

# The Evangelical Perspective on Unity and the Contribution of the Protestant Evangelical Council to Christian Fellowship in Croatia

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**Abstract** *Unity is not just an unfulfilled idea of the Christian world. It is the axiom of reliability and sustainability of the Church founded in the Bible. Throughout history the Church has demonstrated that without unity it ceases to be “salt and light.” Unity cannot be imposed as an ideology, but can only be built through fellowship. This is the witness of the churches of the Reformation tradition in Croatia which have proved in the last twenty years that many great things occur when God’s children come together.*

## Introduction

An earnest desire for unity among churches based in the Reformation heritage has existed for a long time. The axioms of the Holy Scripture are unquestionable – the Church came into being in order to be one and to be one Body of Christ on Earth which glorifies its Creator over and over again. The reports of the Acts of the Apostles, a kind of a chronicle of the New Testament Church, confirm such a desire.

“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had” (Acts 4:32).

I firmly believe that Christian unity and fellowship is not a defunct illusion, but a reality which need not be put on ice. The experience of increased closeness among Reformation churches and churches of the Reformation tradition is indicative of this. The fact that the leaders of these denominations and local churches have often cooperated on the basis of the principle of mutual benefit does not diminish the significance of that kind of cooperation. The crucial period of Croatia’s fight

for independence and the Homeland War has seen many fine developments. One cannot escape the impression that the toils and uncertainties have brought us closer to God and to each other.

### **Biblical Conditions for Unity and Reasons for it**

“... That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (Jn 17:21).

These words of Jesus are treasured readings in all Christian circles. They have spawned many inspired and spirited sermons. The prayer of Jesus is often accompanied by a sigh: “If only it were so...” It is as if Christian unity and fellowship depended only on God’s will and not on the wish and efforts of Christians themselves. If peace is humankind’s unfulfilled dream, then unity is the unfulfilled dream of the Christian world. According to the words of Jesus from the Gospel of John 17, unity is not just a persistent desire and unfulfilled wish, but the condition of Christianity’s reliability and its survival. That is why Jesus concludes verse 21 with, “that the world may believe” (Jn 17).

In order for unity to come into being, it must first be properly understood. The unity of the living, (and the Church is either alive or is not a Church), is not achieved by gluing together, mixing or kneading, but by connecting living with living. The Creator of all life alone can build a living Church. Because of that, the unity of the Church is not achieved by an outward uniformity but by Christ-like identity and life-generating compatibility. The Church is not realized through the principles of identical patterns because it is a living organism. The body is not effective if all its components seek to become an eye, as the Apostle Paul somewhat jokingly instructed the Corinthian church (1 Cor 12).

Christian unity is therefore a welcome topic for the pulpit and theological gatherings. Unity first has to be understood, then that which has been understood has to be accepted and then lived. That is most difficult because we all have our own notions about how unity is achieved. Further, most often our ideas are far from God’s notions just as our ways are different from God’s ways.

If we dare say that the disunity of the Church is God’s fault, then we go against the Word of God. The Word is to blame. All and sundry interpret it as they wish because its Creator made it possible. If he had been clearer, it would have been easier for us to fulfill his will. But I will disappoint you in this regard. The unity of the Church remains unfulfilled not due to different interpretations of the Word of God, but because of the sins of selfishness and pride! The Church is not divided by that which is written in the Bible, but by that which does not exist in the Bible at all!

## **Why is Christian Disunity a Bitter Reality?**

I want to offer several factors which are the most common causes of disunity. I single out only three in the hope that an honest seeker for the unity of Christ's church will come up with others. These factors are: the sin of willfulness, the sin of partiality based on prejudice, and the sin of sectarianism.

1. **Willfulness** is often masked by the blind loyalty to "our own." When something is our own, even when this "our own" does not make much sense, it is familiar and dear. "Ours" reflects loyalty. "Ours" is not tested because it makes no sense to question the foundations on which we stand. "Ours" is precious; it is ours. It smells like us; it reflects colors which are significant to us. Our tunes are our tunes even when they are not harmonious to other ears. When we speak of the teaching of Jesus, it is identical to "our" teaching. The Bible opens at "our" well-known truths. Jesus speaks loud and clear that which is loud and clear to us. For Jesus is "ours" and not theirs. That should be evident to all who are ours! And to others as well!

