

NUMBER IV IN THE SERIES

Contributions to a Theology of Anti–Ecumenism



THE HERESY OF ECUMENISM
AND THE PATRISTIC STAND
OF THE ORTHODOX

† Metropolitan Cyprian
of Oropos and Fili

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**The Heresy of Ecumenism
and the Patristic Stand
of the Orthodox**

by
Metropolitan Cyprian
of Oropos and Fili

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Translated by
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CENTER FOR TRADITIONALIST
ORTHODOX STUDIES
Etna, California 96027
1998

Published with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili. Translated from the Greek original, *Ἡ αἴρεσις τοῦ Οἰκουμενισμοῦ καὶ ἡ Πατερικὴ στάσις τῶν Ὀρθοδόξων* in *Συμβολὴ στὴν Ἀντι-οικουμενιστικὴ Θεολογία*, Series B, Number 4 (Athens, Greece: Holy Synod in Resistance, 1998).

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOG CARD NUMBER

98-73734

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ISBN 0-911165-35-5

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The Goal of This Series

Ecumenists have noted with some uneasiness, of late, that the wave of opposition to ecumenism is becoming ever-stronger within the bosom of the local Holy Orthodox Churches and that the communities of those standing in resistance to ecumenism are, throughout Orthodoxy, multiplying and uniting.

The Orthodox ecumenists, in an effort to stem this pan-Orthodox opposition, have tried—in addition to other things—to present as harmless (“neither here nor there”) the ecclesiological character of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and, more widely, the ecumenical movement, appealing to the founding charter of this Geneva-based organization and to other of its official texts.

In so doing, however, they commit the logical error of *petitio principii* (to assume a premise before it has been demonstrated): the constitution of a country or the founding charter of an association (the WCC, pan-confessional in nature, is such an organization) is not interpreted “in a vacuum” (“ideationally” or “conceptually”), since neither is, as such, self-sufficient; that is, a constitution or founding charter cannot, whatever the case, be independently interpreted. Nor does it thoroughly and accurately portray the conditions in a country or association, except when it is placed in its more general social and operational context.

The founding charter of the WCC and the “Encyclical” on ecumenism issued by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1920 provide rudimentary evidence, not

only for the ecclesiological character of the Geneva-based WCC and, on a larger scale, of the ecumenical movement itself, but should be interpreted fully and clearly only within the general context of the pre-history, inception, growth, and evolution of ecumenism.

This is precisely the focus of the series at hand: to present the “unexplored” boundaries of the WCC and the ecumenical movement and to understand ecumenism from within its “essential core,” wherein there clearly holds forth a dogmatic, canonical, and ethical “minimalism” that is antithetical to Orthodoxy.

The aim of this series is to show, by God’s Grace and in a sober and responsible manner, that the Hesychastic and Eucharistic presuppositions underlying our critical Orthodox stand before the ecumenical movement make it most profoundly clear that ecumenism constitutes a wholly new “ecclesiological position” and that, since 1920, we face an “ecclesiology of innovation” that has prompted a radical change in the theological outlook and consciousness of Orthodox ecumenists, as regards their acceptance of non-Orthodox [Christian] communions (as well as those of other religions).

Those responsible for the series pray that the texts therein will have some impact and, indeed, that Orthodox ecumenists will come to a quandary and turn about in their position, while there is yet time. It is our desire, too, that those Orthodox opposed to ecumenism will in the future work with greater earnestness, if, to be sure, they wish their opposition to be trustworthy and thus constructive, keeping in mind that anti-ecumenism is not an easy undertaking, but a distress-

ing exercise in discretion, love, and immersion into the words of the Fathers, entailing, as well, an effective stratagem in the face of the strong onslaught of those violent social developments which are basically the source (and which continue to be the “temptation”) of the ecumenical movement.

“Convocations for Orthodox Awareness”

The aim of the “Convocations for Orthodox Awareness,” which are organized by the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina under the aegis of the Holy Synod in Resistance, is to inform the Faithful in a responsible and sober manner about the burning issues of our Faith, and especially about the deadly peril posed by the heresy of our age, the panheresy of ecumenism.

To date, we have successfully organized the following six “Convocations”:

- The “First Convocation” (Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1990), with the theme: “The ‘New Age’ Syndrome and the Hope of Orthodoxy.”

- The “Second Convocation” (Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1994), with the theme: “From Ecumenism to the ‘New Age’ Vision of a World Religion and the Responsibility of the Orthodox.”

- The “Third Convocation” (Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1995), with the theme: “The Rôle of the Vatican in the Contemporary Interfaith Movement and the Great Fall of the Orthodox Ecumenists.”

- The “Fourth Convocation” (Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1996), with the theme: “The Heresy of Ecumenism and the ‘Boundaries’ of the Church: The Erosion of Orthodox Ecclesiology in the Ecumenical and Interfaith Movements.”

- The “Fifth Convocation” (Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1997), with the theme: “Ecumenism: A Movement for Union or a Syncretistic Heresy?”

- The “Sixth Convocation” (Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1998), with the theme: “The Heresy of Ecumenism and the Patristic Stand of the Orthodox.”

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**The Heresy of Ecumenism
and the Patristic Stand
of the Orthodox**

- A. The Lawful Character of Anti–Ecumenism
- B. The Sure Boundaries of Anti–Ecumenism

The Heresy of Ecumenism and the Patristic Stand of the Orthodox

A. The Lawful Character of Anti–Ecumenism

1. “The More Fervent Part of the Church”

In opening my presentation tonight, I would like to cite a very telling event from the life of St. Gregory the Theologian, Archbishop of Constantinople.

This will introduce us to our topic in a direct and easily understandable way, and, at the same time, clearly define its two dimensions: the perspective of faith, and the perspective of love towards those who are corrupting the Truth of the Church.

* * *

St. Gregory the Theologian’s father according to the flesh, who was also called Gregory, was Bishop of Nazianzos, a small city in Pontos.

He distinguished himself as an outstanding spiritual personality; we can readily comprehend this when we take account of the following facts:

a) He bequeathed five Saints to our Holy Orthodox Church; namely: himself,¹ his wife, Nonna,² and his three children, Gregory,³ Gorgonia,⁴ and Cæsarios,⁵ whom—it should be noted—he begat at an advanced age and after fervent prayer.

b) He struggled on behalf of the Church and Her people at very critical times, when the tempest of Ari-

anism was sweeping the East; it was he who, with profound spiritual judgment, vigorously strove to have St. Basil the Great appointed Archbishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia and Exarch of Pontos, in which endeavor he was ultimately successful, thanks to his untiring persistence.

c) He left us, as an inestimable treasure, his Holy Relics, which are preserved incorrupt to this day at Nea Karvali, in Kavala.

And yet, this venerable Elder, Bishop Gregory of Nazianzos, in a certain difficult circumstance, along with other Bishops from Asia, signed a semi-Arian creed, by reason of his simplicity.⁶

That is to say, he did not reject the Orthodox Symbol of Nicæa out of deep conviction; but, as an old man of about ninety, he was unable fully to grasp the subtle theological and dogmatic notions, such as the distinction between *homoousios* and *homoiousios*, which were convulsing the Church at that time.⁷

In spite of this, it was a dogmatic fall....

What was the attitude of the clergy and, indeed, of the monks in the vicinity of Nazianzos towards this fall of the elderly Bishop?

They broke communion with him; that is, they “walled themselves off” from him.

The Church of Nazianzos was confused and divided; a “storm” and “tempest” had arisen (see note 7).

When unity of Faith does not exist, we always have schisms.

At that time, the Bishop's son, Gregory, who was still a Presbyter and an assistant to his elderly father, endeavored to bring this dissension and schism to an end.

Finally, in 364, with the help of our Lord, he succeeded in making peace between the monks and clergy and his father; a fruit of his joy over this reconciliation is his *First Irenic Oration*.⁸

This moving *Oration* closes with the following exhortation:

As for those who think to the contrary, as corruptors of the truth, let us take them in and cure them, as far as we are able; but as for those who are incurably ill, let us repudiate them, lest we be infected by their sickness before we impart our own health to them.⁹

* * *

This instructive event allows us to draw the following preliminary conclusions:

a) Pious believers have, all along, been sensitive to matters of the Faith; St. Gregory characterizes them as “the more fervent part of the Church”;¹⁰ and they have not hesitated to distance themselves from Shepherds, even very virtuous ones, when the latter did not teach aright the word of Truth.

b) The purpose of this estrangement is to prevent the Faithful from being infected with sickness, namely the heretical mind-set of those who have deviated.

c) The heterodox are divided into those, on the one hand, who are *capable of being healed*, and those, on the other hand, who are *incurably ill*; and we “take

in and cure” the former, while we “repudiate,” that is, avoid, the latter.

* * *

Now, what does this incident from the life of St. Gregory the Theologian have to tell us today?

In our days, we confront—now at a global level—a new tempest: the heresy of *ecumenism* and *innovation in the Festal Calendar*.

We have Shepherds and, indeed, Patriarchs, who collectively and, moreover, out of conviction, uphold and propagate heretical beliefs; but we also have a flock that has not been made fully aware that the Faith and salvation are in jeopardy.

Thus, since 1920, and especially since 1924, zealots for piety have faced a twofold problem: the *perspective of faith*, and the *perspective of love* towards ecumenists and innovators.

The theological basis of this twofold *perspective* has been put to the test and has, unfortunately, divided the anti-ecumenist *Old Calendarists*.

That is to say, while they are all agreed that there is absolutely no room for any ecclesiastical relations and communion with *ecumenists*, they disagree, nonetheless, about the ecclesiological identity of those who are yet to be condemned as *innovators* and about the most appropriate pastoral attitude towards them.

This disagreement leads the moderate anti-ecumenists—and, in particular, our Synod, the Holy Synod in Resistance—to wage a struggle on two fronts:

—*on the one front*, we have to contend with *ecumenism* and, at the same time, put forth efforts to persuade our well-intentioned brothers who still adhere to the *innovation of the New Calendar* to assume their responsibilities and to fulfill their obligations towards their imperilled Faith;

—*on the other front*, we have to cope with deviations among the Orthodox, striving to preserve the sound ecclesiological foundations, as well as the correct theological presuppositions, of our anti-ecumenist endeavor, in order to ward off new and destructive innovations in the struggle against *innovation*.

These two fronts,¹¹ on which *Orthodox resistance* is escalating with ever-increasing intensity, determine also the two aims of my address on this important day and Feast of our most Holy Church.

I invoke your prayers and your attention, that, through the intercessions of the special Patron of our “Convocation” this evening, St. Theodore the Studite, we may be edified in Christ.

2. The Heresy of Ecumenism

At first, then, I will deal with the heresy of ecumenism.

We constantly confront the following timely question: Are we justified in our stark attitude—the attitude of those who follow the Old Calendar—towards the unionist undertaking which is being cultivated in the context of the so-called ecumenical movement?

Once again, our sources will furnish us with a ready answer; let us take a look at them.

