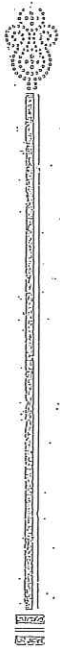


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THE ENTHRONMENT OF THE THIRD
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HIS HOLINESS ABUNE TEKLE HAIMANOT
Patriarch Of The Ethiopian Orthodox Church

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PATRIARCH**

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PUBLISHED

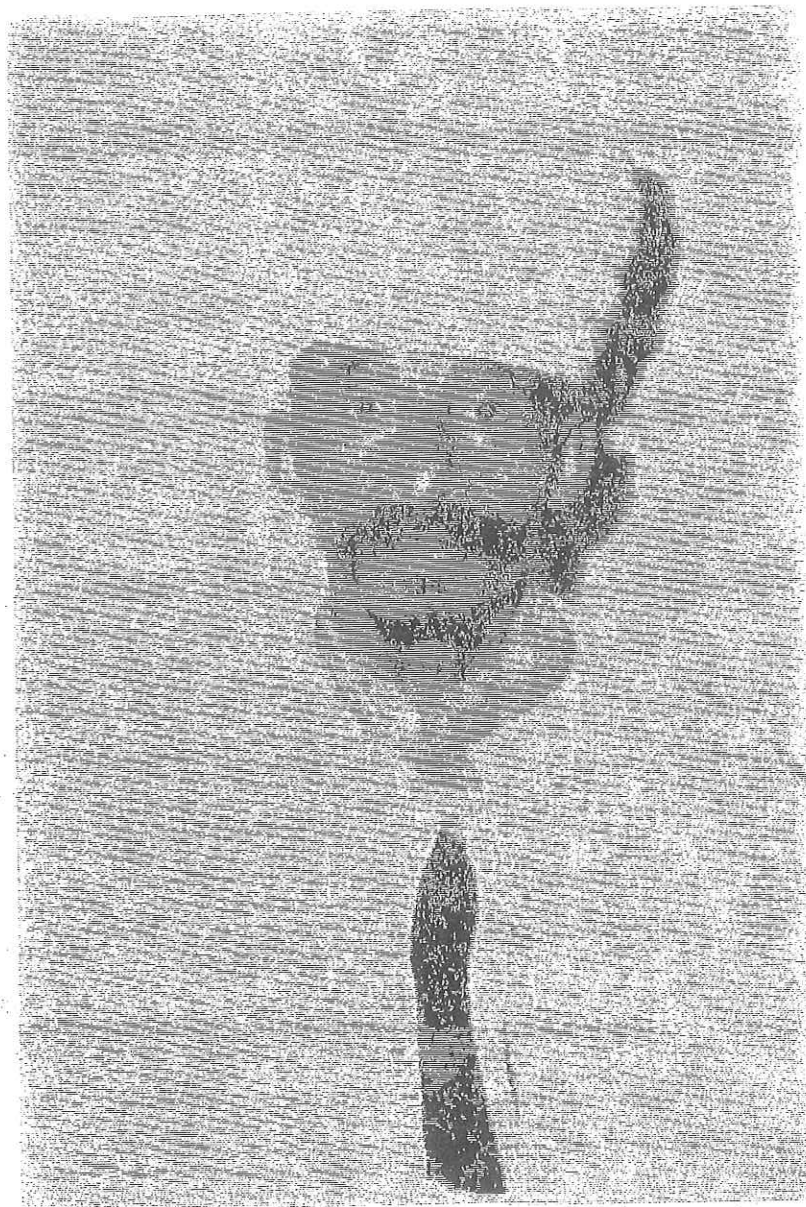
BY

THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

ADDIS ABABA

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His Holiness Abune Tekle-Haimanot Before Elevation to Patriarchal Throne

ELECTION OF THE NEW PATRIARCH

By the end of the first week of July 1976, for the first time in the history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, a very significant event of a true democratic nature had taken place. The clergy and other Orthodox christian masses, through their representatives or delegates democratically elected their patriarch by means of a secret ballot.

