



The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Cathedral

## THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH Part. I

### Introduction

A member of the Oriental Orthodox family of Churches, the Church of Ethiopia shares with them in essence a common faith. This faith, the churches believes, is derived from the apostolic heritage and borne witness to in the New Testament against the background of the Old Testament. It has been expounded by the fathers of the Church both in the ancient councils and in their teaching. It continues as a living reality in the church in its life of worship, preaching and discipline. In a word, then in the church of Ethiopia is a community which has inherited and which holds to the historic Christian faith as it has been handed down through the centuries. What is attempted here is, only to give a brief introduction to the faith of the Church of Ethiopia. (1)

### The Mystery of the Holy Trinity

God is the only eternal Being. Beyond time, space and all limitations, He abides without a beginning and without an end. "Thou hast no beginning," says in prayer the Ethiopian priest who celebrates the Anaphora of St. John, "but Thou bringest all things to their end. Infinite art Thou, but for all things Thou didst set bounds."

God is the Creator of all that exists. Having made them all, He continues to sustain them. The Lord is high, says the Anaphora. Yet "all were created through His grace, and all live through His kindness". Perfect in Himself, He continually imparts perfection to His creatures. Individuals as well as the entire historical process are ultimately under His control. God is not a passive perfection or an abstract ideal, but a dynamic reality who is ever active in bringing all that exists to the final destiny which He has for each of them as well as for the whole created realm.

God is one in three and three in one. The unity of God is nor convinced in the sense of an arithmetical digit nor of a solitary condition, but in that of an all-inclusive perfection. So the one is also eternally three. He is, affirms the Anaphora, "three names and one God, three prosopa and one appearance, three persons and one essence".

The unity of God is confessed as the unity of Godhead - Melekote as the word is used in Ethiopia. The one Godhead is shared equally and eternally by the three Persons - Akal as they are referred to in Ethiopia. As in other parts of the Christian world, in Ethiopia also there were men who tried to interpret the doctrine in various ways, there were, for instance, persons who refused to accept the personal distinctions in the one Godhead and others who insisted that the three Persons were three Gods. Both these views were rejected by the Church.

God is eternally Father, eternally Son, and eternally Holy Spirit. "The Father beget His son without days or hours; and when He beget Him, His Father was not separated from Him." Beyond time, God is the eternal One. That One is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. No one of the three Persons is prior to the other two in time. "The One was not before the Other", says the Anaphora, "and the Second was not before the Third." But "we proclaim that the Father lived with His Son, and that the Son lived with His Father before creation, and before the heavens and the earth were made."

In the one co-eternal and co-equal Trinity, the Father is the eternal source if the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is born of, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from, the Father. While affirming that the Son and the Holy Spirit derive each of them His respective being eternally from the Father, it is insisted that "the Father did not beget the Son to help Him in His work before the world was created and the existence of the Holy Spirit is not to contribute wisdom and work."

It is not with the Deity as it was with Abraham who was older than Isaac. Or with Isaac who was older than Jacob, but the Father is not older than the Son, neither is the Son older than the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not younger than the

Son, neither is the Son younger than His Father

The Father is different from the Son and the Holy Spirit only in that He alone is Father. The Son alone is Son, and the Holy Spirit alone dwells in us and makes God known to us. So the priest who celebrates the Anaphora of St. John says in prayer, "But thy living Holy Spirit knoweth the depth of Thy Godhead. He has declared to us Thy nature, and told us about Thy oneness. He taught thy unity, and helped to know Thy Trinity." The one Godhead is, therefore, in the Father in perfection. From Him the same Godhead is received in perfection by the Son through His eternal generation; and from the Father again the same Godhead in perfection is derived eternally by the Holy Spirit. It is affirmed at the same time with equal force that "the father is not grater than the Son, and the Son is not less than His Father," and the Holy Spirit in not grater or less than either the Father or Son. Thus the unity of God is affirmed by confessing that the Godhead is one, and that the Godhead is eternally in the Father. The Son and the Holy Spirit receive the same Godhead eternally and in perfection from the Father.