As is well known, the anti-ecumenist Old Calendarists constantly refer to the Synodal Encyclical of 1920, issued by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which indisputably “constitutes a definitive expression of Orthodox ecumenism, and also a milestone in the history of the ecumenical movement.”¹² This Encyclical is anti-Orthodox, primarily for two reasons:

First: it is founded on so-called “*Baptismal Theology*,” on the basis of which all Christians, Orthodox and heretics, supposedly constitute the Church through an “inner, mystical unity.” “All of us Christians,” say the ecumenists, “are sacramentally and ineffably united with Christ and with each other through the sacramental Grace of Holy Baptism.”¹³

Second: the Encyclical recommends *dogmatic syncretism*, on the basis of which the Orthodox and heretics, abiding by their own dogmatic positions, can talk together, work together, pray together, and liturgize together.

The result of this multi-level hobnobbing is the cultivation of an harmonious and imperturbable co-existence of Orthodoxy and heresy, truth and error, light and darkness; it is clear, however, that this signifies in essence the abolition of the preaching of repentance.

The ground on which the Synodal Encyclical of 1920 rests is, in a word, the heretical view that “Orthodox and heretics supposedly work ‘in the same Field and in the same Vineyard of the Lord’”!¹⁴

* * *

A very typical illustration will help us to understand in practice this theological notion, which constitutes the essence of the ecclesiological heresy of ecumenism.

In 1971, the Roman Catholic Cardinal, Jan Willebrands, visited the semi-autonomous local Church of Crete (May 20–23).

The Cardinal was welcomed with honors and displays that *were appropriate only for an Orthodox Hierarchy*, since this high-ranking representative of the Vatican

—blessed the packed congregation of the Church of St. Menas in Herakleion;

—took part, wearing vestments, in the service of Vespers that was celebrated at the Church of St. Titus, engaging, as well, from the *Parathronion*, in joint prayer with the then Archbishop of Crete, Evgenios, who was presiding;

—together with the Archbishop blessed the people;

—blessed the table at a wholly official dinner;

—visited all the Dioceses of the island, where he was enthusiastically welcomed by the local Hierarchy, the clergy, the monastics, and the people, with the ringing of bells and to the chanting of “Εἰς πολλὰ ἔτη, Δέσποτα” [“Many Years, Master”];

—was present, again engaging in joint prayer from the *Parathronion*, on Sunday (May 23) at the Divine



The Papist Cardinal, Jan Willebrands, engaging in joint prayer, wearing vestments, from the Parathronion, with Archbishop Evgenios of Crete, who presided over the service (Church of St. Titus, Herakleion, May 20, 1971).

The telling observation was made, that “the most characteristic feature and the most important event of the visit (of Cardinal Willebrands to Crete, May 20–23, 1971) was the Cardinal’s participation in Divine Liturgies on Feast Days, in Vespers, and in joint prayers for Christian unity. The Cardinal was not only present in religious ceremonies, at the Parathronion, but prayed together with the Metropolitan and the clergy, exchanging the fraternal kiss of peace with them in church, to the obvious satisfaction and excitement of all.”

Liturgy, which was celebrated by the Archbishop of Crete at the Church of St. Menas, at which service addresses of an ecumenical nature were delivered, gifts were exchanged “to the applause of the Christian Faithful,” and the choirs chanted “Many Years” in honor of Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul VI, while “after the Divine Liturgy, the Archbishop and the Cardinal blessed the clergy and people to the manifest excitement of all!”¹⁵

* * *

By means of countless similar dogmatic and canonical *coups*, since 1920 the ecumenists have been shifting and gradually destroying, one by one, the “eternal boundaries” of the Patristic Orthodox Tradition.

To prove this point, I will remind you of several definite and firm “steps” taken by the ecumenist Patriarchs of Constantinople and the other Bishops of the Phanar, in particular towards heretical Papism, always, of course, in the context of the “contemporary ecumenical activity of the local Orthodox Churches.”¹⁶

a) They lifted the anathemas of 1054 against Papism (December 7, 1965).¹⁷

b) They proclaim that there are no substantial differences between Orthodoxy and Papism.

• Patriarch Athenagoras (†1972) made this revealing statement:

During the nine hundred years that have passed since 1054, we, the two worlds of East and West, have come to think that we belong to different Churches and to different religions. *Consequently, the purpose of dialogues*

*becomes clear: to prepare our peoples psychologically to accept that there is one Church and one religion....*¹⁸

c) They regard the Pope as the “First Bishop of Christianity.”

- Patriarch Demetrios (†1991), for example, declared, in his “Message” to Pope Paul VI (dated December 3, 1977), on the twelfth anniversary of the lifting of the anathemas:

Along with this blessing, we are sending Your Holiness, as a very small expression of love, fraternal honor, *and our recognition of your august person as the first Bishop of worldwide Christianity*, a vigil-lamp which has been kept burning in our private Patriarchal Chapel, so that it might be placed in your private chapel, to show that ‘the light of Christ illumines all.’¹⁹

d) They correspond with the Pope as if he were a Bishop “in communion with them,” with every ecclesiastical formality.

- Patriarch Athenagoras, for example, wrote to Pope Paul VI on November 22, 1963:

To Paul, the Most Blessed and Most Holy Pope of the Elder Rome, greetings in the Lord.... In sending timely congratulatory salutations and heartfelt wishes, in a fraternal spirit, to Your Holiness on the occasion of your *election and appointment, by the good will and Grace of God*, to the ancient Throne of the Elder Rome..., we pray once more that Your Holiness may ever enjoy good health and *illustriously preside over* the most Holy Church of the Elder Rome for as many years as possible.... The beloved brother in Christ of Your Holiness,

who is held in esteem and affection by us, Athenagoras of Constantinople.²⁰

- Patriarch Demetrios wrote in a similar vein to Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1975:



The meeting between Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople and Pope Paul VI (Jerusalem, January 6, 1964).

The Patriarch declared after the meeting: "This is a great and historic event. My conscience is at peace before God. Orthodoxy means freedom, and it is the free who make progress.... Dogmas are the power of the Church, her wealth, and for this reason we keep our wealth in a vault. But this in no way impedes us from minting a new coinage with the other Churches: 'the coinage of love....'" "All the Popes are good, but John XXIII opened the door, and Paul VI, who stepped through it, is a great Pope."

To Paul, the Most Blessed and Most Holy Pope of the Elder Rome, greetings in the Lord.... Sharing in such fraternal sentiments and edifying pronouncements with Your Holiness, *first in rank and honor in the universal Body of the Lord*, we embrace you with a holy kiss, and we remain, with fraternal love and especial honor, the beloved brother in Christ of Your most esteemed Holiness, Demetrios of Constantinople.²¹

• Finally, Patriarch Bartholomew wrote to Pope John Paul II on June 21, 1993:

To John Paul II, the Most Holy and Most Blessed Pope of the Elder Rome, greetings in the Lord. During the present year, 'we have desired with desire' (St. Luke 22:15) *to concelebrate* with Your Holiness, who is held in love and affection by us, *the Patronal Feast of your Church of Rome....* Hoping and praying that *this new and festal meeting of our Churches* may be blessed abundantly by the Lord, we congratulate you on this auspicious day, and we remain, with immutable fraternal sentiments in Him, the beloved brother in Christ of Your esteemed Holiness, Bartholomew of Constantinople.²²

e) They visit heretical Rome as if they were visiting an Orthodox Patriarchate.²³

f) They pray together with the Pope and exchange the kiss of peace in the midst of the Liturgy.

• At the Patronal Feast of Constantinople (November 30, 1979), for example,

...at the Divine Liturgy, His Holiness, the Pope, approached...and stood with all the members of his entourage.... The Pope was led to a specially prepared Throne opposite the Patriarchal Throne, from which he

watched the Divine Liturgy with reverence. *At 'Let us love one another,' the Pope descended from his Throne and the Patriarch came out of the Holy Altar and they exchanged the kiss of love in Christ to the applause of the entire congregation. The Pope recited the Lord's Prayer in Latin.*²⁴

g) They bless Orthodox congregations jointly with the Pope and his representatives.

- At the Patronal Feast of Constantinople (November 30, 1979), after the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, at which Pope John Paul II was present, engaging in joint prayer, the Patriarch and the Pope addressed each other and exchanged gifts; and “next [the choirs—*Tr.*] chanted the *Polychronia* of the two Primate, who gave each other the kiss of peace and blessed the crowds,” and then “ascended the outer staircase, from the top of which they blessed the applauding crowds and entered the Patriarchal residence.”²⁵

h) They celebrate Doxologies in honor of the Pope inside the Patriarchal Church.

- During his visit to the Phanar, for example, Pope John Paul II “went to the Patriarchate, where he was given *an official welcome* according to Patriarchal protocol *and was present at the Doxology celebrated in his honor in the Patriarchal Church;*” and finally, “*the whole ceremony concluded with the Polychronia of the two Primate, the mutual kiss of peace, and the blessing which they imparted to the congregation.*”²⁶

i) They chant a *Polychronion* to the Pope publicly and “in Church.”²⁷

j) They commemorate the Pope in the *Diptychs* of the Divine Liturgy.

• Patriarch Athenagoras, addressing himself to Pope Paul VI in his letter for the Feast of the Nativity, in 1968, said:



Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Demetrios jointly bless the Orthodox flock (Phanar, Patronal Feast of Constantinople, November 30, 1979).

The ecumenists of Constantinople assert that advances in dialogue “render Catholics and Orthodox capable even now of giving a common witness of faith.”

In this communion (of the love of Christ), celebrating with the company of the most holy and most honorable Metropolitans around me, *we will commemorate your precious name in the Diptychs of our heart, O most holy brother Bishop of the Elder Rome, before the holy offering of this precious Body and this precious Blood of the Savior in the Divine Liturgy of our most holy predecessor, the common Father of us all, John Chrysostomos.*

*And we will say on this holy day of the Nativity before the holy Altar, and we say to you: May the Lord God remember thine Episcopacy, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.*²⁸

k) They welcome Papist bishops enthusiastically and are blessed by them.

• In 1965, for example, a Pontifical delegation under Cardinal Bea visited the Phanar (April 2–5). On April 4, they went to the Halki School, where the Rector, Bishop Andrew of Claudioupolis, addressed the Cardinal, concluding with these words: “For this reason, we chant with all our hearts: *‘Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord’*!” The Cardinal then preached a lengthy and didactic sermon to the students, and, at the end, “*the pupils of the School lined up in front of the Cardinal and received his blessing*”!²⁹

l) They allow Papist bishops and other clergy to be present at, and to engage in, joint prayer at the Enthronements of Orthodox Hierarchs.³⁰

m) They send congratulations on the elections, anniversaries, birthdays, and promotions of Popes and other Papist bishops.

• On September 9, 1963, for example, Metropolitan Maximos of Sardis wrote to the newly-elected Pope Paul VI, conveying, among other things, the congratulations of Patriarch Athenagoras:

By august command, I convey with reverence to Your Holiness the warm congratulations and heartfelt wishes of His Most Divine All-Holiness, that Your esteemed Holiness may offer *long and fruitful service in our Holy Sister, the Roman Church...*³¹

• On June 20, 1969, Patriarch Athenagoras sent a telegram to Pope Paul VI, on the anniversary of his election:

On the occasion of the great event of the enthronement of Your beloved and esteemed Holiness, we cordially congratulate you, and we beseech our Lord, that He grant you long years, full of health, *for the good of His whole Church.*³²

• In 1977, Patriarch Demetrios sent a message of good wishes to Pope Paul VI, “on the occasion of his eightieth birthday”:

Rejoicing and *prayerfully celebrating* the birthday of Your Most Blessed Holiness and your reaching an important stage in your life, *which has been entirely dedicated to the Lord, to His Gospel, to His Church,* and to the service of mankind.³³

• On October 16, 1979, Patriarch Demetrios sent a telegram to Pope John Paul II, “on the first anniversary of his election”: “With profound fraternal love

and joy we rejoice in the completion of the first year of *your radiant Episcopacy on the Throne of Rome....*”³⁴

n) They compose special prayers and send them to the Pope, so that he can recite them officially at ceremonies and presentations.