Two months before the election date, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Provisional Council had systematically approached the clergy and the Orthodox laity and effectively enlightened them on the type of patriarch the Ethiopian Orthodox Church ought to have. In addition to disseminating information on democratic methods of election procedures, it opened a discussion forum in the church and other public media through which the clergy and the orthodox laity participated by sharing invaluable views and ideas about the election of the patriarch.

A few weeks prior to the election, the Holy Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church appointed a 13-man ad-hoc commit-

tee (in which four archbishops were included and charged it with the entire responsibility of supervising the election. This committee began its task by drawing election rules and regulations, establishing appropriate policy and procedures, and also setting up the criteria which served the voters as a reliable guideline.

Unlike the previous two elections the Provisional Council had facilitated for 1149 delegates from 565 districts presen-ting church leaders and laymen from all over the nation to assemble in Addis Ababa to cast their votes.

On July 7, 1976 the assembly of members of the Holy Synod, 809 delegates, members of the ad-hoc committee, government observers, and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Provisional Council started the voting ceremony at the Holy Trinity Cathedral with an opening group prayer led by the Acting Patriarch, Abune Yohannes. It was very gratifying to note that, for the first time in many hundreds of years, an independent and democratic elec-

tion for the highest post of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was held free from any political coercion.

The casting of the votes started at 9:00 in the morning and was over at 5.00 in the afternoon. At the end of the vote the ballots were counted in the presence of the Acting Patriarch, members of the ad-hoc committee, and government representatives. Aba Melaku Wolde Michael, the pastor of Debre Menkirat St. Tekle Haimanot Church

in Wolaytta District, won the election of by 317 votes to be the third patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

He was consecrated a bishop on July 18, 1976, by the name of Abune Tekle Haimanot. His Grace Abune Tikle Haimanot is enthroned as the Third Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church by the same name today Sunday, August 29th. in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and seventy six.

TEKLE HAIMANOT 'MAN OF THE PEOPLE'

His Holiness Abuna Tekle Haimanote, the new Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was borne in 1918. His former name was Aba Melaku. The son of a soldier, Wolde Michael Adamu, Aba Melaku went to the village traditional church school when he reached school age. Like most children in his village who had the ambition to go for higher education he left his home and went to Zerzer St. Michael Church School in Bitchena, Gojjam Administrative Region, for advanced church education after he completed his primary school. Bitchena, as it is now, was famous then for its advanced Bible commentary and *kine*—church poem education. To prepare for ordination as a deacon and a priest Aba Melaku studied both liturgy and *kine* there. Then he was ordained a deacon by Abuna Matthew, the Egyptian Bishop in Ethiopia.

Late in 1934 he came to Addis Ababa and was ordained a priest by Abuna Kerilos, another Egyptian Bishop. After a few day's stay here he went to Sodo, then a very small town in Wolayitta Province, Sidamo Administrative Region, to serve as an evangelist at Debre Menkirat Tekle-Haimanote Monastery. After serving for some years he chose to become a monk so that he could give himself totally for a better service to the church and the Ethiopian people.

During his long stay in Wolayitta the new Patriarch had done more than any one would expect from an ordinary monk as Aba Melaku then was. Unlike most evangelists he preached and worked without pay. His sustenance come from in-

