

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all... Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”

*The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians*

“The authenticity of our diversity... is to be tested by the Scriptures as to whether it represents a faithful expression of our common confession of Christ and whether it tends towards the “unity of the Spirit” and the “building up of the Body” (Epheseni, 4:8-16). The diversity of which Paul writes constantly draws focus and meaning from the one Body which we are in Christ. Diversity is not good in itself. It is good when it flows from our unity in Christ and builds up in our ability to do the will of Christ in the society in which we live. We need to be a “diversity in unity”.

*Peter J. Blackburn*

“We are a nation of many nationalities, many races, many religions – bound together by a single unity, the unity of freedom and equality.”

*Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

“In a time when tolerance is frequently lacking, the promotion of unity in diversity could now be more relevant than ever... diversity is ultimately an expression of unity.”

*Mark A. Foster*

“Generally speaking, the Apocalypse as presented in the Book of Revelation is misunderstood, a misunderstanding arising from to different ways of interpretation. One is literal interpretation, which is the fundamentalist view. The other is a symbolic interpretation, which was St. Augustine’s belief. Thus the fundamentalists see the Apocalypse as the literal end of the world. Some forty-eight million Americans believe this will happen in their lifetime. The symbolic interpretation sees the Apocalypse as the end of the Christian eon, and a protracted time of some new spiritual dispensation coming into being.”

*William Van Dusen Wishard*

“What will be the consequences for religion and for arts, especially literature, if and when we conclude that the effort to produce a sustainable society has definitively failed? At that scientifically apocalyptic moment... actual extinction may still be far enough in the future that there will be time for a new kind of religion and a new kind of art to develop. These will be, no doubt, a religion and an art born of despair, but religion and art are precisely those products of the human spirit to which we turn in times of despair. The last days of the human race may be, not to speak at all flippantly, our finest hour.”

*Jack Miles*

“In every city and town in the United States and, so far as we can tell, every community in the world, people - all kinds of people - must learn to live and work together. Peaceably. Productively. We call that challenge “Unity in Diversity”...Unity in Diversity is an ideal worth striving for. For all our sakes.”

*Dolly Berthelot*



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Mr. George Alexe, chairman

invite you to

*The Thirteenth Ecumenical Theological  
Symposium*

## **Unity in Diversity: Can We Live Together in an Apocalyptic World?**

Saturday, December 3, 2005  
5:00 PM

Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Church  
359 Broome Street  
(bt. Elisabeth and Mott Streets, Little Italy,  
downtown)  
New York, NY 10013

**George Alexe**

Senior theologian of the Romanian Orthodox Church, member of the Union of Romanian Writers, director and founder of *Romanian Communion*; Chairman of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality:

*Toward Theandric Restoration of the Divine Unity of the World in the Light of Its Secular and Biblical Apocalypse*

**Steven Cressap, Ph.D.**

Chairman of Professional Development and Education for the Audrey Cohen School for Human Services and Education; Professor, Metropolitan College of New York:

*Apocalypse Wow! The Aesthetic Value of Catastrophes and Terror*

**Mihaela Albu, Ph.D.**

Professor of Comparative literature, State University of Craiova, Romania, Editor in chief: *Lumină Lină/ Gracious Light: National Identity and European Diversity. A Case Study: Romania*

**Richard Grallo, Ph.D.**

Professor of Applied Psychology, Metropolitan College of New York: *Learning, Functional Interferences and Personality Dynamics in Contemporary Context*

**Napoleon Săvescu, M.D.**

President of Dacia Revival International Society, Director of *Dacia Magazine: Thraco-Geto-Dacians: a Paradigm for Unity in Diversity*

**Gale Bellas, Ph.D.**

Professor of English Literature, Fairfield University, Connecticut: *Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation in a Pre-Apocalyptic World*

**Gregory Jose, Ph.D.**

Professor of Statistics and Accounting Metropolitan College of New York: *Aspects of the Apocalyptic World: Tsunamis, Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Mudslides, and Their Aftermath in the New Millennium*

**Theodor Damian, Ph.D.**

Professor of Philosophy and Ethics, Metropolitan College of New York; President of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality: *The Day of the Lord: The Apocalyptic Dimension of the Old Testament Prophets' Warnings*

## MODERATOR:

Elizabeth Mellen, Associate Director of the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute (retired); member on the Board of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* at Temple University and on the Board of the North American Academy of Ecumenists; member in the NCCC/USA Commission on Faith and Order representing the Episcopal Church, USA

The current symptoms of the Western post modern culture, religion and art, especially American, intensively indicate in their actual development the presence of a kind of influenza that might be called the apocalypticism syndrome. Professor Walter Wink of Auburn Theological Seminary, New York City, has already pointed out in his essay *Apocalypse Now?*, that we are currently living in an apocalyptic time disguised as normal. Also philosopher Gunther Anders clearly stated that we are moving into an apocalyptic mode when we no longer find ourselves asking “How shall we live?” and ask instead, “Will we live?” Hopefully, the answer to these existential questions will proclaim unanimously the ultimate solution “Unity in Diversity” that will be academically debated in our Symposium, in correlation with the fundamental interrogation: “Can we live together in an apocalyptic world”?

We certainly believe that apocalyptic religious and secular thinking concerning the end of the world, and at the same time its renewal, is transcended and given full meaning by the spiritual, theandric unity of God’s creation, as it is expressed in the biblical narratives and in the writings of major theologians and philosophers in past times and today.

*George Alexe*