• As proof of this, we cite the “Set of Prayers and Meditations Inspired by the Meaning of the Divine Passion,” which Patriarch Bartholomew composed in 1994, “at the request” of the Pope, “for the customary procession of the ‘Way of the Cross’ (*Via Crucis*) at the Colosseum, on the evening of Good Friday, led by the Roman Pontiff.”³⁵

Much was written about the significance of this “ecumenical event,” and the Pope, on the Patronal Feast of Rome (June 29, 1994), in his address to the Patriarchal delegation, emphasized: “I cannot forget, at this moment, the magnificent and profound meditation on the ‘Way of the Cross’ which Patriarch Bartholomew presented to me on the occasion of the Good Friday service at the Colosseum in Rome.”³⁶

o) They accept that Papism is a “Sister Church,” which possesses “all that Christ entrusted to His Church.”³⁷

• Final conclusion: It is evident that all of these citations fit the precise meaning of *dogmatic syncretism*, through which *a full equation of Papists and Orthodox ecumenists has been achieved in practice*; and all this on the basis of a theology that was established, and is being developed and continually upheld, *out of conviction*.

* * *

I return to the case of the elderly Bishop Gregory of Nazianzos, who—I remind you—*but once and without full awareness, signed* an heretical confession, and I pose the following questions:

If, at that time, the pious Priests and monastics, “the more fervent part of the Church,” broke communion with him, *what should we do today*, when Orthodox ecumenists have signed heretical texts, not once, but many times?

What should we do today, when they have transgressed the Canons, not once, but many times?

Finally, *what should we do today*, when these innumerable falls occurred not without a full awareness, but have been the products of *deep conviction*?

Let me conclude this paragraph with a telling example of steadfast persistence, based on conviction, in the principal heretical notion of the ecumenists, that Orthodoxy and heresy supposedly co-exist within the boundaries of the Church.

Please pay close attention to the development and continuity of this heresy.

a) The first major ecumenist text, the Synodal Encyclical of 1920, which I have previously mentioned, regards the totality of “the different Christian Churches,” that is, Orthodox and heterodox, as “*the whole Body of the Church.*”³⁸

b) In 1967, during his visit to the Vatican, Patriarch Athenagoras co-signed with Pope Paul VI a “Common Statement,” in which it was proclaimed that the Ro-

man Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church were able “to re–discover each other as Sister Churches.”³⁹

c) The previous Patriarch, Demetrios, repeatedly characterized Papism as the “Sister Church of Rome,”⁴⁰



Patriarch Bartholomew and Roman Catholic Edward Cardinal Cassidy bestowing a joint blessing on the Orthodox flock (Phanar, Patronal Feast of Constantinople, November 30, 1992).

*A direct consequence of ecumenist theology is the idea that Orthodox ecumenists and the heretical Papists “meet on the basis of an ecclesiology between sister Churches,” that “Roman Catholics are not heretics,” and that liturgical hobnobbing and “concelebration” are now “a time–honored tradition,” in spite of the published protests of the Athonite Fathers, who ask the Phanar “that there be no exchange of a kiss with heterodox clergy at the exclamation, ‘Let us love one another...,’ in the Divine Liturgy; that joint prayers in vestments not be held; and that heterodox not bless Orthodox flocks or preach at the time of Divine worship in Orthodox churches” (“A Tragic Fall: The Silence of Mount Athos,” *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. xi, No. 1 [1994], p. 60).*

and very clearly expressed his attitude towards ecclesiology when he stated in 1979—while welcoming the Pope to the Phanar—that their meeting *had broader significance than “that of the meeting of two local bishops”*; “*we regard it,*” he said publicly, *“as the meeting of the Churches of West and East.”*⁴¹

d) Finally, the present Patriarch, Bartholomew, fully embraces—and in 1995, at the Vatican, officially proclaimed—the theology of “Sister Churches,” with particular reference to Papism and Orthodoxy.⁴²

This, then, confirms persistence and continuity in false belief.

I will not dwell any further, however, on the heretical nature of ecumenism; an in-depth theological anatomy, which this forum undertook at our previous “Convocations,” has helped us sufficiently to understand that

...ecumenism is not simply and solely a ‘canonical irregularity,’ but bears directly on the ecclesiological foundations of the most Holy Orthodox Church. The ecumenists, in their attempt to delineate the ecclesiological nature of heterodox communions, have formulated a package of theological notions, whereby they accept the ‘ecclesiality’ of the different Christian bodies; that is, they acknowledge that the heterodox are within the ‘boundaries’ of the Church.⁴³

3. Orthodox Resistance and Walling–Off

Having established these points, we pose the following serious questions:

Are the Orthodox, in breaking communion with heretics, and, in this particular case, with the ecumenists, perhaps departing from the Church? Are they perhaps alienating themselves from God? Are they perhaps separating themselves from the Saints? Are they perhaps destroying the unity of Orthodoxy?

Assuredly and certainly, no!

And this is the issue that I would like to examine next, as briefly, clearly, and simply as possible.

First of all, I will cite a quite pertinent example from the Life of St. Mark Evgenikos, Archbishop of Ephesus (1392–1445).

The lives of the Saints are always trustworthy guides in theory and in practice, for the Orthodox.

St. Mark, at the final moments of his earthly life (he reposed on June 23, 1445), stated categorically that he did not want, by any means whatsoever or in any way at all, to have communion with the then Latin–minded Patriarch Gregory (Gregory III Mamas, 1443–1450) or with any who had communion with him, who by their unionist and pro–Papal policy were working “to destroy the correct dogmas of the Church.”⁴⁴

It is noteworthy that the Saint did not want to have communion with them, not only as long as he was alive, but not even after his repose—neither at his funeral, nor subsequently at his memorial services!

Let us marvel at these *ipsissima verba* of the Saint's legacy:

'I neither desire,' this Atlas of Orthodoxy declares, 'nor accept communion with him [*i.e.*, the Latin-minded Patriarch] or his lackeys, in any manner whatsoever, *whether during my lifetime or after my death*'; 'just as throughout my life I was separated from them [*viz.*, the Latinizers], *so also at the time of my departure from life, and even after my death, I reject communion and union with them*; and I adjure, I command, *that none of them approach either at my funeral or at memorial services for me, nor even those of anyone else belonging to our faction, so as to attempt to associate and concelebrate with our clergy. For this is to mix what cannot be mixed. For it is necessary that they [*viz.*, the Latinizers] be completely separated from us, until God grants the good amendment and peace of His Church.*'⁴⁵

The Saint's language is severe and uncompromising. Now why is this so? How did he justify this absolute position of his towards the Latin-minded unionists of his age who, it should be noted—pay particular attention, please—had not yet been suitably judged by an Orthodox synod and who at that time constituted the so-called "official Church"?

Let us hear, then, how the Saint explains his position, with marvellous precision and theological clarity:

For I am absolutely convinced that *the more I distance myself from him [*i.e.*, the Latin-minded Patriarch] and those like him [the unionists], the closer I draw to God and all the faithful and Holy Fathers; and to the extent that I separate myself from these people, even so am I unit-*

*ed with the truth and the Holy Fathers and theologians of the Church.*⁴⁶

According to the Saints, therefore, *separation from heretics means rapprochement and union with God, the Truth, and the Fathers.*

* * *

Thus, we now arrive naturally at the terms “walling-off [*apoteichisis*]” and “resistance [*enstasis*]”; let us elucidate them briefly.

The act of breaking ecclesiastical or mysteriological [sacramental—*Tr.*] communion with, and withdrawing from, those who preach heretical doctrines, as St. Mark did, is called “walling-off”; this, indeed, is undertaken even prior to a “synodal decision,”⁴⁷ that is, “before even a synodal judgment is rendered concerning [a particular] heresy” and the heretic, as St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite makes clear.⁴⁸

Those who “secede,” that is, “separate themselves from communion with heretics,” are characterized as being “walled-off,” because the “wall” of Orthodox Truth now protects and separates them from the herodox, who are outside the Truth: “the wall is a separation of those inside it from those outside it.”⁴⁹

This salvific “walling-off” is part of the more general struggle of Orthodox resistance.

Those who fight against and refute a heresy and defend the Truth of Orthodoxy are called “resisters,” because they resist; that is, they wage an Orthodox, lawful,

and God-pleasing struggle for the Holy Faith, in order to deliver “the Church from schisms and divisions.”⁵⁰

The Holy Fathers—and St. Theodore the Studite, in particular—say that “everyone who resists for the sake of the Truth”⁵¹ is a contender in the good struggle “of Orthodox and God-pleasing resistance”;⁵² and for this reason, “everyone who resists” is reckoned “a confessor”⁵³ against heresy and for Orthodoxy.

According to the Holy Fathers, the period of an Orthodox, anti-heretical struggle is a “time of confession, a time of resistance, a time of contest, and perhaps of other sufferings, but also of crowns and heavenly glory.”⁵⁴

Consequently, the notion of Orthodox resistance includes “walling-off,” but is not exhausted by this; a constant struggle is required, a “stalwart and unyielding resistance,” according to St. Basil the Great, “in defense of the Truth,”⁵⁵ which *begins*, in practical terms, with a “walling-off,” *continues* with the proclamation of the Truth and the refutation of error, and *culminates* in the condemnation of a heresy and unrepentant heretics by an Orthodox Synod.

* * *

One further example from Church history will contribute in a practical way to a deeper understanding of Orthodox resistance and walling-off.

Let us go to Constantinople, in the era of the Patriarchate of Nestorios (428–431).

In a Church of the Imperial City, at the time of the Liturgy, Bishop Dorotheos, in the presence of Nesto-

rios, dared to preach his terrible heresy “in a loud voice.”⁵⁶

What ensued?

Immediately “a mighty cry arose from all the people, and they rushed out”;⁵⁷ that is, there was a rapid mass exodus from the Church.

This spontaneous exodus and withdrawal of the Faithful from the place where the Nestorian heresy was being preached and their dissociation from the heretic best expresses the meaning of “walling-off.”

Thereafter, the Orthodox of Constantinople wished no ecclesiastical communion with the Nestorians, to the point that they no longer went to the Churches in the City, fearing—as the most Holy Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria wrote—, lest they should suffer harm (see note 57).

It was from that moment that the struggle of “Orthodox and God-pleasing resistance” began; it certainly gave rise to persecutions, tortures, and privations, but it had an auspicious conclusion, that is; the convocation of the Third Holy Ecumenical Synod, which clarified and proclaimed Orthodox Truth and anathematized the Nestorian heresy and the heresiarch Nestorios.

So it has been with every Ecumenical Synod: it was the culmination of Orthodox resistance and walling-off.