2. **Prejudice** is the cancer of many disrupted or unfulfilled interpersonal relationships. The history of the Church knows loyalty based on revolt. It is a historical fact that people can "get along with some," and "not with others." Some appear as if they are in our vicinity just for spite. They must thus be treated accordingly. We must shout first. We must discover something which nobody has yet discovered or which has been ignored, and then prove who is right. If the enemy is more numerous, our outcry is yet louder. People like those who are willing to lead into something seemingly new, better and shinier. It is sufficient to label others as "mean, dead, outdated and fake," and we instantly feel better. How many people are there in churches of all colors who are not there because they have the unity of the Church on their hearts and minds, but because their self-righteousness is sufficient to them? Based on prejudice, with good reason or no reason at all.

3. **The sin of sectarianism** is the inclination to emotional charges. Since the beginning of time, human beings have been dependent on their emotions. It is much more difficult to manipulate knowledge than feelings. We regularly commit our everyday stupidities even when we know what is good and what is bad, but our feelings lead us into doing that which is contrary to common sense. Skillful politicians, musicians, as well as – let us not be surprised – even religious leaders, manipulate other people's feelings. The knack for the theatrical is not taught only in drama schools.

## **The Protestant Evangelical Council in the Republic of Croatia in the Service of Church Unity**

Where do we as Croatian Christians see ourselves in all this? – We who belong to Reformation churches and churches of the Reformation tradition. Have we gath-

ered here because we get along so splendidly or because this is such a wonderful topic? Will we leave this scientific symposium more together or more separated?

Despite all that has already been said, you might be surprised to hear that I believe the Croatian churches of the Reformation tradition have made certain significant steps forward towards unity.

The believers of my generation vividly remember the walls which used to divide our churches. Those walls were not erected only against traditional churches, western or eastern. The walls stood firm between churches who professed to stand on the foundation of the Word of God. A visit to another church could be punished with excommunication. Pulpit messages thundered with the instruction that spouses must be sought in the ranks of "our" church. Others were considered unbelievers. The unbelievers were understood to be all those who were not "ours."

In the past twenty years, the churches in Croatia have drawn nearer than ever before. This was accomplished partly through the work of the Association of Religious Officials in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the Protestant Evangelical Council (PEV) in the newly established Republic of Croatia. The organization of joint events, the commemoration of the Day of Reformation, and book launches are just some of the encouraging developments.

During the Homeland War, joint prayer meetings for pastors and preachers were organized. Selfless cooperation in the area of humanitarian aid distribution was achieved. The common RE educational program was approved and implemented. The educational possibilities for the training of future church leaders increased at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek, the Theological Faculty "Matthias Flacius Illyricus" and the Biblical Institute in Zagreb.

The Agreement with the Croatian Government, signed in 2003, is the fruit of joint work. Have we fallen asleep in these four years following the achieved governmental recognition of our churches? Such recognition is something which our brothers and sisters in some of our neighboring countries can only wish for. Perhaps we are not even fully aware of what we have received. Occasionally it seems to me that we behave like a bird in a cage which persistently sits on its bar in front of an open door and stares at the space outside the cage in unbelief.

### ***How Did it All Start?***

The Protestant Evangelical Council (PEV) in the Republic of Croatia was founded on May 15, 1992 as the successor of the previous Association of Religious Officials in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The founding committee included Branko Lovrec, Dr. Peter Kuzmič, Mladen Jovanović, Bishop Andre Langh, Josip Jendričko, Giorgio Grlj and Stevo Dereta. The committee was charged with the production of the statutes for the council relative to the new

socio-political and religious circumstances in Croatia. It was decided that PEV would act in an advisory capacity and would gather churches of the Reformation heritage.