There is also another equally important emphasis regarding divine unity. This lies in the affirmation that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are eternally inseparably together. In everything that the Father does, the Son and the Holy Spirit are there with Him; in all the things that the Son does, the Father and the Holy Spirit are there with Him; and in all Activities of the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son are also with him. It is affirmed that "the father, being Father, doth not give orders to the Son; and the Son, being Son, is not exalted; and the Holy Spirit is equal. Both the divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit is equal. But the divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit and are one God, one Kingdom, one authority and one government."

If we may put the emphasis in our words, the term "Father" with reference to God signifies the divine reality which originates everything; the Son indicates the divine reality implying all that is originated; and the Holy Spirit signifies the divine reality which dwells in creatures relating them both individually and corporately to God. The eternal God, as we have noted already, is the all-inclusive perfection. He creates all things; He sustains them; and He guides them to a final destiny.

Infinite love, God creates and sustains the world and all that there is in it. It is God the Father who bring all this into being; but it is accomplished in reality through the Son, and is perfected in the Holy Spirit. All this is one activity of God consisting of different aspects. Grounded in the Son and upheld and perfected by the Holy Spirit, the created world belongs to the Father. In His love God the Father sent His only Son into the world in order to accomplish its salvation; in the same love God the Son came and worked out the world's salvation; in the same love again God the Holy Spirit perfects the salvation thus given. All these are manifestation at different levels of the same activity of God in relation to the world. (1)

### **The meaning of Holy Trinity (Pope Shenouda III)**

#### **The Mystery of the Incarnation**

The incarnation of God the Son is primarily for the salvation of the world. Salvation means to restoration of the world to its direct and unimpeded relation with God.

As God made it, the world was very good. But evil came there in it. God who made the world is ever concerned and active to save it from the clutches of evil and restore it to the destiny for which it has been created. Incarnation is God's supreme act in saving the world.

God the Son entered the earthly realm of existence in a unique way by taking over Himself a perfectly real human life. This is incarnation by which God the Father who created the world through God the Son and perfects it through God the Holy Spirit, manifests through the Son His saving work for the world and completes it in the Holy Spirit. As creation is the work of God, redemption is also God's work.

God who created the world made man as the crown of creation. Made in God's image and endowed with creaturely freedom and autonomy, man seeks God and reflects on His being and nature. Through the wrong exercise of man's freewill there came on him and the world at large misery and suffering as well as sin and evil. The salvation of the world, therefore, required pre-eminently the healing of man. It is this healing which the Incarnation is believed by the Church to have aimed to accomplish.

In the Incarnation, God the Son united to Himself real and perfects manhood. Conceived in her womb by Mary the Virgin

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through the work of the Holy Spirit, He was born in the world as a real man. At the very moment of His conception, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, a personal manhood was formed in the Virgin's womb in union with God the Son. Thus God the Son united to Himself the manhood taken from the human mother and was born as perfect God and perfect man in the real sense.

Jesus Christ, the incarnate God the Son, is one Person, continuous with Godhead and continuous with manhood. In Him Godhead and manhood continue each in its integrity and perfection, in a state of indivisible and unconfused union. On this ground the Church of Ethiopia, with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches, affirms that Jesus Christ is not two) natures, but one incarnate nature of God the Word. The "one" here is not meant to ignore the dynamic continuance of either Godhead or manhood in the one Christ, but to confess a real incarnation whereby God the Son entered the world of jous as a man. He is indeed God the incarnate Son even while He is found to undergo the frailty of manhood.

Living as He did a life of unbroken communion with God, He was absolutely sinless. Maintaining this union in the most toward and real sense, He entered into our battle with sin and evil as a man, and fell a victim to our death. By His Suffering and ignominious death on the cross He scored a victory over the forces of evil, and by His resurrection from the dead He lives eternally in His natural unity with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, and in his unbroken and indivisible union with the manhood. In Jesus Christ, then, we have the incarnate, crucified and glorified God the Son, who is Himself our brother, signifying the final destiny awaiting the human race.