* * *

I have now come to the end of the first part of my presentation, and I will summarize my conclusions as follows:

Firstly: ecumenism is truly a heresy, an ecclesiological heresy, against which it is imperative that we maintain an Orthodox resistance and walling-off; and this, because—according to the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod—, “heresy separates every man from the Church.”⁵⁸

Secondly: in vain are the Old Calendarist Orthodox anti-ecumenists accused of allegedly leaving the Church by walling themselves off from the ecumenists; for walling-off does not signify alienation from God, but drawing near to Him, and safety within the adamantine walls of Orthodox Truth; conversely, a heretic, by virtue of his error, is separated from our Savior, Christ, Who is “the Truth,”⁵⁹ and from His Church, which is “the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.”⁶⁰

Thirdly: those who assert that they are against *ecumenism*, but are in communion with *ecumenists*, are inconsistent, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, do not help the Church substantially to emerge from Her crisis, since they do not follow the Holy Fathers.

They do not emulate, for example, *St. Mark Evgenikos*, who did not want communion with the Latin-minded Patriarch of Constantinople even at his funeral, “either during (his) lifetime or after his death.”

Likewise, they do not emulate *St. Gregory Palamas*, who broke communion with the similarly Latin-minded Patriarch of Constantinople, John Calecas (1334–1347), and who, because of this, was imprisoned, insulted,⁶¹ and anathematized.⁶²

To be sure, such anathemas not only have no validity, but are *a glory and an honor* for those who re-

sist heresy in the defense of Orthodoxy; simultaneously, they constitute a sure sign of the correct course and the legitimacy of the anti-heretical struggle of the resisters.⁶³

B. The Sure Boundaries of Anti–Ecumenism

I. “In Agreement with and Following the Holy Fathers”

In the foregoing section, I attempted to substantiate the lawful character of anti–ecumenism; I demonstrated that breaking communion with ecumenists does not betoken a departure from the Church.

This issue pertains to one front, on which we contend with the heresy of ecumenism.

But I also referred to a second front, on which we face deviations among the Orthodox.

This reference is equally necessary, because if Orthodox resistance and walling–off, and, more specifically, anti–ecumenism, are to be fruitful and successful, they must be based on correct ecclesiological foundations, that is, they must have sound theological presuppositions.

Only when a sacred undertaking is in conformity with custom handed down from of old can it be blessed and successful.

This is required by the Patristic Tradition of Orthodoxy.

When the Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod concluded its investigation, based on the countless testimonies that were read, of the question of the veneration of the Holy Icons, its president, St. Tarasios of Constantinople, said: “We recognize that the setting up of Holy Icons is an ancient Tradition; we are, there-

fore, following the Holy Fathers.” The Holy Synod said: “We follow them and agree with them.”⁶⁴

Our fidelity and adherence to this principle, “in agreement with and following the Holy Fathers,” will protect us from canonical and dogmatic deviations, which unfailingly lead to “warfare against the Fathers” and “warfare against God,” according to St. Theodore the Studite, who says: “We do not grasp well the voices of the Saints, and as a result we find ourselves waging warfare *against the Fathers* or, rather, *against God*.”⁶⁵

With this Synodal and Patristic principle as a firm criterion, then, let us analyze in brief the primary intra-Orthodox deviation, which differentiates our Synod, the Holy Synod in Resistance, from the other Old Calendarist Orthodox, and because of which we are sometimes, unfortunately, the target of unjust criticisms.

* * *

Let us return to the Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod.

The Fathers of the Synod, assembling in 787, clarified two basic issues:

a) that the Church was at that time “divided, split, and broken,”⁶⁶ and was “at variance,” “in division,” “in discord,” and “at odds”;⁶⁷ and

b) that the Synod had convened in order to work “for the union and harmony of the Church,”⁶⁸ “for the union of the Holy Catholic Church of God,”⁶⁹ “that what was sundered might be united.”⁷⁰

That is to say, sixty years after the appearance of the Iconoclastic heresy, the Church was regarded as divided and in need of being united.

This is our own fundamental view of the prevailing contemporary situation: *the Orthodox Church today, by reason of ecumenism and the calendar innovation, is divided and in need of being united.*

* * *

I am ready to deal with a legitimate question:

What is the basis for the notion of a “divided” Church, insofar as the Church is One and Unique, whereas the erring heterodox do not constitute a part of Her, but are outside the Church?

Relying on the relevant texts of St. Basil the Great, St. Theodore the Studite, and the Seventh Holy Œcumenical Synod, we will explain this position, calling upon your attention and prayer.⁷¹

It is a fundamental Patristic idea that the members of the Body of the Church can be ill, that is, that they can be in error regarding the Orthodox Faith; in spite of this, even as ailing members, as members who have not “broken off” or “withdrawn” from the Church “through schism,”⁷² *they are not dead* and they continue to belong to the Body.

Something similar happens, at times, with a healthy body, in which there can also exist unhealthy cells, or with a tree in bloom, which may also have sickly branches.

The distinction between healthy and ailing, “good wheat” and tares, good and bad fish, which can co–

exist and “grow together” in the same “field” and the same “net” of the Church, is tellingly emphasized in the pertinent parables of the Lord;⁷³ they will be separated decisively—as we will mention subsequently—either by a “synodal decision” of the Church,⁷⁴ or at the time of “the harvest,” that is, “at the end of the world,” by the Lord.⁷⁵

With the appearance of a spiritual illness, a heresy, the organism of the Church is thenceforth separated into a “healthy part” and a “diseased part,” that is, an ailing part.

St. Basil the Great wrote to the people of Evæsa:

Stand fast in the Faith. Look over all the world, and see how small is this part which is unsound; all the rest of the Church, which has received the Gospel from one end of the world to the other, abides in this sound and unperverted teaching.⁷⁶

It should be noted, in particular, that in the Church we do not have an automatic and instantaneous death or falling-away from the Body; this is why, moreover, we speak about a “diseased,” and not a “deadened,” part.

A typical example from the life of the Church will help us to understand this ecclesiological idea.

A monk went to the city to sell his handiwork, and on the way he happened to meet a beautiful young woman, the daughter of a pagan priest; he left himself unprotected, and was so dominated by evil desire that he forgot the promises which he had made to Christ about virginity and chastity, and asked her father to give her to him as his wife.

‘I cannot promise her to you,’ he replied, ‘without first asking my god.’

So he went to the oracle to obtain a response.

‘Ask him to deny his God, his Baptism, and his monastic *Schema*,’ answered the oracle or, rather, the Devil.

‘I deny them,’ the hapless monk dared to utter, darkened by his irrational desire; he then saw a white dove go out of his mouth and vanish into the immensity of the sky....

But the father of the young woman was not immediately satisfied; he sought a second oracle.

‘Do not give him your daughter,’ said the oracle; *‘his God has not abandoned him, but is still helping him.’*

When the denier heard this, he was shocked and his heart was crushed. ‘I, wretch that I am,’ he cried, ‘have denied a God Who never rejects the work of His hands....’

Bitterly lamenting his terrible sin, like Peter, he returned to the desert, where he confessed his sin and regained the Grace of the Holy Spirit with the guidance of a Holy Elder.⁷⁷

Let us dwell on the admission by the oracle, the demon: *“His God has not abandoned him, but is still helping him.”*

Truly astonishing is the love of our Lord for mankind....

Is it possible, then, for us to maintain today that all of our brothers who are still caught up in innovation have been completely abandoned by God, and are collectively without Grace and the Church?

How could this be possible, if we indeed reflect on the fact that they have not even come to the point of

explicitly denying Orthodoxy, and that the majority of them neither accepts the chief dogma of the ecclesiological heresy of ecumenism nor even knows exactly what ecumenism is?

* * *

However, in order to complete this ecclesiological view along general lines, I should respond to two further questions, which, incidentally, are the favorite arguments of our critics.

The first question is as follows:

When and how will the mortification of the ailing member, or the “diseased” part, and its decisive separation from the Body come to pass?

The sublime authority of the Seventh Holy Œcumenical Synod will give us the answer to this crucial question.

The Holy Synod decrees the following, not only in a simple Canon, but also in its dogmatic *Horos*:

We order that those who dare to think or teach differently, or, in accordance with the abominable heretics, to overthrow the Traditions of the Church and devise some innovation..., if they be Bishops or clergy, *should be deposed*, and if monastics or laymen, *should be excommunicated*.⁷⁸

The synodal injunction, “We order that [they] should be deposed and excommunicated,” is addressed to a Synod of “living Bishops,” that is, Bishops who were present, who were to judge the accused appropriately.⁷⁹

It was necessary that the innovators be examined, in order to ascertain whether their illness was incurable; should it prove to be so, they were to be excised.

A “synodal decision,”⁸⁰ is required, according to the Sacred Canons, and indeed, a “final decision.”⁸¹

I remind you that the holy hymnographer of the First Holy Œcumenical Synod emphasizes very clearly the meaning of “incurable disease,” as well as the act of the “expulsion” of heretics from the Body by a competent Synod: “The Divine Shepherds,” we chant in the Praises, “cast out from the plenitude of the Church” “the prowling and destructive wolves,” “driving far off with the sling of the Spirit those who had incurred a fall that leadeth unto death and were afflicted with an illness that could not be cured.”⁸²

* * *

The second question to which I must reply is as follows:

In expressing this view, are we not perhaps reassuring those caught up in innovation and heresy, rather than helping them to repent?

The answer is, *certainly not!*

The theological and practical meaning of Orthodox resistance and walling-off is anything other than reassuring, since it has the capacity literally to wake people up:

a) Orthodox resistance requires the “healthy part” of the Church, that is, the “anti-innovationist plenitude,” to wall itself off, not to have communion with the “diseased,” the ailing, part; this rupture of com-

munion already lays the foundations for *weighty perplexity* and a *relentless uneasiness* among our brothers who are caught up in innovation and heresy.⁸³

b) This rupture of communion and walling-off initiate a series of actions with the following goals:

—*that we should not become diseased* or contaminated ourselves;

—*that we should exhort* the rest of the members of the Body to break communion, too, lest they likewise become diseased or contaminated;

—*that we should aid* in the repentance and cure of the ailing member with brotherly love, so as to avoid the worsening of his illness and his final excision from the Body;

—*that we should contribute*, finally, to the convocation of a Synod, which would take measures to prevent the disease from spreading to the entire Body.

These synodal measures define the therapeutic treatment of the Church, and they are as follows:

First: the excision of the member, if he does not repent;

Second: the proclamation of “sound doctrine,”⁸⁴ the remedy for the disease;

Third: encouragement of the Orthodox to live, as St. Ignatius of Antioch says, “only on Christian fare, and to refrain from strange food, which is heresy.”⁸⁵

* * *

In the wake of all that we have demonstrated and summarized up to now, we draw the conclusion that the consistent application of the standards of Orthodox

resistance and walling-off keeps the anti-innovationist plenitude in resistance within the sure boundaries of anti-ecumenism and averts the danger of our becoming—according to St. Theodore the Studite—“more lawful than the law” and “straighter than the rule.”⁸⁶

In the case of the opposite,

—ecclesiological alertness *is diminished*;

—the sanctity of the unificationist vision *is obfuscated* by other priorities;

—the steady planning and careful coördination of a general unifying Synod *are neglected*;

—quietism and an unhealthy ecclesiological introversion and self-sufficiency prevail, with all their tragic and painful consequences on the theological, pastoral, and spiritual levels.

