

THE THIRD ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

1. NESTORIANISM: Christological heresy

- a) Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople taught heresy
 - * former superior of a monastery in Antioch
 - * installed as patriarch of Constantinople in 428
 - * dedicated to "cleaning up" the remnants of Arian, Apollinarian and Macedonian heresy
- b) Nestorius' heresy
 - * started with the preaching of one of his Antiochene clergy brought with him to Constantinople, who was teaching:
 - + "let no one call Mary Theotokos, for Mary was only a human being and it is impossible that God should be born of a human being"
 - * the above was further developed into teachings which implied the separation of the two natures in Christ to the point where:
 - + ONLY GOD:
 - WAS RESURRECTED
 - WAS TRANSFIGURED ON MOUNT TABOR
 - PERFORMED MIRACLES
 - ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN
 - + ONLY MAN:
 - WAS INCARNATE
 - SUFFERED AND DIED ON THE CROSS
 - * Mary was called CHRISTOTOKOS, or "MOTHER OF CHRIST, THE MAN ONLY"
- c) the initial response of the Church
 - * riots in Constantinople
 - * reaction from Celestine, the episkopos of Rome
 - * reaction from Cyril of Alexandria
 - + letter to the monks in Egypt about Nestorius's teachings, in 429
 - + second Letter to Nestorius in 430
 - + third letter to Nestorius with the twelve anathemas or twelve positions of faith

2. The Council in Ephesus: 431

- a) held in 5 sessions
 - * some of the episkopoi arrived late
 - * Cyril: a leading force behind the procedures
- b) among those attending:
 - * from the East:
 - + Cyril of Alexandria
 - + Memnon of Ephesus
 - + Nestorius of Constantinople, together with 16 episkopoi supporting his teachings
 - + Juvenal of Jerusalem
 - + John of Antioch arrived late
 - * from the West:
 - + two Italian episkopoi
 - + the priest Philip

- * the Council reaffirmed the Nicene Creed and affirmed Cyril's Second Letter to Nestorius as the Orthodox teaching; among the key statements of this letter:
 - + "The Word, having in an ineffable and inconceivable manner PERSONALLY UNITED TO HIMSELF FLESH ANIMATED WITH LIVING SOUL, BECAME MAN AND WAS CALLED SON OF MAN...THE DIVERSENESS OF THE NATURES WAS NOT DONE WITH IN THIS UNION, BUT RATHER GODHEAD AND MANHOOD COMPLETED FOR US ONE LORD..."
 - + "We do not say that God the Word suffered in His own divine nature, for the Godhead is impassible. But in as much as that which had become His own body suffered, we say that He Himself suffered for us. For the Impassible was in a suffering body..."
 - + "...Scripture does not say that the Word united Himself to the person of man, but that HE BECAME PARTAKER OF FLESH AND BLOOD LIKE US. SO THE VIRGIN IS CALLED THEOTOKOS, NOT AS IF THE NATURE OF THE WORD OR HIS GODHEAD HAD ITS BEGINNING FROM THE VIRGIN, BUT IN AS MUCH AS HIS BODY, ENDUED WITH RATIONAL SOUL, WAS BORN OF HER, TO WHICH BODY THE WORD WAS PERSONALLY UNITED"
- * here are some of the New Testament passages used:
 - + Acts 20,28
 - human nature shed blood, but not alone, because not only flesh died but the Person of God Incarnate
 - + 1 Timothy 2,5
 - Jesus Christ is fully man: there is One God and One Mediator-Man; the Person, God Incarnate is the Mediator
 - + 1 John 3,8
 - human nature alone cannot destroy the work of the evil one, only the Son of God Incarnate can do it
 - + John 3,13
 - the Son of Man is also Son of God
 - + Matthew 1,21
 - "Jesus": the One who saves
- * Mary's role defended and clarified in writings of Church Fathers during and shortly after the council
 - + proper understanding of Luke 1,26-56
 - + the term "New Eve"
 - see Genesis 3,15 & Galatians 4,4-5
 - + the ever-virginity
 - + they taught that the mystery of the Virgin was foretold in the Old Testament in some of the following passages:
 - Isaiah 7,14
 - Ezekiel 44,2 & 3

- Exodus 3,2-4: the foreshadowing of the burning bush
- Genesis 28,12: the foreshadowing of the ladder
- Exodus 16,33: the foreshadowing of the dish holding the manna
- Numbers 9,15-23: the foreshadowings of the pillar of fire and the luminous cloud