Regarding the Person of Jesus Christ also there have been serious discussions in Ethiopia. But the Church holds to the view that He is God the Son in His incarnate state. Bom of God the Father eternally as God the Son, He was born of the Virgin Mother as a real man. There are a number of affirmations in the Anaphora regarding Him, some of which may be noted here.

1. Jesus Christ was born of Our Lady Mary for our salvation. He who does not believe in His birth from Holy Mary, let him be anathema.

2. In this way, after being conceived in the womb of the Virgin, God the Son was born as a man. By His conception, God the Son became incarnate "taking our nature." The Son who is born of the Father without a mother, was born as a man without a Father. "He put on mortal flesh and made it immortal," and He came truly into the world "clothed in the body which He took from us."

3. His human birth was a unique event, whereby God the Son "came down through the will of His Father" and was made man. "His humanity was not inferior because He had no Father to be born of His seed." This is incarnation, whereby God the Son entered the historical realm in order to save it forever.

4. In the Incarnation, God the Son united to Himself manhood and "made it one with his Godhead without mixture or confusion, without division or alternation." Therefore, "His Godhead was not separated from His manhood, not for an hour, nor for the twinkling of an eye."

5. God the Son came to us "without being separated from His Godhead." After being born, "He grew like an infant, and grew little by little until He matured like a man. At the age of thirty He was baptized in the Jordan." He was tempted by the devil; "He hungered and thirsted," He went about "preaching the gospel of the kingdom of Heaven." By this, who is perfect like God the Father and is His image walked among us in our image.

6. He suffered passion and death voluntarily on our behalf and for our sakes. He became hungry as man, and granted food to many with very little bread. He thirsted as a man who dies, but changed water into wine as being able to give life to all.

They bet Him on the head as a servant and He set free from the yoke of sin as Lord of all. He suffered all. He cured the blind with His spittle and gave us the Holy Spirit by receiving the spittle of the unclean. He who forgiveth sin was accused as a sinner by them. The judge of judges was judges by them. He was crucified on the tree to destroy sin, was crucified with the sinner to control with the righteous. He died through His will, and was buried willingly; He died to destroy death, He died to give life to the dead; He was buried to raise those who were buried, to keep the living, to justify the impure, to justify the sinners, to gather together those who were scattered, and to turn the sinners to glory and honour.

Such passages in the Anaphora are too numerous to be reproduced or even noted in the present context. They show that Jesus Christ was at once God and man without division or confusion. The same Christ, God the Son incarnate, expressed the divine actions as well as the human. He is one Christ, in whom God and man are indivisibly united.

7. As to the absolute reality of the suffering and death, there are passages almost without number. We shall reproduce here two of them, one taken from the Anaphora of St. James of Serug, and the other from the Anaphora of St. Dioscorus. The priest who celebrates using the first of these two Anaphora's says in prayer:

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O Lord, Thou wast struck with the hands of a servant, beaten with sticks, pierced with a spear, and they caused Thee to drink a little gall with vinegar. While Thou was God able to prevent them, thou didst not prevent them, Thou didst become patient even to death; all this thou didst accept for the love of man.

The Anaphora of St. Dioscorus contains the following passages bearing on the point at issue in the present context. The priest says there in prayer:

He was laid in the manger of the cattle, received the presents of His kingdom, and wept as infants do, asking for food from the breast of His mother. As to suffering and death in particular, we have passages like the following. They crucified Him on the tree, nailed him with nails, beat Him on the head with sticks, pierced his side with a spear, to Him who gave drink to the Israelites from a rock they gave to drink gall mixed with myrrh in His thirst. The immortal died, died to destroy death, died to quicken the dead as He promised them with the word of covenant.

8. Death was not the end of His dispensation. "He rose from the dead, absolutely without corruption and set is free from the yoke of sin." The risen Christ ascended into heaven and is with God the Father. He has triumphed over death and decay.

