianity to a position that re-affirms some of the basic assumptions of the early Apostolic Church.

When upon the transition of the two men, who held the Patriarchate of this Church, Bishop Robert Raleigh and Bishop Lowell Paul Wadle, Archbishop Herman Adrian Spruit restored the Vilatte Line into a single succession, as had been the intent of the Bishops Wadle and Raleigh, and chose the Antioch Cross as the official Logo of this Church for all posterity.

The basic cross motif itself is known as an Eastern or Greek Cross, reminding us that the earliest origins of the whole Church stem from the East. Thus affirmation is given that the Light Rises in the East. The Eastern type of Cross stands in sharp contrast to the sharp, square, and rigid lines of the Roman Cross, a symbol of legal restraint, torture, punishment, and suffering. The four arms of the Greek Cross terminating in threefold endings convey the idea of the fullness of life, the gracious beauty of being, and the expanding growth of the Christian thrust into never ending extensions of a living faith.

This high spiritual idealism is given concrete expression in the human heart and mind by the symbol of the Red Rose at its center and the four branches reaching out in the four directions of the compass. Thus there is proclaimed to the world the fact of a saving grace that shall be to all people. Rich significance is given to the Rose upon the Altar, where the vertical thrust of the Divine Imperative crosses, cancels and captures, and thereby grants freedom to the finite nature of the human will.

The Rose upon the Cross, together with its branches and leaves was restored to our Faith by our brothers and adepts of the Order of the Rosy Cross. These were men and women who, having witnessed the progressive deterioration of Christianity succeeded in rekindling the remaining embers of a dying Faith by restoring the life and meaning of the Holy Mysteries unique to the Christian position. Thus it behoves us to be ever grateful to those men and women who served as Guardians of a most Holy Faith. Indeed every generation is to be mindful of preserving the pristine beauty of the Christian dynamic. For the rose signifies, not a system of belief, but a dynamic thrust of life. Furthermore, the Rose, its petals and branches signify that Christianity is an eclectic system and a syncretic force.

It is an ever growing stream, which absorbs the tributaries it meets, thus becoming enriched by the contributions of others, whose different concepts of the One Truth become indigenous

aspects of the total Christian Stream. It is by this acceptance of the cumulative wealth of soul brought by others, there has been set in motion a reciprocal sharing that culminates in a World Faith in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

The Red Rose on the Cross alludes to the fact that ours is a Mystery Religion, which expresses itself as a Sacramental System, regardless of what Age it serves or regardless of the Name it will ultimately assume. As the Red Rose is emblematic of the centrality of Love and Beauty, so essential in the expression of this Faith, we learn that Love and Beauty are only found as the limited and horizontal lines of the earthbound human will, which is transformed by the thrust of the vertical inflow of the Divine Initiative into the human self.

Humanity everywhere is reminded of the twelve Apostles by the Twelve Leaves of the growing Rose. Their ministry constituted the origins of the Church, that it was they who founded the Church. The basis of a design which was given by our Lord Jesus was but imperfectly followed. Thus while we respond with gratitude to the Founders of the Faith, we do not despair over its imperfections, inasmuch as they were motivated by issues both human and divine. We, too, are Founders of the Faith, as each of us seeks the perfect pattern which is lodged within our soul. The Church will ever grow.

This number twelve also reminds us of the many allusions to that number in Biblical lore, such as the Twelve Tribes of Israel, as well as its use in modern life in the twelve inches of the foot, and the twelve that constitutes a jury, symbolic of the Rule of Law so essential to the practice of jurisprudence in a Republic. The symbol of the Triangle straightway unites us with the heart of the Divine Being, whose Wisdom we encounter in the Trinitarian Faith of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Furthermore, that we are made in the image and likeness of God, and that the threefold expression of our whole nature is seen in this central fact of our spiritual anatomy.

The Ten Hebrew Letters, the Yods, within the Triangle, convey a rich and mind gripping story. The Ten Yods are also known as the Tetractys of Pythagoras. If rightly understood they hold the key to every mystery and the answer to every question. He who is in possession of that key has found the Inst word of which the ancients speak. The meaning of that key cannot be grasped or conveyed by the human mind. It is given by God to every earnest, sincere, and dedicated devotee of the Mysteries.

Whenever men and women assemble in the Name and Spirit of the Mysteries, there are those who have given evidence that they have found the “Key” or “Word”, though these have been very few. In this Church of Antioch, the present Patriarch Herman Adrian Spruit having found it, was given a symbolic writing that contained the wisdom of this Key. As he received this symbolic representation of that Key from his predecessor, Archbishop Wadle, so he did convey it to his successor. In the possession of that documentary evidence of the Tetractys of Pythagoras is the identity of this Ecumenical Patriarchate/Matriarchate and the succession of our Apostolic Line established.