During the Homeland War, and at the founding of the independent Republic of Croatia, PEV took part in public discussion about important social issues, particularly those related to religious rights. On November 20, 1992 a statement was sent to the office of the President of Croatia dealing with the government bill regarding the legal status of religious communities in Croatia. This document was supported by the representatives of all churches, members of PEV. The document was a kind of preliminary muscle-flexing in the process of securing optimal freedoms for the Reformation churches and churches of the Reformation heritage. Here is an excerpt from the document:

Having carefully and extensively considered the text of the bill regarding the legal status of religious communities in Croatia which you sent us on December 6, 1992, having consulted with representatives of other religious communities, and after PEV discussed the issues at its consultation held on November 14, 1992, we forward you the following observations and comments:

We are surprised that after undergoing radical democratic changes in our country, the Government of the Republic of Croatia still considers necessary a special law which would regulate the legal status of religious communities. We consider that law anachronistic and inappropriate to a new democratic constitution of the country, which is the goal of all citizens of Croatia, including ourselves. In several other countries, particularly those in the western world where the Church is separated from the state, all legal matters of religious communities are settled within the existing general laws and regulations.

Article 8, which gives the Minister for general administrative matters the right to prohibit the functioning of a religious community on the basis of "its religious doctrine or the activity of its adherents," is particularly unclear in this respect. We are convinced that this Ministerial prerogative is too wide, inappropriate and above all detrimental to the democratic aspirations of the Croatian society. We ask: Is the Minister in the position to accurately assess the religious doctrine and its implications? Why should this prerogative be justifiably placed in the hands of a Minister for general administrative matters? Can the law permit a Minister, on the basis of a criminal act of one individual or even of a section within a religious community, to prohibit the function of the whole community in question? This matter needs further consideration.

The Bill does not define the term "religious community". Does it refer to a local religious community or is it a collective body which includes cognate communities? How does the Bill relate to those religious communities which strictly adhere to the principle of autonomy and do not form or join larger organizations?

Article 10 states that the Government of the Republic of Croatia will form a committee of seven members. We maintain that this committee, and indeed any of its working groups, should also include representatives of religious communities who would, in this way, stay informed on a regular basis and who would be present at deliberations about the degree of urgency of certain needs.

Article 11 states that “the religious community may challenge the decision (to ban the activity of a religious community) by lodging an appeal. Nowhere is it mentioned that the cessation or the banning of the activity of a religious community can be effected only after due legal process.

The same article mentions the property of religious communities. Does that mean that the State maintains the right to confiscate this property? Does this not violate the right of religious communities as legal persons to own property? How about the potential legal heirs?

We trust that the Committee appointed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia will consider our observations and will introduce appropriate alterations and additions. We also maintain that the bill needs to undergo public discussion before it is adopted as the law.

The writer of this paper was a signatory of the document as a member of the presidency of PEV. Less than two years later, in May 1994, PEV held its first council in the new Croatia under the motto “The time for peace and hope.” This council took place in Bizovac in the vicinity of Osijek which was still effectively a war zone. Several press releases were sent to the Croatian public from that council. Here is one:

“The time for peace and hope” is the motto of the gathering of representatives of evangelical churches in the Republic of Croatia. Over 250 participants will take part in this significant event which will take place from Tuesday, May 24 to Saturday, May 28, 1994. They all meet in the Reformation spirit of reliance on the Bible and in the hope of an even more effective cooperation in the proclamation of Christ’s peace and hope in our homeland. The Protestant Evangelical Council in the Republic of Croatia is also meeting at the same time as this conference. Its main goal is the advancement of freedom and the unhindered proclamation and preaching of the Christian faith. Its other goals include active promotion, lasting development and the strengthening of the ideas of Christian humanism, i.e. the furthering and support of the spirit of dialogue, principles of peace, love, harmony and the understanding of human dignity. Both of these events will draw participants from a large number of the churches of the Reformation tradition (Church of God, Reformed Church, Church of Christ, Lutheran church, Baptist church, Evangelical church, Methodist church, Brethren church and several independent churches). Participants will include representatives of Christian aid organizations which provide selfless help to numerous needy people in Croatia. These

organizations are: My Neighbour, Agape, Peace on Earth, Living Word, World Relief and Evangelical Alliance.

Dr. Jure Radić, President of the Governmental Commission for the Relations with Religious Communities is expected to visit the event on Thursday, as well as Monsignor Ćiril Kos, the Bishop of Đakovo and Srijem. A press conference will also take place on the same day with the participation of members of the council presidency and several visitors from abroad.