These and the many other passages in the Liturgy show that the manhood of Christ was absolutely real and perfect. But everywhere the emphasis is on the unity of Jesus Christ. It is affirmed that He is God the Son in His incarnate state. As regards the Incarnation, it is clearly shown that He was conceived in the Virgin's womb, and that He was born as a real man. At the very moment of His conception, through the Holy Spirit, actual manhood was formed from the human mother in union with Himself. It is to Him who was thus conceived that the Virgin gave birth. Therefore, Jesus Christ is indivisibly one. The two natures of Godhead and manhood which came into union in Him continue in the one Christ, each in its absolute integrity and perfection with its respective properties, without change or division. Each of them continues in its dynamic reality, not in a quiescent state, so that Christ is God and man at the same time.

The Church of Ethiopia, with the other Oriental Orthodox Churches, has refused to accept the Chalcedonian Definition of the Faith with the affirmation that Christ is "made known in two natures." If by the expression the Churches which accept the Definition mean only that Godhead and manhood continue in the one Christ dynamically, this is the teaching of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. On the other hand, if the expression is taken in the sense that Godhead and manhood continue in Christ only in a state of moral union, there is a basic difference on this issue between the churches of the Chalcedonian tradition and the Church of Ethiopia, which should be noted. (1)

### **The Incarnation (St. Athanasius)**

#### **[The Mystery of Baptism**

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mk. 16:6). Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the spirit he can not enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5). In accordance with such writings of the Holy Scriptures, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church baptizes male infants at the age of 40 days and female infants at the age of 80 days, (Lev. 12:2-7). Yet if an infant is sick, so that the infant may not die before being baptized and be subjected to the unchangeable order of the Lord Jesus Christ, "unless one is born of water and the spirit he can not enter the kingdom of God", the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church baptizes infants just as they come even prior to the above fixed baptismal dates. In addition, if an adult believes and requests baptism, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church willingly complies and baptizes him or her.

#### **Few words from the Holy Scriptures that testify Baptism**

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt. 28:19). And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of the Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts. 2:38). "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts. 10:48). "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into His death" (Rome 6:3). "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free- and all were made to drink of one spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves us (you), not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience..." (1 Pet. 3:12). Such words testify to the usefulness of our Baptism. (2)

#### **The Mystery of the Holy Communion; what is Holy Communion?**

It is a sacrament through which we are far off from the domination of sin and get nearer or attain to communion with God. In this sacrament, the faithful receive the body of Jesus Christ, the true and living God, who is the source of life and

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destruction. Based on this example, Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world has founded the Mystery of the Holy Communion by offering Himself as a true sacrifice on the cross. (Ex. 5-15 Isa. 53: 7 Jn. 1:29). "For the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God,"(Heb. 7:19)

The Preparation and Presentation of the Holy Communion is in the form of bread and wine; i.e. like that of Melchizedek King of Salem's presentation to Abraham (Gen. 14:18). Why the Holy Communion is called Mystery is that by partaking of the visible Bread and Wine, we attain to invisible heavenly blessings and eternal life. "...Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in Me; and I in him," (Jn. 6: 53-57). "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, (will be examined by the Blessed Holy Trinity of being unworthy) and will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the Bread and drink of the Cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment upon himself That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we should not be judged' (1 Cor. 11:27-32). It is, therefore, based on this teaching that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church calls (upon her followers to be pure from sin, reveille strange thoughts, fornication etc. and to receive the true flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified upon the cross on Holy Friday for the salvation of the world. The priest when putting the bread on the plate and the wine in the cup (chalice) blesses them. During the service of the Holy Liturgy, the bread turns into the true flesh of the Son of God and the wine into the true blood of the Son of God [Athanasius said, "we believe that the bread and wine before the priest blesses them are simple bread and wine, but after; [the blessing they are truly turned into the flesh and the blood of the Son of God, "Therefore, what the Apostles received! [on the night of Good Thursday, and what has been sacrificed upon the cross on Good Friday, and what is still being: [offered today and to the end of the world in the four corners of the world is one and the same. St. John of Chrysostom; said that, the poor sacrifice which the priests offer every time is one and the same sacrifice, which has been offered upon) the cross.