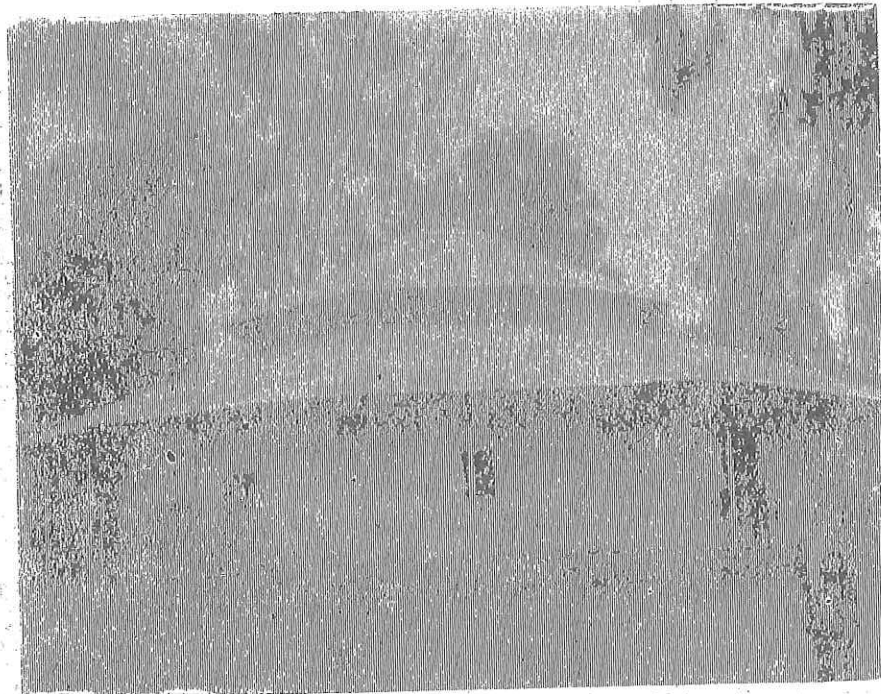
comes he got from the sales of vegetables he planted and cared for himself.

In his tireless efforts and services Aba Melaku raised funds and built 65 churches and 24 schools in Wolayitta. He also helped build an 11-room home for the aged and the orphans in Sodo town. He has also built a clinic for the needy and introduced modern amenities like electricity.

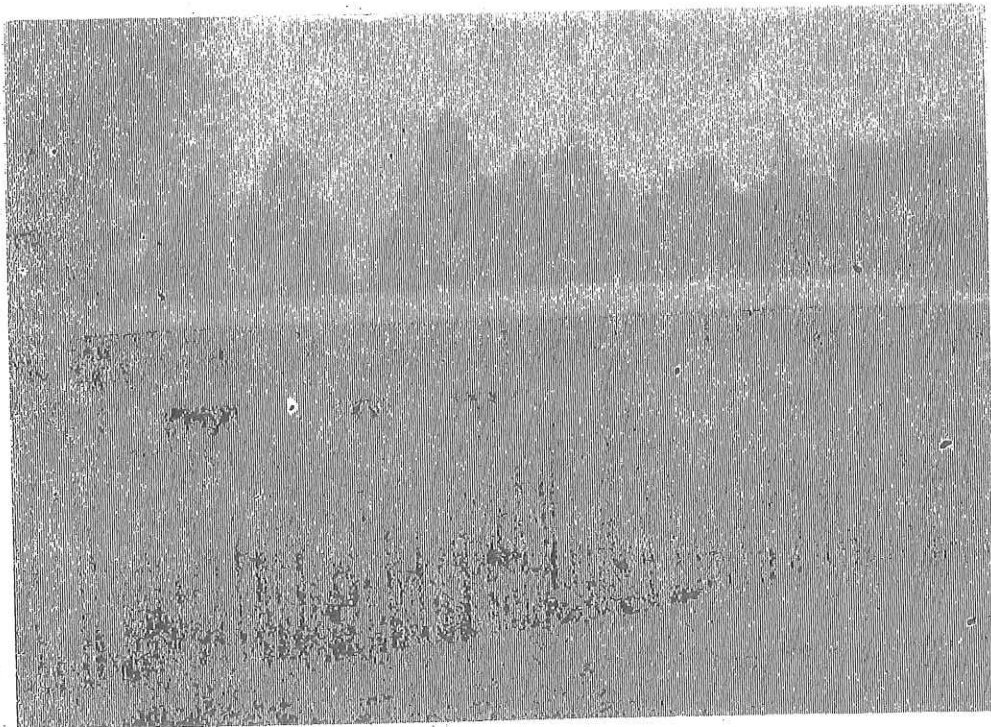
During his evangelizing mission in Wolayitta Province Aba Melaku baptized more than 300,000 persons. It is because of these achievements that people called Aba Melaku, the simple but the most popular monk in the Province, Aba Tekle-Haimanote, after the name of the 13th century Ethiopian popular church leader.

