

In Memoriam: Archpriest Peter Gillquist

(July 13, 1938 - July 1, 2012)

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Fr Peter Gillquist

Peter E. Gillquist (July 13, 1938 - July 1, 2012) was an archpriest in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America and retired chairman of

the archdiocese's department of missions and evangelism. He was chairman of Conciliar Press (Ben Lomond, California) and the author of numerous books, including *Love Is Now*, *The Physical Side of Being Spiritual* and *Becoming Orthodox*.

He also served as project director of the *Orthodox Study Bible* and from 1997 served as the National Chaplain of the Sigma Alpha Epsilonfraternity.

Gillquist and his wife, Marilyn (married in 1960), were long-term residents of [Santa Barbara, California](#), but in June 2009 they resided in Bloomington, Indiana.

Gillquist died on July 1, 2012.

Upbringing and education

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Gillquist grew up nominally Lutheran. He attended the University of Minnesota where he received a B.A. degree in journalism and was active in the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. While at university he became involved with the Campus Crusade for Christ evangelistic organization and became a born-again Christian.

Gillquist pursued graduate studies at Dallas Theological Seminary and at Wheaton College. After graduating, he became a full-time staff member of Campus Crusade for Christ in the 1960s, starting a ministry at the University of Notre Dame and ultimately becoming a regional director with the organization. After several years with Campus Crusade, Gillquist worked for three years at the University of Memphis, then for 11 years with Thomas Nelson Publishing in Nashville, where he eventually became a senior editor. In 1975 he served on the Overview Committee for Nelson's New King James Version of the Bible.

Gillquist was the father of six children and grandfather of 19 grandchildren.

Spiritual journey

While still on staff at Campus Crusade, Gillquist and some of his colleagues began studying church history and came to the conclusion that the Orthodox Church was the only unchanged church in history. In 1973 Gillquist and his colleagues in Chicago established a network of house churches throughout the United States, aiming to restore a primitive form of Christianity, which was called the New Covenant Apostolic Order. Researching the historical basis of the Christian faith, Gillquist and his colleagues found sources for this restoration in the writings of the early Church Fathers. This led the group to practice a more liturgical form of worship than in their previous evangelical background. Originally known as the Christian World Liberation Front, and then the New Covenant Apostolic Order, in 1979 the Evangelical Orthodox Church (EOC) was organized.

A desire for Apostolic Succession led most members of the EOC to join the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America in 1987 after first investigating the Episcopal Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Archdiocese, and the Orthodox Church in America (OCA). Gillquist and other EOC leaders traveled to Istanbul to meet with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople but were unable to complete any substantial progress toward their goal. However, they were able to meet with the Patriarch of Antioch during his historic visit to Los Angeles that year. After further discussions, Gillquist led seventeen parishes with 2,000 members into the Antiochian Archdiocese in 1987. This group became known as the Antiochian Evangelical Orthodox Mission, lasting until 1995 when its parishes were absorbed into the standard diocesan framework of the archdiocese.



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