



Ascension Alliance

SPIRITUALITY IS A RENEWABLE RESOURCE

Newsletter

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Convocation 2011 A Homecoming of Malabar Rite Christians

The St. Thomas Cross A Piece of our Tradition

When members and friends of the Ascension Alliance gathered at the Seabeck Christian Conference Center, August 19-21, it was more than just our second annual convocation. It was also a homecoming of Malabar Rite Christians.

For many of those coming to Convocation, it was the first time they were able to be with their brothers and sisters again since the "recent troubles." Participants came from far and wide: Archbishop Anastasia Voyatidjes, from Argentina, Bishop Tom David Siebert and Father Tom Gallub, from Richmond, VA, Rev. Cathy Chalmers, from Nashville, TN, and many others.

On Saturday morning, Bishop Jorge Eagar presided at the celebration of a Malabar Rite eucharistic pooja, similar to a liturgy developed by Dom Bede Griffiths and Acharya Frances Mahieu, and which is celebrated in the Malabar region of India.

Presiding Bishop Alan Kemp gave a talk called "The Ark & The Covenant." In it he told about how our movement began, and how the Alliance can be thought of as an ark, a vessel we can climb aboard when adrift in troubled waters, and also as a sacred vessel, like the ark of the covenant, which can help us Ascend to the Holy, and that is flexible enough to move and change, depending on the need.

The workshops were fascinating. For example, Bishop Roberto Foss conducted a session on Soul Retrieval in Mayan Shamanism. Bishop Jorge Eagar conducted a session that combined Kaballah and angelic magic. And, Dr. Julie Byrne updated us on her research dealing with Independent Catholicism.



When we began Convocation 2011, we did so around a low altar in the middle of the room. On it was a lamp, with a St. Thomas Cross, like the one pictured above. This cross is part of our Malabar Rite tradition. The budded cross, symbol of Christianity and the four directions, sits atop a lotus, representing enlightenment and the land of India. The Spirit of Christianity and the wisdom tradition of India have come together here, in the Malabar region of India, where our patron, St. Thomas, spread a message of love, freedom, and wisdom.

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Intercommunion Agreement



Archbishop Anastasia Voyatidjes, left, from the Church of Antioch in Argentina and Presiding Bishop, Alan R. Kemp, right, put their heads together during Convocation 2011 to discuss an intercommunion agreement between the Alliance and the Argentinean and Australian Churches of Antioch.

About the Ascension Alliance

One small branch of the Mystical Body

- A **“Free Catholic”** and **“Emerging”** Church. We are born of a free Catholic vision, in the tradition of a fledgling Independent Catholic movement, inspired by the intuitions of the Emerging Church, and following in the example of Jewish Renewal. We require rigorous preparation for ordained ministry but encourage maximum self-determination and a creative response to the needs of today’s world. Our bishops and priests trace their apostolic succession as far back as that of even the most ancient of Catholic and Orthodox communions.
- **We are about fellowship, the spiritual path, and love.** Honoring the legacy of Archbishop Herman Adrian Spruit, we strive to be a fellowship of spiritual pilgrims. Without imposing dogma, we give ourselves and others the freedom and encouragement we need to live the truth and become ever more renewed and transformed. For us, Christ’s ministry is the law of love and truth. Saint Augustine may have said it best, “Love and do as you will.”

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