He (St. John) also confirms that it is not a symbol, but the real and blood of the Son of God.

Supporting scriptural words about the teaching Of the Holy Communion "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, take, eat; this is my Body. And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, saying, drink of it, all of you; for this is my Blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins," (Mt. 26: 26-29; Mk, 14: 22; Lk. 22: 19). "Truly truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world" (Jn. 6: 32; 35; 51-59), such passages confirm the doctrine of the Holy Communion. (2)

### **[The Mystery of the Resurrection**

"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5: 28-29). St. Paul said. "There is one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15: 41-42).

(Supporting Scriptural Words Concerning the Resurrection

" For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the son and believes in Him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 5: 25, 6: 40, 11:25) " Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence" (2 Cor. 4:14). " For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call; and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first," (1 Thess. 4:16). "Having a hope in God which these themselves accept that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust. " (Acts 24: 15, Dan. 12: 2). The Resurrection of those already raised in the Scripture is an evidence of our Resurrection.

Elijah raised one child (1 Kg. 17: 21-22) Elisha raised the Son of the Shunammite (2 Kg 4:35) a dead man raised on the touch of the bone of Elisha (2 Kg. 13: 21).

A daughter of a ruler was raised by the Lord (Mt. 9: 25). The dead who were raised on the crucifixion day of the Lord. (Mt. 27:52)

The Son of a widow at Nail was raised by the Lord (Lk. 7:15).

The raising of Lazarus at Bethany by the Lord (Jn. 11: 43-44)

Dorcas was raised by Peter (Acts 9: 40).

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The bodily living (life) of Enoch and Elijah is one indication of our resurrected eternal life. But our fundamental understanding of our raising is the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. As Amoniyos and Awsabeyos stated in the introduction of the Gospel, "He is risen so as to teach the Resurrection, of our bodies"

Based on the above teachings, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church offers belief and worships the High God who creates and rules. In this teaching, our church is in accordance with the ancient churches; such as Alexandrian, Syrian, Armenian, and Indian Orthodox Churches. (2)

### **Human Salvation**

The Incarnation is first and foremost for the salvation of the world, The salvation of the world means pre-eminently the redemption of the human race. The saving work of God accomplished through the Incarnation is to be appropriated by man, both individually and corporately. It is when this is done with reference to the entire human race that the work of salvation of the world will have been perfected. God Himself is carrying on this work through the Holy Spirit.

In his life and existence man includes both the individual and the corporate dimensions. The saving work accomplished by God in the Incarnation should, therefore, be assimilated and perfected in both these dimensions. It is to carry on this divine work that the Church is founded by God. The incarnate, crucified and risen Christ is in the Church, which is His body on earth, through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works in the Church through individual members as well as its community as a corporate body, in order to make the saving activity of God real to them. This is done through the various ministries of the Sacraments, preaching and teaching. In this way individual persons are inspired to dedicate their lives, and both individuals and communities are guided to carry forward the ministry of Jesus Christ in the social, economic, political and such other spheres of human life for the well-being of man and the world at large.

This concern is giving expression to in the Anaphora's of the Church of Ethiopia by including prayers for all these areas of life in the world. Thus prayers are offered for rains, that God may send them where they are needed; for waters of the rivers, that "God should fill them unto their due measure and bounds"; for the fruits of the earth, that "God may grant to the earth her fruit for sowing and for harvest"; and for the prevailing of the spirit of peace for the people. In the same way every liturgical celebration includes intercession for the Emperor as the Head of the State and for ecclesiastical leaders. Besides, traders, farmers and craftsmen, as well as those in need, sickness or oppression are specially remembered. Prayers are also offered for those who have fallen in any manner of sin. All these show that the entire realm of nature and all conditions of men and women are committed to divine protection and care at every service of worship.

