Research and scientific committee

XXIV International Ecumenical Conference of Orthodox Spirituality
MARTYRDOM AND COMMUNION
Bose, 7–10 September 2016
in collaboration with the Orthodox Churches

“Martyrdom and communion” is the theme chosen for the 24th International Ecumenical Conference on Orthodox Spirituality, organized in collaboration with the Orthodox Churches, which will be held at the Bose Monastery on 7–10 September 2016.

The conference hopes to shed light on the close ties between the witness rendered to Christ by the martyrs and communion between the Churches in their scriptural and patristic foundations and in particular in the traditions of the various Orthodox Churches. The subject is dramatically present today in times of war and persecution that touch many Christian communities in the world. The experience of the martyrs of the twentieth century is a precious evangelical heritage for all the Churches and for all mankind.

The martyrdom of Jesus, the Christ, his blood shed on the cross for all (cf. Eph 2,13–14) grant us peace, communion of the Kingdom of heaven. This blood, more eloquent than that of Abel (cf. Hb 12,24), is a testimony of his infinitely merciful love for his own (cf. Jn 13,1) and of the Father’s love for the Church of his Son (cf. Jn 14,23), sealed by the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 14,15–17.26).
The martyrdom of Christ’s disciples from apostolic times to our own days is considered as the perfect glorification of God (Jn 17). Does it not testify that the Holy Spirit, in spite of the schisms and divisions that occurred in the Church’s history, does not abandon those who confess Jesus as the Lord of history, of the world, and of their life? There is a mysterious tie between martyrdom and the desire of the Holy Spirit that prods the Church to work at finding visible communion.

The sufferings and the death of Christian martyrs speak eloquently to us of the unity-communion of the heavenly Jerusalem, where the risen Christ, the Lamb seated on the throne, will gather around him the immense multitude of the redeemed of the earth (Rev 7,9) and will be all in all (Col 3,11). The martyrs’ cry is still heard: “How long, Sovereign, you who are holy and true, will it be before you make justice?” (Rev 6,10), and it joins that of the Spirit and the Bride: “Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev 22,20). The martyrs’ blood already witnesses to the Una Sancta.
In addition to the speakers, there will be official representatives of all the Orthodox Churches, of the Catholic Church, of the Church of England, Biblical scholars, patrologists, theologians, eastern and western monks and nuns from many countries.

The program, which will be made known shortly, has been drawn up by the Scientific committee, made up of: **Enzo Bianchi** (Bose), **Lino Breda** (Bose), **Sabino Chialà** (Bose), **Lisa Cremaschi** (Bose), **Luigi d’Ayala Valva** (Bose), **Adalberto Mainardi** (Bose), **Raffaele Ogliari** (Bose), **Antonio Rigo** (University of Venice), **Michael van Parys** (Abbey of Grottaferrata).

The International Ecumenical Conferences on Orthodox Spirituality are intended to be an occasion of fraternal meeting, exchange, and sharing, in common listening to the Word of God and in deepening knowledge of the Orthodox spiritual tradition. **The conference is open to all**.