The full daily spiritual programs will feature globally distinguished theologians. Professor Duane Elmer from Wheaton College will speak about the harmony and unity of the Church, Peter MacKenzie from the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek will speak about healing through forgiveness. Jill Briscoe, member of the executive Board of the World Relief and a well-known Christian writer with over twenty published books, will speak about facing pain and recovery. Roland Vaughan, Director of the International Mission of the Church of God from Cleveland, will be the plenary speaker and will address the topic of God's invitation to reconciliation. Stuart McAllister, General Secretary of the European Evangelical Alliance, will present his view on the place and role of the Church in today's world and the mission of Christianity in the new Europe. On the penultimate day of the conference, Art Gray, President of the humanitarian organization World Relief and former President of the American Inter-Confessional Association, will present a paper on the structure of the Church and its leadership.

In addition to plenary papers, there will be seven working groups which will consider relevant questions from the life and ministry of Christian communities. Of particular significance will be discussions about the training and education of future Christian workers, ecumenical relations and the attitude towards the lesser-known foreign missions working within the territory of Croatia.

The organizers and participants of these two parallel gatherings trust that they will make a contribution towards the better mutual understanding and life of different Christian denominations which have an important place in Croatian history and culture. The program is so structured that it allows for meetings of groups. It also includes sessions of prayer and worship.

This was indeed a gathering of hitherto unprecedented unity among churches in Croatia. The message was clear: We stand together because that is our calling!

However, the State still sought to act as they wished. The high publication daily newspaper "Večernji list" of Saturday, June 3, 1995, published an interview with Dr. Jure Radić, then Minister for the Relationships with Religious Communities. In the interview, Minister Radić tried to smuggle in and impose the conditions which religious communities allegedly had to meet if they wanted to be recognized and legally registered.

After brief deliberations and telephone consultations, two days after the pub-

lication of the interview, PEV formed a delegation which visited Minister Radić. The objections to the Minister's published statements were as follows:

If, according to the Croatian Constitution, the Church is separated from the State, as Minister Radić declared in his interview, how can the State opine that it need to sign the agreement only with the Roman Catholic Church, and without the participation of other religious communities? The statement that the Roman Catholic Church agrees with the introduction of confessional religious education in schools, and that it appears as the only stakeholder in this most important undertaking, is not a democratic procedure. The PEV Commission for Religious Education is preparing the proposal of the RE program for secondary schools which will be presented at the PEV council meeting which will take place in Crikvenica. Is the State familiar with this initiative or is it simply marginalizing it?

Dr. Radić mentions the law regarding religious communities and the need for their registration "in order that the State may enable them to operate and to provide protection for them." What is this about? We are familiar with the draft proposal for this law and we duly sent our comments and objections to the Croatian Parliament in 1991. We were told that this law is a kind of anachronism and that it would not come to the Croatian Parliament for hearing. Has anything changed in this regard?

We are astonished by the statement by Dr. Radić that "the total number of adherents necessary for any one community in order to be considered as a religious (!) community is still to be determined." After the statement he mentions the figure of 30.000 or, as he claims, 50.000 in some countries (!). What does that mean? What kind of condition is that, and who has the right to determine these figures? Conditions like these did not exist even in the period of Communism! Does democratic Croatia need such unthinkable standards? Or do they perhaps serve some other purposes?

Soon after this "urgent intervention" of the PEV delegation the debate about such a law ceased. PEV learned that much can be accomplished if we come together and act with one voice.

The next meeting of the Council took place soon afterwards in Crikvenica in the same month of June, 1995. It gathered representatives of all Reformation tradition churches which exist and operate within the territory of Croatia and neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The PEV presidency convened, consisting of Dr. Peter Kuzmić, Branko Lovrec, Bishop Endre Langh (absent), Giorgio Grlj, Mladen Jovanović, Josip Jendričko, Damir Špoljarić, Stevo Dereta and Stanko Jambrek, the Secretary of this council. Reports were given about the activities of working groups. It was emphasized that "the Protestant Evangelical Council supports the equality of all religious communities because that is one of the basic presuppositions of



every true democratic constitution.” The council is involved in the pan-European initiative “Hope for Europe” and through its active membership in the European Christian Alliance, participates in all positive efforts of the Conference of European Churches. Among those present at the council are numerous guests from the USA, Canada, Australia, France and Italy, as well as representatives of national alliances of several European countries. The welcome address of the council was given by Manfred Kern, President of the German Evangelical Alliance, who wished the participants much success in their work.