Aba Melaku, now, His Holiness Abuna Tekle-Haimanote, was popularly elected by the most representative electorate body consisting of church leaders and laymen and a lay-woman from various dioceses and monasteries through out the country in a secret ballot and democratic election ever held so far in the Ethiopian Church. Now he is heading the ancient Church of Ethiopia with its over 15 million faithful—the most numerous in the Oriental Orthodox Churches in a single country.

The new Patriarch's tasks are many more now than at any time in the past. The Church has been misguided by its lay and religious leaders in the past. Money and power had corrupted them. Besides, the Church is in a changing society and the faithful want change in the Church.



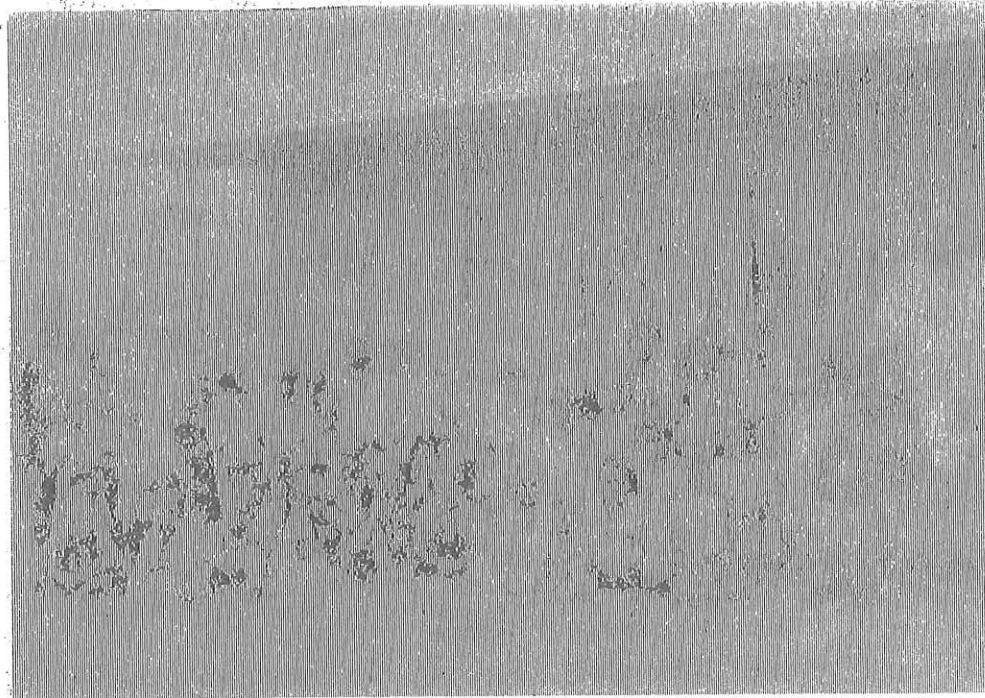
Church Built by His Holiness Abuna Tekle Haimanot



A Clinic Built by His Holiness Abuna Tekle Haimanot

With many years of experience as at his background an evangelist, church and school builder, and a servant to the people, the new Patriarch will not have problems to lead the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Perhaps

In an interview over the radio His Holiness reminded the people that their Patriarch must be a *teramaj*—a revolutionary church leader. That is what people see in His Holiness Abuna Tekle-



Children at one of Schools built by Patriarch Tekle-Haimanot
Pose for Picture after class

knows the needs of the Ethiopian Church and people more than any religious leader at this moment. He has been with the people and knows their needs at heart. He knew his duties to those who call for change even before he was elected a Patriarch.

Haimanote. Ayantu Megersa Irena, a female writer in *The Ethiopian Herald*; said, "Now we do have a man of the people, who is reform oriented and has proved his worth in trying circumstances in outlying areas." (*The Ethiopian Herald* 10 July 1976)

BRIEF HISTORY

Ethiopian Christianity has had recognition as a state religion since 330 A. D. and until the present Revolution started. It has been a dynamic force in the spiritual, educational, cultural, and social life of the people. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has also been a unifying factor of the country's diverse

people in expressing their national sentiment and existence.