In conclusion, I will attempt to put forth the following principles, which are a condensation of my brief account of the sure ecclesiological boundaries of anti-ecumenism:

The anti-innovationist plenitude of the Orthodox Church in resistance, as a specific ecclesiastical community that has walled itself off,

—*does not constitute* the Church;

—*is not* an administrative substitute for the innovating Church;

—*does not function* as a jurisdiction parallel to that of the New Calendar Church;

—*and does not present itself* as a second Orthodox Church in Greece.

It is, however, profoundly aware that

—it *is* within the boundaries of the Church;

—that it *constitutes* the “healthy part” of the Church;

—and that it *continues* the history of the anti-innovationist Church of Patristic Tradition, which is Orthodoxy in its genuine sense, always having in mind the prospect of a general unifying Synod.

2. “Sympathy for the Ailing, But a Defense of the Healthy”

I am now approaching the end of my topic.

I call yet one more time upon your patience and indulgence, and I pose a final question: is a correct theological foundation sufficient to insure the success of the anti-ecumenist struggle?

That is, are we “in agreement with and following the Holy Fathers” with this safety valve alone? Or is something more required? And what is this?

Let St. Basil the Great be our guide on this issue.

In 372, the Holy Hierarch addressed the Presbyters of Tarsus: “Circumstances are tending towards the overthrow of the Churches”; “Altogether, the state of the Church (if I may use a plain figure, though it may seem too humble) is like an old coat, which is easily torn on the slightest pretext and cannot be restored to its original strength.”⁸⁷

What were the reasons for this tragic state of affairs?

The Saint identifies them: “There is nothing constructive in the Church; no correction of error; no sympathy for the weak; no single defense of healthy brethren” (see note 87).

St. Basil demonstrates indirectly, but clearly, that in any anti-heretical undertaking, there must co-exist, together with correct ecclesiology,

a) an effort to build up the Church and to correct previous errors;

b) sympathy for the ailing part of the Church;

c) and protection for those brethren who constitute Her “healthy part.”

Deficiency in these three elements is, unfortunately, the cause of today's situation; this deficiency has turned our sacred struggle into an “old coat, which is easily torn on the slightest pretext.”

We affirm with deep sorrow that there is no general “sympathy for the ailing,” that is, for our brethren who are caught up in innovation and heresy; but neither is there any “protection for the healthy,” that is, for fellow anti-ecumenists.

Our Holy Synod, as a case in point, is continually the target of unbrotherly attacks by the other Old Calendarists, despite the fact that our Hierarchs make endless attempts to build up the Church in a sober and responsible way.

This situation reminds us of the vivid description by St. Basil the Great of the climate that prevailed in his age.

‘To what, then, shall I liken our present condition?’; ‘Is this tempest of the Churches not fiercer than any storm at sea?’; ‘In attacking one another, we are overthrown by one another. If our enemy is not the first to strike us, we are wounded by the comrade at our side. If anyone is struck and falls, his fellow soldier tramples him down’; ‘And to such a depth is this evil rooted among us that we have become more irrational than the irrational animals; they at least herd with their own kind, but our most savage warfare is with our own people.’⁸⁸

In the name of an indiscriminate zeal, which is the natural outgrowth of ecclesiological self-sufficiency, that is, anti-ecumenism based on erroneous theological premises, *self-reproach, humility, and love* have been lost.

From this place, I address an appeal to the spiritual children of the Holy Synod in Resistance, and also to all our well-disposed brothers in Christ: let them never forget *self-reproach, humility, and love*, if they sincerely desire the upbuilding and unity of the Church.

* * *

a) Self-reproach

It is moving how St. Basil, in describing the terrible condition of the Church caused by the Arian persecutions, deeply humbles and reproaches himself: "I seem," he wrote to Peter of Alexandria, "to be deprived by my sins of all success in my undertakings."⁸⁹

Addressing himself likewise to Barsees, the Bishop of Edessa, who was in exile, the Saint again chides himself:

Only pray, I beseech you, that the Lord may not deliver us forever to the enemies of the Cross of Christ, but that He will keep His Churches, until the time of that peace which the just Judge Himself knows when He will bestow. For He will bestow it and will not forever abandon us. But as He prescribed seventy years for the period of captivity for the Israelites in punishment for their sins, so perhaps the Mighty One, after giving us

up for some appointed time, will recall us once again, and will restore us to the peace of the beginning.⁹⁰

Unfortunately, I have not found this ethos of self-reproach among anti-ecumenists today, proclaiming, as they do, that everyone apart from themselves is responsible for the disorder of the Church.

These hapless people forget what St. John Chrysostomos teaches: heretics do not repent and the Church is not at peace, because, apart from anything else, a “radiant life” and a Saintry way of life are absent from the Faithful, something which “has brought slanders on the holy articles of our Faith; this has turned everything upside down.”⁹¹

* * *

b) Humility

As well, the need for humility in dealing with issues of the Faith is especially highlighted by the Holy Fathers.

There are, unfortunately, Faithful who—obviously from a lack of self-knowledge—confuse the boundaries of *confession* and *teaching*, and become self-appointed teachers and theologians.

St. Basil the Great observed in his age that, “Everyone is a theologian, even one who has his soul blemished with more spots than can be counted.”⁹²

Confession of our Holy Faith is certainly a duty for all, and should be made when required, but with

few and humble words, with “meekness and fear” of God, according to the Apostle Peter.⁹³

Teaching, however, or the further elaboration of theological issues, is the task of experienced men who have been authorized by the Church, according to the injunction of the Apostle Paul to St. Timothy: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be *able* to teach others also.”⁹⁴

St. Gregory the Theologian delivered a special *Oration* on this subject, when he exposed the indiscriminate zeal of those Faithful who were overstepping their limits:

“*Be not hasty in words, Wisdom orders you;*⁹⁵ do not, if you are poor, compare yourself with a rich man, nor *seek to be wiser than the wise*. Wisdom consists in knowing oneself but not giving oneself airs, nor suffering the same fate as voices, which are completely lost if they are subjected to excessive strain. It is better for one who is wise to give way out of forbearance *than for one who is ignorant to stretch himself beyond his limits out of audacity*. *Let your haste extend to confession, should this ever be demanded of you; but be hesitant about going beyond this*. For while sluggishness is dangerous for confession, haste is hazardous for teaching.⁹⁶

The Holy Father goes on to say very aptly that those who shatter Church unity are animated by a fervor and zeal without reason and knowledge, and are dominated by irrationality, ignorance, and rashness.

‘What is it that has stirred up all these things [that has made the One Church into many factions and torn Her apart]?’ asks the Saint; and he replies: *‘Fervor without reason and unchecked by knowledge; ‘men of great and fervent character are the cause of this confusion; not simply, of course, because they are ardent and great (for we are not yet condemning fervor, without which it is impossible to accomplish anything important in piety or in any other virtue), but because they are intrepid with irrationality, ignorance, and its evil product, that is, rashness; for rashness is the offspring of ignorance; ‘men of intrepid character, when trained and guided by reason, are an important factor in virtue; but when knowledge and reason are lacking, they are equally conducive to evil.’*’⁹⁷

* * *

c) Love

I have left until the end the subject of love, “which is,” according to the Apostle Paul, “the bond of perfectness.”⁹⁸

The Holy Father say that love “*clenches together*”⁹⁹ all of the virtues and that it “*holds together everything that engenders perfection*”;¹⁰⁰ this blessed love is like a golden link that binds all the virtues together into a perfect whole.

We ought to be possessed of this holy love, and especially towards our brothers who are caught up in innovation and heresy, but are as yet uncondemned, if we want to attract them to the Truth of the Faith.

I return once more to St. Basil the Great, who had bitter experience of similar conditions, deriving *from*

indiscriminate zealotry, that is, from the divorce of truth from love:

‘In the present [evil time],’ ‘when the love of many has waxed cold, brotherly concord is destroyed; the very name of unity is ignored; *loving admonitions have disappeared: nowhere is there Christian pity, nowhere falls a tear of sympathy, and there is no one to receive the weak in faith; some now trip up their neighbors’ heels, some stamp on a man when he is down, and others clap their hands with joy.*’¹⁰¹

St. Gregory the Theologian, addressing himself to the dreadful heretics, the Eunomians, said: “*O friends and brethren; for I will still call you brethren, although you do not behave like brothers.*”¹⁰²

In another instance, the same Saint said to the Pneumatomachians: “*For we are not striving to conquer, but to bring our brothers—by whose separation from us we are torn apart—to our side.*”¹⁰³

And I conclude with the saying of St. John of Damascus that is marvellous in its simplicity and profundity: “*Zeal for piety is a good thing, but when combined with love.*”¹⁰⁴

Fervor in confession is good, but literally catastrophic when it is not united with *repentance* and *self-reproach*, with *humility* and *self-knowledge*, with *love* and *compassion*.

3. “Every Landmark of the Fathers Has Been Moved”

By the Grace of our Lord and through your prayers, I now close my presentation for this evening.

I have dealt with the heresy of ecumenism and the lawful character of the struggle against ecumenism, which the Old Calendarist Orthodox are waging.

I have also set forth the sure Patristic boundaries of the anti-ecumenist endeavor, which validate it and keep it from hazardous deviations.

St. Basil the Great observed in his age, an age of grievous recriminations among Christians, who had just emerged from the catacombs: *“Every landmark of the Fathers has been moved; every foundation, every bulwark of dogma has been shaken.”*¹⁰⁵

This applies also to the ecumenists today, who have disturbed the dogmatic and ecclesiological landmarks, the foundations and bulwarks of the Orthodox Church.

But there lurks a danger for the Old Calendarist Orthodox anti-ecumenists: their diverse oversights and excesses damage the credibility of their witness and give rise to uncertainty about their stability “on the rock of the Faith and the Tradition of the Church,”¹⁰⁶ since the “the right doctrine of true religion” is capable of being distorted *“in the direction of excesses or in that of deficiencies.”*¹⁰⁷

In spite of this, we must continue our struggle against the panheresy of ecumenism with all might and sacrifice, casting our hope on Divine Providence.

Our Synod, the Holy Synod in Resistance, with anguish and brotherly love, calls Her spiritual children to remain “in agreement with, and followers of, the Holy Fathers,”¹⁰⁸ in the general context which we have delineated in brief; at the same time, they should pray unceasingly for the unity of the Orthodox anti-ecumenists of the Old Calendar, as also for the unity in general of the Orthodox Church, “that the world may believe.”¹⁰⁹

Only on such conditions do we have grounds for hoping that we will celebrate a new Sunday of Orthodoxy, a new triumph of Orthodoxy; may this come to pass very soon, by the intercessions of our Lady *Theotokos* and of all the Saints. Amen!

Notes

¹ He is celebrated on January 1. • St. Gregory was born in 273; the offspring of a wealthy and aristocratic household, he was previously a pagan, but well-intentioned and very virtuous; he was attracted to Christianity by the influence and efforts of his very pious wife, Nonna. He was Baptized in 325 by Bishops who at the time were passing through Arianos on their way to the First Holy Ecumenical Synod. Between 328 and 329, he was elevated to the office of Bishop of Nazianzos (Diocæsarea), after the repose of the ruling Bishop, Leontios. He reposed between 373 and 374 at the age of one hundred. St. Gregory the Theologian dedicated to his father, Gregory, *inter alia*, these four *Orations*: 9, 12, 16, and 18 (*Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, cols. 820–826, 844–849, 933–964, 985–1044).

