

## **“Eastern Orthodox approaches to mission and the issue of money”**

Eastern Orthodoxy has not been famous for its missionary efforts and even today, after the events of 1989 and the changes in Eastern Europe, it continues to lack missionary activities. One of the reasons may be the fact that “Orthodoxy is too mystical and otherworldly to motivate social changes” (Makrides 2005, 182) and its “mission” has always been its “internal mission,” that is, strengthening the Body of Christ within its own ecclesiastical life. Another reason is lack of enough funds for mission, and many Orthodox churches are satisfied only with the activities for which funds have been ensured. The 1989 changes in Eastern Europe made the people poorer and poorer, and the majority of the churches are poor, as well. On the other hand, there are rich Orthodox parishes and still their funds are not used for mission. Why? There must be something which prevents these churches from doing mission.

The paper considers the approaches the Orthodox churches have been employing over the centuries, and are currently employing in their mission (as far as it exists), and tries to link these with the inability of the churches to do mission. If “it is the Eucharist that transforms the Church into mission” (Schmemmann 1979, 215), then the question of why the believers, who faithfully take part in this most important sacrament of the Church, do not undertake more efforts in order to “go and teach all nations...” but are only satisfied with their internal ecclesiastical life. Examples from several Orthodox churches are given in the paper where the author tries to show the ways in which the churches do mission, including the matter of money and the importance of funding missionary activities.