The introduction of Christianity into Ethiopia is mentioned in Acts, Ch. 8. The story of the beginning of Christianity in Ethiopia goes like this: An Ethiopian of great authority went on

a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. On his way back home, he met Philip, the Apostle who converted and Baptised him into the Christian Church. Thus Ethiopian Christianity is unique in that it started.

Although Christianity came to Ethiopia much earlier than it did in most parts of Europe, it was not officially professed as a state religion before the fourth century A.D. During this time, two brothers from Tyre, Frumentius and Edesius, had made their way to the court of Axum where they held positions of great influence. When they left the country Frumentius went to Alexandria and was consecrated Bishop of Axum by St. Athannassisus the Great. Because of his missionary zeal to spread the new faith Frumentius is known by Ethiopians as Aba Selama, (father of peace) or kassate Berhan (revealer of light.) These events took place during the reign of Ezana whose religious policy facilitated the spread of Christianity over Ethiopia.

In the fifth century the famous, Nine Saints' from Syria came to Ethiopia where they founded monasteries. They also engaged themselves in the translation of the sacred books of the Church into the ancient Ethiopian language (*Geez*) as well as in expanding Christianity throughout the country, specially in the northern part.

Through her long and unbroken history, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has contributed to the cultural, educational, and literary life of the country. The church music, and chants, the old hand written manuscripts, the old church buildings and schools manifest her long history

THEOLOGY:

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church belongs, to the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The Oriental Orthodox Churches are: Ethiopian, Egyptian, Armenian, Syrian and Malabar Orthodox Churches.

They all believe in one incarnate nature of God the Word. It was God the Son himself who became incarnate. In becoming incarnate he individuated manhood in union with himself and made it his very own. His divinity and his humanity are harmoniously and inseparably united. Against the Nestorians, the Church acknowledge the incarnate word as one person.

It admits only one united nature after the union. Where his nature is perfectly united consisting of the divinity and of the humanity hypostatically united without change, mixture, confusion or diversion. The union was a hypostatic union or after the manner of the soul and the body of man, and it continued to exist in perfection and reality in that union. Therefore, the manhood of Christ did not exist independent of its union with God the Son. The manhood of Christ was real, perfect and dynamic in the union.

The Oriental Orthodox Churches accept only the first three Ecumenical Councils: the council of Nicaea, Constantinople, and the council of Ephesus.

According to the teachings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Bible, contains 81 books. This means that our scripture exceeds the Protestant Bible by 15 books. Besides the 66 books whose authority is accepted by both Orthodox and Protestant Churches, the Ethiopian Bible comprises a number of apocryphal books such as Enoch, Jubilees, the Shepherd, of Hermes, Judith, Tobit, Ecclesiastiques, etc. Equal authority is attributed to the prescriptions of the Old Testament as to those of the New Testament.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

A church sacrament is a Holy Ordinance through which the believer receives invisible grace under the form of an outward

sign, visible or audible. It should be instituted by Christ himself.

The Seven Sacraments are:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) Baptism | (4) Holy Communion |
| (2) Confirmation | (5) Unction of the sick |
| (3) Penance | (6) Matrimonty |
| | (7) Holy orders |

THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH

The central point in the service is the celebration of the Mass. The Mass is the symbolic representation of the teachings, life and death of Jesus Christ. In order to celebrate the Mass in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, at least two priests and three deacons must be present. The priests and deacons wear elaborate and colourful vestments. Incense is used during the Mass, which approximately takes between one and two hours. After blessing the bread and wine and saying the appropriate prayer on them, the chief priest administers the Holy Communion to the people who take it with great reverence and awe.

THE CHURCH ORDER

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has hierarchy of ordination. The Patriarch who occupies the highest rank and position is the head of the Church. Next comes the Archbishops, Bishops, Archimandrites, Priests, Deacons, and sub-Deacons. Laymen also have a respected place in the Church as teachers. The clergymen exercise a great deal of influence over the people and are closely associated with them in time of difficulty as well as prosperity. The priests make frequent visits to individuals' houses in order to give them advice that keeps the members of the family intact. Sometimes

they bring reconciliation between wife and husband whenever they disagree. In order to be a bishop one has to remain a celibate monk. But there are also married priests in the Church.