² She is celebrated on August 5. • She was born in 304; the daughter of Philtatios and Gorgonia, also the offspring of a wealthy and aristocratic household, distinguished for her piety, morality, and beauty, she was the sister of Amphiloichios, father of the future St. Amphiloichios, Metropolitan of Iconium. She reposed in 374. St. Gregory the Theologian eulogized and praised his holy mother more than his father, in many passages of his writings.

³ He is celebrated on January 25. • He was born in 329 in Arianos, south of Nazianzos; during the years 345–356, he studied at institutions of higher learning (at Cæsarea in Cappadocia, at Cæsarea in Palestine, at Alexandria, and at Athens), and was Baptized between 357 and 359. He was Ordained Presbyter between 358 and 359 and Consecrated Bishop of Sasima in 372. He struggled successfully against the Arians and the Pneumatomachians in Constantinople during the years 379–381, was Archbishop of the Imperial City from 380–381, presided over the Second Holy Ecumenical Synod in 381, and reposed between 390 and 391.

⁴ She is celebrated on February 23. • She was born between 331 and 332 and reposed, very young, in 370, at the age of about thirty-eight. In spite of this, with her husband Alypius, she bore sons, daughters, and grandchildren. St. Gregory the Theologian extolled

the many virtues of his holy sister and, indeed, dedicated a special *Funeral Oration* to her (*Oration 8, Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, cols. 789–817).

⁵ He is celebrated on March 9. • He was born between 333 and 335. He received a brilliant education, becoming a physician to the Emperors in Constantinople and a senator. He reposed suddenly between 368 and 369 in Bithynia. He, too, was accorded a eulogy by his brother, St. Gregory the Theologian, who dedicated to him, *inter alia*, a *Funeral Oration* (*Oration 7, Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, cols. 756–788).

⁶ “When George of Laodicea brought the formula for union of the Emperor Constantios to Cæsarea [in which there was a confession that ‘the Son is in all respects similar to the Father’], Bishop Dianios of Cæsarea, in his naïveté, signed it, as did many others besides, including Gregory, the father of Gregory of Nazianzos, who thus took sides with the ‘Homœousians’” (C. G. Bonis, *Gregory the Theologian...* [Athens: 1982], p. 32. See a detailed treatment of the schism that was created, on pp. 78–87: “5. Disturbances in Nazianzos arising from the signing by his father Gregory of a semi-Arian creed”).

⁷ “Decoyed by a document and by artful terms into association with evil, he alone [his father, Gregory] was believed *to have an unwounded mind and a soul unblackened by ink, even when he had been imposed upon in his simplicity* and failed, from his guilelessness of soul, to be on his guard against guile...” (St. Gregory the Theologian, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, col. 1005c [*Oration 18: “Funeral Oration on His Father, in the Presence of Basil,”* §18]).

• The biographer of St. Gregory the Theologian makes the following revealing comments on the matter in question: “...Others, deceived by their simplicity of character, accepted the bait of heresy and joined their adversaries in communion by the stroke of a hand. *One of these was the father of blessed Gregory, who in the innocence of his mind fell for the hook.* Unable to endure this, the monastics of the region severed communion with him, and with them seceded no small segment of the people...” (Gregory the Presbyter, *Patrologia*

Græca, Vol. xxxv, col. 261C [*Life of our Father among the Saints, Gregory the Theologian, Bishop of Nazianzos*]).

⁸ *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, cols. 721–752 (*Oration 6*). • Gregory, the son, persuaded his father to sign the Orthodox Symbol of Faith and to announce it publicly (Gregory the Presbyter, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, cols. 261D and 264A [*Life...*]).

⁹ St. Gregory the Theologian, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, col. 752A (*Oration 6*: “First Irenic Oration on the Union of the Monks after the Silence over His Return,” §22).

¹⁰ *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, col. 1005C (*Oration 18*: “On His Father...,” §18).

¹¹ St. Gregory the Theologian—to cite a pertinent example from Church history—*had to cope on two fronts* during his struggle in Constantinople: on one side were the Arian-minded and the Pneumatomachians; and on the other, the divided Orthodox, who had transferred the inter-Orthodox quarrels of the Antiochian Schism to the Imperial City, on the basis of which the super-correct Eustathians *accused the Saint of moderation and did not commune with him!* (*Orations 22*, the “Second Irenic Oration,” and 23, the “Third Irenic Oration,” are indicative of the climate prevailing at that time—in 379—in the Capital City.)

• St. Gregory says very tellingly in one place: “*The irenic and moderate faction suffers ill-treatment from both sides: either disdain or warfare*. We, in fact, today belong to this faction, which is precisely why we have accepted this Throne, which is the object of rivalry and envy” (*Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, col. 1148A [*Oration 22*: “Second Irenic Oration,” §14]).

¹² Great Protopresbyter George Tsetsis, *The Œcumenical Throne and the Oikoumene: Official Patriarchal Texts* [in Greek] (Katerine: Tertios Publications, 1988), p. 57.

¹³ John N. Karmiris, *Orthodox Ecclesiology* (Part 5 of his *Dogmatic Theology*) [in Greek] (Athens: 1973), pp. 242–243.

¹⁴ *Ekklesiastike Aletheia* [Constantinople], No. 14 (13 April 1919), p. 97a [in Greek] (see the following comments pertaining to the “Synodal Letter,” which upholds this ecclesiological view: Tsetsis, *The Œcumenical Throne and the Oikoumene*, *op. cit.*, pp. 47–51;

idem, *The Contribution of the Œcumenical Patriarchate to the Founding of the World Council of Churches* [in Greek] (Katerine: Tertios Publications, 1988), pp. 51–71, and especially pp. 60–63).

¹⁵ See the full chronicle of the visit in P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity* [in Greek], Vol. II (Athens: 1978), pp. 252–273.

¹⁶ Constantine J. Manikas, “The Church of Greece and the Orthodox–Roman Catholic Dialogue According to the First and Second Pan–Orthodox Consultations in Rhodes” [in Greek], *Theologia* (April–June 1991), p. 382.

¹⁷ See P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 5–53 [ch. 1: “The Lifting of the Anathemas (July 16, 1054–December 7, 1965)”]; *Tomos Agapes: Vatican–Phanar (1958–1970)* [in Greek] (Rome and Istanbul: 1971) (relevant texts in ascending order, Nos. 119, 121–124, 126–132, 141–143, 173, 200–201, 236–237, 277, 279). See a critique from an Orthodox standpoint in: Archimandrite Spyridon S. Bilalis, *Orthodoxy and Papism*, Vol. II (Athens: *Orthodoxos Typos* Publications, 1969), pp. 353–364.

¹⁸ Archimandrite Athanasios J. Vasilopoulos, *From the Journey of Love...* [in Greek] (Athens: 1968), p. 53a. • These views were reiterated on January 10, 1968 (*ibid.*, p. 87b: “Patriarchal visits and their happy results”).

¹⁹ P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 684–685; *Episkepsis*, No. 180 (15 December 1977), p. 12 [in Greek]: “The Visit of His Eminence, Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon to Rome”; *L’Osservatore Romano* (9–10 February 1977), p. 2.

²⁰ *Tomos Agapes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 86–88, §35.

²¹ *Episkepsis*, No. 139 (13 January 1976), pp. 14–15 [in Greek], on the tenth anniversary of the lifting of the anathemas.

²² *Episkepsis*, No. 493 (30 June 1993), p. 7 [in Greek].

²³ See “Athenagoras I in Rome (26–28 October 1967),” in P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 141–196. Patriarch Demetrios in Rome (3–7 December 1987): *Episkepsis*, No. 392 (1 February 1988), pp. 1–22 [in Greek]; *Katholike*, No. 2457 (22 December 1987), pp. 5–8 and 11, No. 2458 (5 January 1988), p. 4 [in Greek]. “Official Visit of the Œcumenical Patriarch (Bartholomew)

to Rome" (27–29 June 1995), in *Episkepsis*, No. 520 (31 July 1993), pp. 2–21 [in Greek].

²⁴ *Episkepsis*, No. 221 (1 December 1979), pp. 11–12 [in Greek].

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 3 and 6.

²⁷ See the preceding notes 25 and 26.

²⁸ P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 293; *Tomos Agapes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 528–530, §242.

²⁹ P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity*, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 202–214; *Tomos Agapes*, *op. cit.*, p. 208, §95.

³⁰ See *Hagios Kyprianos*, No. 247 (March–April 1992), pp. 61–64 [in Greek]: "A New 'Sacred Tradition': 'Enthronements' and 'Patronal Feasts' of Ecumenists and Heterodox."

³¹ *Tomos Agapes*, *op. cit.*, pp. 80–81, §32 (*emphasis ours*).

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 554–555, §256 (*emphasis ours*).

³³ *Episkepsis*, No. 176 (15 October 1977), p. 2 [in Greek] (*emphasis ours*).

³⁴ *Episkepsis*, No. 219 (1 November 1979), p. 2 [in Greek] (*emphasis ours*).

³⁵ See *Orthodoxia* [Constantinople], (July–September 1994), pp. 620–623 [in Greek].

³⁶ *Episkepsis*, No. 507 (31 July 1994), pp. 5–6 [in Greek].

³⁷ *Katholike*, No. 2705 (20 July 1993), p. 3, §13: "The Unia, as a Method of Union During the Past, and the Contemporary Search for Full Communion" [in Greek] (official text of the Seventh Plenary Meeting of the Joint International Commission for Dialogue between Orthodox and Papists in Balamand, Lebanon, June 1993).

³⁸ Tsetsis, *The Ecumenical Throne and the Oikoumene*, *op. cit.*, pp. 59 and 62.

³⁹ *Tomos Agapes*, *op. cit.*, p. 445, §195 (*emphasis ours*).

⁴⁰ See, for example, the "Messages" of Patriarch Demetrios to Pope John Paul II on the Patronal Feast of Rome in 1990 and 1991 (*Episkepsis*, No. 443 [15 July 1990], p. 2 [in Greek]; No. 464 [1 July 1991], p. 3 [in Greek]).

⁴¹ *Episkepsis*, No. 221 (1 December 1979), p. 4 [in Greek] (*emphasis ours*).

⁴² *Episkepsis*, No. 520 (31 July 1995), pp. 19–21 [in Greek]: “Joint Communiqué” (*emphasis ours*).

⁴³ Archimandrite Cyprian Agiokyprianites, *Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Movement* (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1997), p. 17.

⁴⁴ St. Mark of Ephesus, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CLX, col. 536C (“Apologia Uttered Impromptu at the Time of His Death”).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, cols. 536C and 537A.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, col. 536CD.

⁴⁷ Fifteenth Canon of the First–Second Holy Synod (861, under St. Photios the Great of Constantinople).

⁴⁸ St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, *Pedalion*, p. 358.

⁴⁹ Monk John Zonaras, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CXXXVII, col. 1069D; *Syntagma ton Thion kai Hieron Kanonon*, ed. G. Rallis and M. Potlis, Vol. II (Athens: G. Chartophylax, 1852–1859), p. 694.

⁵⁰ Fifteenth Canon of the First–Second Holy Synod.

⁵¹ St. Theodore the Studite, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1064C (*Epistle* 1.43: “To His Brother Joseph the Archbishop”).