The participants of the council meeting heard the report of the special delegation about the visit to Dr. Jure Radić, President of the Commission for the Relations with Religious Communities. It welcomed the willingness of this Governmental Commission to consider the opinion of the churches of the Reformation tradition, particularly with regard to the preparation of the new law about religious communities. The PEV council trusts that the new democratic and free Croatia will recognize the values and contributions of all Christian communities and enable their free and unhindered function.

PEV also took an active part in the resolution of the unpleasant developments within the Lutheran church in Croatia. The meeting of the Presidency of PEV drafted and sent an open letter to the Evangelical Church of Croatia, or rather to its leadership. Here is an excerpt:

Hurt by the troublesome circumstances which came about through mutual recrimination, accusations and the split in the Evangelical church in the Republic of Croatia, the Presidency of PEV, at its meeting of Friday, March 22, 1996 offered prayers for reconciliation and unity of their fellow evangelical believers.

We fully accept the teaching of the Lord in his Word: “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Eph 4:2-3). We also accept that our Lord prayed for perfect unity (Jn 17) in the same Spirit. We thus send this concerned letter, written in Christian love, to the pastors and believers of the Lutheran church. We therefore condemn all violence and autocratic rule in church leadership and all unspiritual means of solving existing problems, and remind our fellow Lutheran believers of the Biblical principles of love and forgiveness accompanied with mutual respect, and the adherence to the regulations of the Lutheran church. We also express our deepest sorrow over the breakup of unity in the Lutheran church and the echo of this fact in the society at large which has resulted in the creation of a negative image also in regard to other churches belonging to the Reformation-Evangelical tradition. At the same time, we beseech the Lutheran churches in Europe, appropriate ecumenical bodies and particularly the World Lutheran Council, to offer earnest and decisive assistance to the Lutheran church in Croatia to find its way towards the realization of the true unity of Lutheran Christians in our country. The Lord warned us: “All men will know that you are my disciples if

you love one another” (Jn 13:35).

The European Evangelical Alliance from Great Britain has recognized the valuable efforts of PEV and offered partnership with the Croatian Alliance. The report of August 13, 1996 speaks about this.

The oldest world Evangelical alliance, the Evangelical Alliance of the United Kingdom, which celebrates its 150th anniversary in October this year, with membership of several million from member churches and church organizations, and including numerous national leaders, offered partnership status to PEV at the meeting between John Earwicker, the official representative of the British Alliance, and the representatives of the PEV presidency. This meeting took place today in Crikvenica, and PEV was represented by Stanko Jambrek, the PEV Secretary, and members of the executive Presidency Stevo Dereta, Giorgio Grlj and Mladen Jovanović. Also in attendance was the representative of the European Evangelical Alliance in Croatia, Johannes Neudeck.

The British Evangelical Alliance is willing to establish a close relationship with the cognate body in Croatia. Despite the awareness of cultural and historical differences, both organizations have many things in common. Earwicker emphasized that the British Evangelical Alliance desires more than a one-sided partnership, and that it is willing to learn from the life and work experience of the Christians of the Reformation tradition. The experience of the Christians of the Reformation tradition in the areas of evangelization, social engagement and humanitarian aid are highly esteemed among British Christians.

The PEV Secretary, Stanko Jambrek, was invited to the UK to the celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the British Evangelical Alliance.

In connection with the Agreement about partnership, the first academic symposium was held in Zagreb from October 28-30, 1996.

The welcome address was given by Minister Jure Radić who was visibly surprised by such excellent cooperation among the so-called “small religious communities.” Several distinguished historians and theologians presented significant papers at the symposium: Dr. Josip Bratulić, the President of Matice Hrvatska spoke about “The History of Croatian Protestant Literature in the Time of the Reformation” and Dr. Miroslav Volf from Fuller Theological Seminary spoke about “Christianity and National Identity.” Antun Kovač, the Secretary of the Croatian Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired Persons, presented the project of the publication of the Bible in Braille’s alphabet. Dr. Derek Copley, the Dean of Moorlands College in Great Britain, spoke about the “Evangelical Alliance as the Essential Need of Modern Europe.” The event also included the launch of the first collection of original Christian poetry with Vladimir Pšenko as the editor.