FASTS AND FEASTS

There are seven fasting periods according to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. They are: Wednesdays and Fridays, *Gehad* (the eve days of Christmas and Epiphany), the fasting of the Nenevish people, fasting of the Apostels, the Assumption of the Holy virgin, fasting of the Apostels, Lent and the Advent fasts. During the fasting periods abstinence from meat, fats, eggs and all dairy products is a must.

All fasts commence with pompous celebration of the mass in the churches. Although there exist a great number of Holy days observed by the Church we will just mention a few of the most popular ones.

Maskel feast = This is the feast of the finding of the true cross. It falls on September twenty seven.

Genna = Christmas day. It falls on January 7.

Epiphany = This is an annual commemoration of the baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan. It is observed on January 19.

Sekelet = Good Friday.

Fasika = Easter Sunday.

Filseta = Assumption of St. Mary.

CHURCH SCHOOLS

Every church in Ethiopia has its own religious school. The school is usually located in or near the compound of the church. The school serves as a recruiting and screening ground for priest-hood training.

The schools give religious instructions. The subjects range from learning the alphabet to mastering the Psalms by heart. After the students have mastered the Alphabet, they begin to study the Gospel of St. John. Then they start reading the general Epistles. By the time they are able to write, they begin to study the Psalms in *Geez*, the ancient language of Ethiopia. These subjects are offered on the elementary level.

However, those who desire to continue their studies on a more advanced level than an elementary education proceed to a church school that enables them specialize in one of the main three branches of learning. These fields of study fall into the following classification.

- (1) Church music (Zema)
- (2) Philosophy and composition (kene)
- (3) Theology and History (Masahaf bet)

The zema school offers religious music. The music books contain intricate musical notations. These books are called *Tsome Degua* and *Degua*. In this field Yared the founder of the Ethiopian Church music occupies a favoured and respected place.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CHURCH

The administration of the Church is based on a system of centralization with the head quarter in Addis Ababa. The head quarter is known as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Patriarchate. There are 14 Dioceses

So with the aid of musical notations, the students learn how to sing and chant.

After the completion of study in the zema school, a student proceeds to the kene school where he is taught how to compose poems based on religious events and personalities. Finally, outstanding students join the school of interpretation which is divided into classes for the Old and New Testaments. Here students study books or monastic life, Church life and society, the canon of the Church, the early history of the universal church and the life of the Saints and Martyrs.

Religious studies in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church can take an individual's life time in their present state. There is now a plan to reduce the number of years for the various religious education without reducing their qualities. New teaching and study methods will be introduced.

Plans for long and short term training programmes for the priests in modern technology to give them skill in agriculture, community development, cottage industries, public health and education is underway. Armed with technological orientation, the priests will be better servants to their communities whom they can motivate for social and economic change in today's Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has been also running modern schools all over the country. Thus it has been making a lot of efforts to meet the manpower needs.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has been also running modern schools all over the country. Thus it has been making a lot of efforts to meet the manpower needs. There are 14 Dioceses in Ethiopia each of which is headed by an Archbishop. In addition to these there exists one Ethiopian Orthodox Church Diocese in Jerusalem, which is administered on an Arch-Bishopric level.

Though the Patriarch is the head of the church the supreme authority in matters of faith and order rests with the Holy Syn-

The central administrative office has many departments such as education, foreign church relations, publication and missionary activity, youth and finance departments

REFORM IN THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Centralizing church administration has been disadvantageous. Appointments of religious and lay leaders were made either by high Church authorities or by the government arbitrarily. Most of the time wrong people were appointed, and they could not execute their responsibilities properly either due to their inefficiency or the negligence of their duties. Such an affair will not be allowed to continue. Church members will elect their lay and religious leaders at every level from the Patriarch who is the head of the church up to a priest in a diocese. So the now centralized church administration will be decentralized.

At the moment there has been set up a consultative body consisting of the reod.

religious leaders and the laity to advise the church on matters of all church affairs including the decentralization of church administration.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church belongs to the family of Oriental Orthodox Churches. It is also the founding member of the World Council of Churches and The All Africa Conference of Churches.