⁵² *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1045D (*Epistle* 1.39: “To Theophilus the Abbot”).

⁵³ *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1177C (*Epistle* 11.20: “To Macarios the Abbot”).

⁵⁴ *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1013B (*Epistle* 1.31: “To the Brethren in Saccoudion”).

⁵⁵ St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XXXII, col. 952A (*Epistle* 258: “To Eiphianos the Bishop,” §3).

⁵⁶ “In Constantinople there was a Bishop by the name of Dorotheos, who held the same opinions as Nestorios, a flatterer for the sake of gain and a man hasty with his lips, as it is written (Proverbs 13:3); at Liturgy, when the Most Reverend Nestorios was sitting on the Throne of the Church of Constantinople, he stood up and dared to say in a loud voice: ‘If anyone says that Mary is the *Theotokos*, let him be anathema!’” (St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXXVII, col. 81B; *Praktika ton Hagion kai Oikoumenikon Synodon*, ed. Spyridon Melia, Vol. 1 [Holy Mountain: Kalyve of the

Venerable Forerunner Publications, 1981], p. 443b [Epistle II: "To the Most Holy and God-beloved Pope Celestine (of Rome)"]).

⁵⁷ "A mighty cry arose from all of the people, and they rushed out; for they did not want to be in communion any longer with those who held such opinions; the result was that even now the people of Constantinople do not attend Church services, with the exception of a few rather simple-minded folk and those who flatter Nestorios; almost all the monasteries and their Archimandrites, and most of the Senate, do not attend Church, fearing lest they should be harmed in their faith, with him and all his supporters 'speaking perverse things' (Acts 20:30)" (*ibid.*, col. 81BC).

⁵⁸ Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod, Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1022CD; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 733a (First Session).

⁵⁹ St. John 14:6.

⁶⁰ I St. Timothy 3:15.

⁶¹ The Patriarchal faction called St. Gregory "sedition" and condemned him "to be reckoned with apostates and prisoners," while they regarded those who were of one mind with him as "disobedient," "insubordinate," and "abominable" (St. Gregory Palamas, *Syngrammata*, ed. P. Chrestou, Vol. II [Thessaloniki: 1966], p. 541 [Second Epistle to Macarios, §4]; p. 595 [Refutation of a Letter of Calecas, §13]).

⁶² "Palamas and those of like mind with him" "who have uncanonically and rashly dared to break off commemoration of me, do we subject to censure from the Life-giving and Holy Trinity and consign to anathema," "John, by the mercy of God Archbishop of Constantinople, the New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch" (*Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CL, cols. 863C–864A).

⁶³ "Anathema was once fearsome and something to be avoided, when it was brought against those guilty of impiety by the heralds of piety"; but since it has been turned "against the champions of Orthodoxy," "it has been transformed into fables and trivialities, and has become, rather, even desirable for the pious," since for them "it produces undefiled crowns and immortal glory, rather than punishment. For this reason, each of the pious and holy chooses to be spat-tered with mud and anathematized countless times by those who are alienated from Christ, rather than to have communion with heretics"

(St. Photios the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CII, col. 833ABC [*Epistle* II.17: “To Ignatios, Metropolitan of Claudioupolis”]).

⁶⁴ Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod, Mansi, Vol. XIII, col. 196D; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 823b (Fifth Session).

⁶⁵ St. Theodore the Studite, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1484D (*Epistle* II.155: “To Theophilos of Ephesus”).

⁶⁶ Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCVIII, col. 1440C; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 895b; Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 987B; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 724a (*Apologia of Tarasios*); Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1006D; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 728b (First Session).

⁶⁷ *Idem*, Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1003D; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 728b (First Session); Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1130B; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 762a (Third Session); Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1154C; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 768b (Third Session).

⁶⁸ *Idem*, Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1118E; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 758b (Third Session).

⁶⁹ *Idem*, Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1126B; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 760b (Third Session).

⁷⁰ *Idem*, Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1126D; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 761a (Third Session).

⁷¹ The following ecclesiological views constitute a simplified summary of a broader and related ecclesiological work of ours that is in the process of being published.

⁷² St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XXXII, cols. 668B and 669A (*Epistle* 188 [First Canonical Epistle]: “To Amphilochos, Concerning the Canons,” First Canon).

• According to the correct ecclesiological content of this Patristic position, schismatics and heretics are considered to be literally “completely broken off,” that is, “those who have estranged themselves from the Church” (Aristenos, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CXXXVIII, col. 585D); in this way, they cease to be even ailing members of the Body, since prior to their synodal judgment, “they have broken away from the body of the Church” (Zonaras, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CXXXVIII, col. 584A) and have organized themselves as unlawful congregations into their own separate community, which no longer belongs to the Thrones and does not act or teach in the

name of and on behalf of the Orthodox Church, but maintains its own administration and teaching.

The heretic Apollinaris (310–390), for example, “having completely broken away,” established an entire “ecclesiastical” organization and “openly devised a heresy, to which his name has been given; and having induced many people to secede from the Church, he formed separate assemblies”; “From that period the members of this sect have formed separate churches in various cities, under their own bishops, and have established laws differing from those of the Catholic Church...” (Sozomen, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXVII, cols. 1357A/C [*Ecclesiastical History* VI.25]).

73 St. Matthew 13:24–30, 47–50.

74 Fifteenth Canon of the First–Second Holy Synod.

75 St. Matthew 13:30, 49.

76 St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XXXII, cols. 937C–938A (*Epistle* 251: “To the People of Evæsæ,” §4).

• Significantly enough, the antithesis, “healthy”–“diseased,” is mentioned also in the following *Epistles* of the Saint: 82, 90, 91, 113, 204, 242, 243, and 251.

• Likewise, St. Theodore the Studite refers to the “healthy part of Orthodoxy” (*Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1288A [*Epistle* II.65: “To Navkratios, His Spiritual Child”]).

77 Monk Paul Evergetinos, *Synagoge ton Theophthongon Rematon kai Didaskalion ton Theophoron kai Hagion Pateron*, Bk. 1, Hypothesis I.J.4 [from the *Gerontikon*] (Athens: A. S. Georgiou, 1901), p. 15 (simplified version).

78 Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod, Mansi, Vol. XIII, col. 380B; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 874b (Seventh Session).

79 St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite, *Pedalion*, pp. 4–5, n. 2, and p. xix, n. 3, §10.

80 Fifteenth Canon of the First–Second Holy Synod.

81 Theodore Balsamon [Patriarch of Antioch], *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CXXXVII, col. 1068D; *Syntagma*, *op. cit.*, p. 695.

82 *Pentecostarion*, Sunday of the Holy 318 Fathers, at the Praises (Athens: Phos Publications, 1984), p. 200a.

⁸³ *Weighty perplexity* and *relentless uneasiness* rest chiefly in the dynamics of the Orthodox confession and in its immediate spiritual result, since the proclamation of Orthodox Truth signifies in essence a *potential anathematization of a heretic*. This profound idea belongs to St. Theodore the Studite and was formulated when he was interpreting the position of St. Cyril of Alexandria, who “condescended not to be separated from those in the East who mentioned Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was a heretic, in the *Diptychs*, since they preserved the teachings of the true Faith most correctly and most appropriately”; St. Theodore declares: “Everyone who is Orthodox in every respect anathematizes every heretic potentially, even if not verbally” (*Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xcix, col. 1088B [*Epistle* 1.49: “To Navkratios, His Spiritual Child”]).

⁸⁴ I St. Timothy 1:10; II St. Timothy 4:3; St. Titus 1:9, 2:1.

⁸⁵ St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. v, col. 680A (*Epistle to the Trallians* 6.1).

⁸⁶ St. Theodore the Studite, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xcix, col. 1064D (*Epistle* 1.43: “To His Brother Joseph the Archbishop”).

⁸⁷ St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 526C (*Epistle* 113: “To the Presbyters of Tarsus”).

⁸⁸ *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, cols. 209D, 212D, 213A, and 216C (*On the Holy Spirit*, ch. 30, §§76–78).

⁸⁹ *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 993B (*Epistle* 266: “To Peter, the Bishop of Alexandria,” §2).

⁹⁰ *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, cols. 981C and 984 (*Epistle* 264: “To Barses, the Bishop of Edessa, Who is in Exile”).

⁹¹ St. John Chrysostomos, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. lx, col. 331 (*On Acts, Homily* 47, §3).

⁹² St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 213D (*On the Holy Spirit*, ch. 30, §77).

⁹³ I St. Peter 3:15.

⁹⁴ II St. Timothy 2:2.

• See St. John Chrysostomos: “But he says ‘commit’ not only to faithful men; indeed, of what advantage is it, though one be faithful, if he cannot convey his doctrine to others—when he does

not betray the Faith, but does not render others faithful? *The teacher, therefore, ought to have two qualities, to be both faithful and capable of teaching.* This is why he says, ‘who shall be able to teach others also’” (*Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXII, col. 619 [*On II St. Timothy, Homily 4, §1*]).

⁹⁵ Ecclesiasticus 4:29.

⁹⁶ St. Gregory the Theologian, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, cols. 197D–200A (*Oration 32: “On Good Order in Controversies, and That Discourse about God is Not Appropriate for Every Man or Every Occasion,” §21*).

• This teaching of St. Gregory the Theologian assumed oecumenical authority through the Sixty-fourth Canon of the Sixth Holy (Ecumenical) Synod, which based its content on an extended extract from this famous *Oration 32*: “It does not befit a layman to dispute or teach publicly, thus claiming for himself authority to teach..., according to the voice of the Apostle, in his interpretation of which, [St.] Gregory the Theologian clearly commends order in such controversies, saying....”

⁹⁷ St. Gregory the Theologian, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxv, cols. 180BA and 176D–177A (*Oration 32, §§5 and 3*).

⁹⁸ Colossians 3:14.

⁹⁹ St. John Chrysostomos, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. LXII, col. 354 (*On Colossians, Homily 8, §2*).

¹⁰⁰ St. Theophylact of Bulgaria, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CXXIV, col. 1260D (*Exegesis of the Epistle to the Colossians*).

¹⁰¹ St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XXXII, col. 216BC (*On the Holy Spirit*, ch. 30, §78).

¹⁰² St. Gregory the Theologian, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxvi, col. 17A (*Oration 27: “First Theological Oration,” §5*).

¹⁰³ *Idem*, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxvi, col. 440B (*Oration 41: “On Pentecost,” §8*).

¹⁰⁴ St. John of Damascus, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xciv, col. 1436A (*Against the Jacobites, §1*).

¹⁰⁵ St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 213A (*On the Holy Spirit*, ch. 30, §77).

¹⁰⁶ St. John of Damascus, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xciv, col. 1356CD (*Against Those Who Slander the Holy Icons* III.41).

¹⁰⁷ St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 213C (*On the Holy Spirit*, ch. 30, §77).

¹⁰⁸ Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod, Mansi, Vol. xiii, col. 196D; *Praktika*, Vol. II, p. 823b (Fifth Session).

¹⁰⁹ St. John 17:21.

**The Deadly Sin of Orthodox
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The Seventh General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, in Canberra, in February of 1991, left no room for doubt that the future of this Geneva-based ecumenical organization is clearly pan-religious and that its syncretistic degeneration is unavoidable.