The Catholic Information Agency (IKA) published a report about the academic

symposium entitled “Croatia has to be a Country which Fully Respects Religious Freedom.”

Zagreb, October 29, 1996 (IKA) - “Croatia has to be a country which fully respects religious freedom. Who is in greater need of the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, than the people of the country which has gone through the horrors and tribulations of war, as Croatia has done? All who preach the message of love towards God and love towards the neighbor encourage people towards good. That is why all religious communities in Croatia enjoy the freedom of spiritual expression and equality.” These are the words of Dr. Jure Radić, the Under-President in the Croatian government and the President of the Commission for the Relations with Religious Communities, from his address spoken at the commencement of the three-day academic symposium, on Monday, October 28, 1996, held at the Panorama Hotel in Zagreb and organized in conjunction with the Day of Reformation. The opening meeting was presided over by Giorgio Grlj, the pastor of the Baptist church in Rijeka. Dr. Antun Škvorčević, the Chairman of the Commission for Ecumenical Dialogue for the Croatian Conference of Bishops welcomed all participants. He wished the symposium to be a successful event and stressed that he was personally delighted to see so many Reformation tradition churches gathered around that academic symposium. The participants were also welcomed by the distinguished representative of the Lutheran church in Croatia, Vladimir Šporčić. The first paper was presented by Mladen Jovanović, lecturer in theology and the pastor of the Church of Christ in Zagreb, who talked about the relation between the Bible and tradition in light of the evangelical movement. Dr. Josip Bratulić, the President of Matica Hrvatska, presented the reprint of the book which is of great significance for the history of Protestantism in Croatia, i.e. “A History of Croatian Protestant Literature During the Reformation.” The book was originally published by the then Matica Hrvatska from Darovar in 1910. The first day of the symposium was concluded with a paper by Dr. Miroslav Volf, Professor at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek, on “Christian Faith and National Identity.”

PEV organized and encouraged joint events, worship services, seminars and round table discussions predominantly connected with the Day of Reformation, as a promotion of the development of religious education in the Reformation tradition churches. The meetings of its presidency sent releases connected with relevant political developments, supported efforts toward ending the war and the return of the exiles to their homes. It also worked on improving the relationship of the State towards the Reformation tradition churches.

PEV took part in organizing the Billy Graham School of Evangelism held from November 3-7, 1997 in Stubičke Toplice. In the same year, another significant symposium about “Reformation Among Croats” took place marking the 480<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation.

## Conclusions

All these experiences related to the cooperation of the Reformation tradition churches in Croatia sufficiently demonstrate what is possible when brothers and sisters work together. This drawing closer and these joint endeavors have not caused any one church to lose its identity or its distinguishing features. On the contrary, one can observe that the context of fellowship and cooperation gave them sharper contours. When we love others and different ones, it does not necessarily follow that we have to love our own less. God has given us the freedom of action so that we can use it to his glory. His will is clear. Did not our Lord pray vigorously that "all may be one?" If that was his wish, do we have the gumption to stand in its way and fail to achieve unity? How many more bitter tears must our Lord shed before we comprehend that the power of the Church lies in its unity? This makes sense to the Gospel because it can be tested among living people and in every generation.

*How very good and pleasant it is  
When kindred live together in unity! (Ps 133:1, NRSV)*

Therefore, let us throw away those banners and clothes which divide us and put on Christ and stand under the only banner which leads to victory – the cross of Christ! The unity of Christians is possible and can be accomplished. We must not give up!

*All New testament quotations in this English version of the article are taken from the New International Version.*

## Literature

Archival material of the Association of Religious Officials in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and of the Protestant Evangelical Council in the Republic of Croatia (1989-2008)

**Sažetak** *Jedinstvo nije samo neispunjena ideja kršćanskoga svijeta, nego biblijski utemeljen postulat vjerodostojnosti i održivosti Crkve. U svojoj povijesti Crkva je pokazala da bez jedinstva prestaje biti "sol i svjetlo". Jedinstvo se ne može ideološki nametnuti, nego jedino zajedništvom izgrađivati. Tome je snažan dokaz iskustvo hrvatskih crkava reformacijske baštine koje su u posljednjih dvadesetak godina u praksi dokazale da se mnoge velike stvari događaju kad se Božja djeca slože.*

Translated by Davorin Peterlin