The Ten Yods within the Triangle fix and firm the fact that the Kabbalah is the soul of the soul of the Law of God, our ultimate Source of Scripture, and the repository of the Wisdom contained in the Ten Sephiroth of the Tree of Life. Since all the Ten Sephiroth are representations of the emanation of God and reveal God in His various forms of manifestation from Kether, the Highest, to Malkuth, the Lowest, we are bidden to seek and find God on every plane of Being, even in the depths of ourselves and of our fellow human beings. In one manner of manifestation or another, wherever it may be, there is God.

The Ten Yods, as symbols of the Ten Sephiroth, deny the fact and presence of evil. That which we so denominate must be seen as no more than a limited manifestation of God and to be seen as endowed with the potential of Divinity. Though we are not expected to embrace the knave and the scoundrel with arms of affectionate love, we will yet extend to others that objective goodwill which belongs to our kinsman. There is no place, even in the farthest reaches of the Universe, where accusation, judgment, or condemnation has any place for any of God's creation.

With this we hold the fact that evil can be overcome only within ourselves. We conquer only as we strive upward and forward on the Evolutionary Path, for where they are, we once were ourselves. Our function is to move from Sephiroth to Sephiroth on a Path determined by the twenty two letters of the Sacred Alphabet, also known as the Major Arcana of the Tarot, and Psalm 119.

The fact that the Tetractys are superimposed on the Cross denotes the Universality of our Faith. By the Tetractys, a later revelation which is seen in the Cross of earlier days, we recognize that our Faith is more than what is perceived in the static antiquities of an apostolic edict. It is a growing force, ever enlarging its scope, always ready to receive that New Light which forever bursts forth from the Golden Orb behind the Cross and penetrating all of life with its transforming glory and warmth.

That Circle representing the Sun behind the Cross denotes that ours is the faith orientated to the future. As it looks forward into all the tomorrows, so also it rests on a spiritual tradition that reaches into the antiquities of the Gnostics, the Essenes, and the Therapeutae of Egypt. Sun worshipers were they all, even as we are. Him, Whom we call the Son of God, whether it be Christ, the Lord Jesus, some Avatar, or you, each in the measure of his own fullness is a Son of God, and as such is fully accountable to the Light.

Finally, the Five Pointed Star is the Star of Bethlehem, the Star of Initiation, the Way by which we find entrance to that vast and glorious Mystery within us all. From that we learn that this, which we recognize as evil is not caused by the vindictive perversities of human nature. Nor is it the capricious nature of an impersonal God. We learn that the totality of our human nature is God's Temple of Initiation through which we travel until the King's Chamber be found.

The troublesome vicissitudes of life are essential parts of the Initiatory Path by which we reach the Realm of God. He who bemoans his fate or strikes back in rebellion, thereby rejects his initiation and spurns the grace that seeks to lift him. Such a one forfeits the boon of his salvation. But he who transmutes that which appears as evil by an acceptance of the Path of Growth will soon learn to leave behind the evils of the present and escalate on the ladder or evolution to an ever more exalted manifestation or life.

The Five Star Points are indicative of the Five Kingdoms of Nature. The rays of the Sun penetrating them all, tell us that all manifestation, even to the tiniest microbe, are irradiated by the life of God; that anywhere your eyes may see, you will find that there is no death. Through that long journey, which is nearing its completion, all have sojourned the various points of the Star. Now, as we are nearing the end of this journey, we are preparing to leave the Kingdom of Humanity and make ready for our entrance into the Kingdom of God.

On our peregrinations through many lives we meet the same type of trials and tests. Differing in application, they are always the same in nature. These are represented by the Five Starpoints.

While we meet them again and again, on each trip we encounter them on a higher plane until, at last, we leave to return no more, when we shall hear the blessed words; “My Son, My Daughter, enter into the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.”

The Five Great Mysteries of Adversity are delineated in five Great Mysteries of the Holy Bible and are represented by the stories of Adah, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, and Martha. These stories are not delineated herewith but one who is a seeker on the Path must discover for oneself. Since many levels of evolution are occupied by the renders of these words, it is incumbent on each to find the interpretation which is relevant for themselves. Each of us must live within the orientation which is germane to ourselves. In so doing the interpretation must always be directed to oneself. Tolerance and sympathetic understanding is granted to each of us by reason of our sojourn together on this glorious trip to the promised land.

We reach the climax of this story in a final and powerful thought as we bring this story of the Cross of Antioch to its culmination. Never, never, release your hold on this sublime metaphysical affirmation. The Rays of the Sun of God reach into every human life. These are now manifest in each human life, yours, of course, to transform each discordant note into a chorus of praise and glory. This can happen now Accept it, now! Teach it now!

We have reached the point where the Story of the Church of Antioch might begin again, for the most has not been told. This is only the beginning.

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