Besides, it enjoys the friendship of other Orthodox churches and other churches.

It has participated in many ecumenical Conferences at all levels.

It has also benefitted from its contacts with all churches and their organizations

THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The Development Commission of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was created in 1972. It supported by the World Council of Churches It was committed to the principles of justice, selfreliance, economic development, and liberation as worthy fundamental objectives of the church's participation in development.

The methods by which these objectives are to be achieved are conscientization, organization and capacitation.

In fully endorsing these principles and strategies the Commission is committed to the training and orientation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church clergy in modern technology which help them organize and mobilize their communities for change.

Much has been already achieved in the training of the clergy in agriculture, community development, cottage industries, and public health. Over one hundred and fifty clergy men have been trained at St. Paul's training center so far. The graduates have

remarkably implemented their training in their villages. One Reverend Simeneh Akalu who graduated in 1973 identified the problems in his community soon after he returned home

student of cooperative community development, organized some 350 unmarried and divorced women into spinners' cooperative to produce cotton yarns for the local weaving industry. These women now pay



Clergy at St. Paul's Training Centre learn Building Houses

He advised members of his community to dig wells, and today they have nine wells which provide them water all year round. The Reverend also taught the people the use of fertilizers, the planting and eating of vegetables like tomato, beetroot, carrots etc. He also helped build a wooden bridge over a stream in which often children drowned when trying to cross it during the rainy seasons. Father Makonen G. Medhin a

themselves over Eth. \$40 monthly.

One Aba Yitbarek Tekalign helped build an elementary school after he raised Eth. \$18,000 and later the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) provided the supplementary funds.

The Commission's development plans will continue and it will be made fit the needs of farmers' association in different parts of the country.

NEWS PAPER COMMENTS

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has just picked itself a new Patriarch. There is more significance to the event than may generally be appreciated. This happens to be the first time the occupant of the highest

post in the Church hierarchy is elected democratically and without political coercion. No manipulation to rig the election, as has happened twice since the 1,600-year-old Church secured autonomy

from the See of Alexandria.

One may now feel secure in the hope that an essential step has just been taken to release the Church from its fossilized cocoon — and salvage it from the depth of political subservience to which it had been relegated by the corrupt pre-Revolution power structure. The events leading to the recent deposition of the former Patriarch was one of progressive deterioration to the point where religious leaders obeyed the laws of the mighty instead of the Almighty.

The Church's newly acquired posture should help tailor its role to meet prevailing realities. We, therefore, salute our religious fathers and members of the reform-minded laity who took requisite initiative to transform the sullied image of the Church.

(The Ethiopian Herald 10 July 1976)

- - - this was the first time that an independent and democratic election for the highest post of the Ethiopian Church was held free from political pressure. The previous two elections were rigged by the former feudal regime through government manipulation of the electorate.

The delegate who cast their votes represent church leaders and laymen from 565 districts and 19 monasteries throughout the country as well as members of the Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

As an able and popular evangelist, Aba Melakau was able to raise funds for

the construction of 65 churches and 24 schools in the province. He also helped to build an 11-room home for the aged and orphans in Soddo town which is attached to the Debre-Menkirat Tekle-Haimanot-Monastery as well as a clinic for needy children.

During his lengthy evangelism in Woylayita province, Aba Melaku baptised more than 300,000 persons."

(The Ethiopian Herald 8 July 1976)

"... I am glad to note that an exemplary discipline and dynamic organizer, in the person of Aba Melaku has been elected as the new patriarch. It is those people from the "Jungle" like Aba Melaku who have built more churches, schools and even introduced modern amenities like electricity to the rural areas, while the priests in "shapely black gowns" have been warming their chairs in Addis.

Now, we do have a man of the people who is reform-oriented and has proven his worth in trying circumstances in outlying areas.

It augurs well for the church and particularly for the oppressed priestly masses that a simple, barefooted monk, who is fired by a zeal for reform and equality is to be elevated to the post of the patriarch.

The church is indeed changing for the better.

(The Ethiopian Herald 14 July 1976)