The Christian's ultimate concern in life is not understood in terms merely of the hope for a blessed life in the world to come. On the other hand, this world itself is affirmed to belong to God. But the fact of evil in it is admitted, both in the natural realm and in the moral realm. Salvation is a present experience consisting in man's complete confidence and communion with God as well as his perfect peace and harmony with his fellow beings. This state of being which should be ours here and now should grow till it reaches its final culmination in the eternal realm. Thus salvation is a present reality which has a future reference. The Church has the responsibility to inspire its member to work for the well being of life in the world here and now and to proclaim the hope of eternal life in the world to come.

In this world man is entitled to individual freedom, social justice, economic sufficiency and such other rights as will enable him to develop his talents for the good of himself and of others. The Church as a body should stand for the realization of these rights. However, the Church of Ethiopia does not agree with the view that the Christian's concern is only to work for the welfare of man in this world. This world and our lives in it are nothing but transitory. No man can be absolutely sure of what will happen to him tomorrow. Furthermore, material prosperity does not as a rule lead to peaceful life, either for the individual or for peoples and nations. In any case, the Church of Ethiopia does not think that its mission is to build up exclusively a city in this world. The hope in the life of the world to come is an integral part of its faith.

The Apostolic Creed which is in use in the Church of Ethiopia has three sections bearing on our discussion in the present context. The first of them insists that "all creatures of God are good and there is nothing to be rejected, and the spirit, the life of the body, is pure and holy in all." The entire natural realm has been made pure and holy by God and all that is for man's regular use. The second passage affirms that "marriage is pure, and childbirth is undefiled, because God created Adam and Eve to multiply." This is a clear statement which shows that in the faith of the Church of Ethiopia, human society is of divine creation, so that the social, economic political and other such ties of man are divinely instituted. In the third passage there is the confession that we "believe in the resurrection of the dead, the righteous and sinners; and in the

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Day of Judgment when everyone will be recompensed according to his deeds." This statement affirms the eschatological hope in the Church's faith.

Putting the three ideas together, we can say that according to the faith of the Church of Ethiopia, the natural realm has been created by God, who has Himself placed man in the world as a member of society. There is a destiny awaiting man, and that is to be attained by him in the risen life in the world to come. In the face of evil and sin in this world of our God has worked out man's salvation through His incarnate Son, who rose from the dead and lives eternally offering us the assurance of a resurrection that will be ours also. (1)

### **A word in conclusion**

The eternal and triune God who is beyond time and space has created the world in time and space. He has redeemed the world and continues His work of perfecting the saving act. The salvation was accomplished by God through the suffering, death and resurrection of His incarnate Son and is perfected through His Holy Spirit.

In is this saving work of God that is represented in every celebration of the Holy Eucharist, which is not merely a memorial service to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But in it the Church offers itself and the whole-redeemed human race together with the natural realm of earthly existence to the triune God. This is why in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, as also in its various other acts of worship, the Church calls to remembrance the living and the departed sections of the communion of saints. This is done in the context of remembering the saving acts of God, not merely as past events, but as events which happened actually in the realm of history and which signify the continuous Kwork of God for the salvation of the world. The Service of the Holy Eucharist brings to us above all the assurance of the eschatological dimension of the Christian faith.

We proclaim Thy death, Lord and Thy holy resurrection, we believe in Thine ascension and Thy second coming, we glorify Thee, we offer our prayer unto Thee and supplicate Thee our Lord and our God.

Grant us, Lord, to do Thy will and Thy good pleasure at all times, and write our names in the book of life in the kingdom of heaven with all saints and martyrs, though Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, to Thee, with Him and with the Holy Spirit be glory and dominion, both now and ever and world without end.

Amen. (1)

(1) Written by V C Samuel  
"THE CHURCH OF ETHIOPIA A PANORAMA OF HISTORY AND SPIRITUAL LIFE"  
Addis Ababa-December 1970. A publication of the EOTC

(2) A short History, Faith and Order of The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, published by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Holy Synod, Addis Ababa 1983.

**The Divinity of Christ (Pope Shenouda III)**

**The Nature of Christ (Pope Shenouda III)**

**Comparative Theology (Pope Shenouda IH)**

Virgin Mary Ethiopian Orthodox Cathedral. Los Angeles. California.