A. The deadly sin of Orthodox ecumenists participating in this Assembly cannot be forgiven—in spite of the “vigorous” protestations that they put forward—for two main reasons:

First reason: The Orthodox ecumenists, after affirming the syncretistic tendencies of the WCC and its openness towards third world “theologies,” not only did not withdraw from the pan-Protestant association of Geneva, but seven months later, at a special inter-Orthodox Consultation—in which, it should be noted, Non-Chalcedonians or Monophysites also took part—in Chambésy, Switzerland (September 12–16, 1991), they hammered out an extended “Report” (Chapters 1–3, 27 sections), whereby they renewed their decision “for a fuller Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement”!¹

Indeed, this lamentable “Report,” in referring to the necessity for a rediscovery, “by concerned Orthodox, of a purified, well-informed, and responsible Orthodoxy” as the “most powerful response” to the “unethical” activities of certain “missionaries,” expresses the opinion that the Orthodox “need the help of every-

one, but especially the support of their brothers in the WCC"! (see note 1).

That is, if Orthodoxy, the blessed Body of the God–Man, Christ our Savior, is to offer Her saving witness to the world, She needs help from the heterodox; if the Truth is to shine, it needs falsehood!

Second reason: The Orthodox delegation played a decisive rôle in broadening the “unionist” vision of the WCC and in preparing the ground for a wider ecumenism,² that is, for an affirmation of other religions *as venerable spiritual experiences and traditions*.

And more specifically, the so-called “ecumenical movement,” and consequently the WCC, after sixty years of deliberation and after a profound fermentation of positive and negative views (Edinburgh 1910, Jerusalem 1928, Tambaram, India 1938, Accra, Ghana 1957–1958, New Delhi 1961, Mexico 1963, Kandy, Sri Lanka 1967, Ajaltoun, Lebanon 1970, and Zürich 1970), made a definite decision that it would now commit itself to dialogue with other religions.³

In January of 1971, the Central Committee of the WCC met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, its main theme being “Dialogue with People of Other Religious Convictions.”

The keynote speaker was Metropolitan Georges (Khodr) of Mount Lebanon, from the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch, who developed the topic “Christianity in a Pluralistic World—the Work of the Holy Spirit.”⁴

The Central Committee, basing itself on the Zürich Statement, regarded interfaith dialogue as an “ec-

umenical priority” and undertook a “bold step”: it proceeded to establish the “Sub–unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies.”⁵

The year 1971, therefore, is considered the starting–point for the broadening of the unionist vision of the WCC and the opening of its gates to all religions.

It should be noted that the broadening of the boundaries of ecumenism by this Geneva–based organization took place in a manner worthy of tears, especially for Orthodox ecumenists, and with unprecedented degradation.

What precisely occurred?

In Addis Ababa, Metropolitan Georges (Khodr), in his attempt to lay the foundations of a new theology, the “theology” of dialogue with other religions, literally trampled on every point of the Faith and promoted a polymorphous brand of heresy.

The unfortunate Hierarchy:

—*confirmed* the authentically spiritual life of the unbaptized;

—*affirmed* that we can enrich our life experience with the riches of a universal religious community;

—*recognized* that Christ illumines those of other religions, when they read their scriptures;

—*maintained* that the Holy Spirit operates independently of Jesus Christ and His Church, inspires the non–Christian religions, and is really the common denominator of all the world’s religions:

The Spirit operates and applies His Own energies in accordance with His Own economy and we could, from

this angle, regard the non-Christian religions as points where His inspiration is at work. All who are visited by the Spirit are the people of God.⁶

The syncretistic methodology of this pitiful Metropolitan shocked even the Protestant members of the Committee in its audacity, and also constitutes amazing proof of how, through ecumenism, one is inexorably led to the pan-religion of the “New Age”!

B. A legitimate question, therefore, arises: why do the Orthodox ecumenists “protest” over an “*increasing divergence from the basis of the WCC,*”⁷ when they have never expressed protest over the “theology” of Metropolitan Georges (Khodr), this pitiful Orthodox clergyman, and those of like mind with him, whose theology constitutes an indispensable presupposition for the further interfaith ventures of the WCC?

The “uneasiness” of the Orthodox ecumenists over the “*tendency for the basis of the WCC to become marginalized when it carries out its work*” (see note 7), making constant reference, as they do, to the “Toronto Statement” (1950), provokes mirth even among the more simple-minded students of the so-called “ecumenical movement.”

And this is because it is undeniable that the theological and practical framework of the ecumenist federation of the WCC preserves its “ancestral” desire to be recognized and confirmed as a kind of supreme authority *supra Ecclesiam*, as an “Ecumenical Church,” contrary to the occasional “Statements” of the Toron-



From the Fifth World Conference of the WCC's Faith and Order Commission, in Santiago de Compostella, Spain (August 3–14, 1993), with the theme, "Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness."

From left: Pastor Gao Ying, from China; the Anglican Archbishop, Desmond Tutu, from South Africa; Pastor Dr. Dorothy Lee, from Australia; the Papist professor, Father Jean-Marie Tillard, from Canada; Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) from the Patriarchate of Constantinople; and Pastor Dr. Günther Gassmann from Germany.

to variety and in spite of the "anxieties," "reflections," and "protestations" of the Orthodox ecumenists.

The Orthodox members of the Assembly in Canberra detected the creation

'of certain dangerous conditions in the WCC'; 'Absent from many texts of the WCC is an affirmation that "Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world"'; they also observed, among other things, 'an increasing departure from the Biblical Christian understanding concerning 1) the Triune God, 2) salvation, 3) the "Good News" of this Gospel itself, 4) man as a creature "in the image and likeness of God," and 5) the Church' (see note 7)

C. And yet, precisely thirty months after Canberra and these “Orthodox anxieties,” Metropolitan Georges (Khodr) of Mount Lebanon, at the WCC’s Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order in the Spanish city of Santiago de Compostella (August 3–14, 1993),⁸ reiterated his syncretistic theology, and this in the presence of a very broad pan–Orthodox delegation (forty–six members):

...But the Spirit blows where the Spirit wills and holiness in the sense of enlightenment and glorification can be received by all people everywhere.... Dialogue for truth can be established. Christian adherence to Christ as the truth should not obscure the truths scattered in the religious traditions surrounding them. All these truths spring from the same Divine source. We should welcome all spiritual life–giving nourishment, not as a human word but as bread from Heaven. All discourse resists different discourse, and all scriptures resist different scriptures. That is why the aim of dialogue is above all, by going beyond religious traditions, to seek the Divine truth latent beneath different words and symbols. That is not to relativize the Christian message: it is not syncretism, it is the same Christ we worship as he journeys through the infinite spaces of other religions. This requires us to have a kenotic [*sic*] attitude. Kenosis [*sic*] is witness without words and can be fruitful. In dialogue the Church opens up, goes deeper and comes to know itself....⁹

D. In 1991, Archimandrite Gennadios (Lymouris), Th.D., Professor at the University of Strasbourg, a staff member of the WCC and the Delegation of the Patri-

archate of Constantinople, in describing the events in Canberra, admitted:

But we were not lacking in moments of *discouragement* and *exasperation, indignation* and *pessimism*, as we reflected on the future course of the ecumenical movement, the gravity of the situation, and *the impasse of multilateral theological discussions*, so that one ended up posing the question: *Quo vadis, Œcumene?*¹⁰

Underlining once again our original observation regarding the *deadly sin* and the indescribable fall of the Orthodox ecumenists—who even now, at this crucial turning-point of the WCC, before it finally dissolves in the pan-religious melting pot, have not only not repented, but “*support*” it in its disastrous course with “theologies” of the Khodr variety and are swept along with it into the abyss of syncretism—, we conclude with a final question:

“*Quo vadite, Orthodoxi Œcumenisti?*”

“Whither go ye, O Orthodox ecumenists?”

Notes

* Our decision to reprint the present article was influenced by the extremely penetrating observation that “*Post-modernism*” (or “*Post-modernity*”) “as a movement of pluralism (and syncretism) in all aspects of human life,” which prevails in our days, after the movements of the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Modernism (Modernity), “*manifests itself in the area of religion as syncretism, as an ecumenical view of religion, according to which the faithful of all religions should be liberated from the barriers of their own religions and communicate with the adherents of other religions*” (Metropolitan Hierotheos

of Navpaktos and Hagios Vlasios, "Is Orthodoxy Post-Modernist?" [in Greek], *To Vema* [29 March 1998/"Modern Times"], p. 10).

¹ See the full text of the "Report" in *The Seventh General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Canberra, February 1991: Chronicle, Texts, Remarks* [in Greek], ed. George N. Laimopoulos (Katerine: Tertios Publications, 1992), pp. 93–106; *Enemerosis*, 7–1991/9–10, pp. 10–16 [in Greek]; *Apostolos Barnabas* [Cyprus] (January 1992), pp. 21–29 [in Greek]; *Episkepsis*, No. 467 (20 September 1991), pp. 5–12 [in Greek]; *Ecumenical Press Service*, No. 26 (91.09.27) (abstract of the "Report").

² Anton Houtepen, "Faith," in the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, ed. Nicholas Lossky, José Miguez Bonino, John Pobee, Tom Stransky, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Pauline Webb (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1991), p. 410b (§ Faith and dialogue with other faiths). (Anton Houtepen, a Papist, is Director of the Inter-University Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research, Utrecht, and Professor of Fundamental Theology at Erasmus University, Rotterdam, Netherlands).

³ See, in more detail: Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili, *The World Council of Churches and the Interfaith Movement* (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1997), pp. 14–28.

⁴ Basil T. Stavrides, *History of the Ecumenical Movement* [in Greek] (*Analekta* of the Vlatadon Monastery, No. 47; Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1984), pp. 193–194.

⁵ See George N. Laimopoulos, "The World Council of Churches and Interfaith Dialogue" [in Greek], *Kath' Hodon*, [Thessaloniki] No. 3 (September–December 1992), p. 45; Marlin VanElderden, "Consultation Speaks on Plurality," *Ecumenical Press Service*, No. 3 (90.01.90); Wesley Ariarajah, "Dialogue, Interfaith," in the *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement*, *op. cit.*, p. 285a.

⁶ Georges (Khodr), Metropolitan of Mount Lebanon, "Christianity in a Pluralistic World: The Work of the Holy Spirit," *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* [Alexandria], Vol. LIII, No. 2 (1971), p. 239; Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose), *Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future*, rev. ed. (Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1979), pp. 15–20; Metropolitan Parthenios of Carthage, "The Central Com-

mittee of the WCC in Addis Ababa" [in Greek], *Pantainos*, Vol. LXXIII (March 1971), pp. 157–162; *Ekklesia*, Nos. 7–8 (1–15 March 1971), pp. 151–154 [in Greek]: "Report of the Delegates of the Church of Greece at the General Assembly of the WCC in Addis Ababa," (there were three delegates: Metropolitan Nicodemos [Gatziroulis] of Attica and Professors Constantine Bonis and Savvas Agourides).

⁷ "Reflections of the Orthodox Members of the Assembly," in *The Seventh General Assembly*, *op. cit.*, p. 78 (b, §2).

⁸ See *Ekklesia*, No. 13 (1–15 September 1993) [in Greek]; *One World*, No. 189 (October 1993), pp. 12–17; *Ecumenical Press Service*, No. 21 (93.08.01 and 93.08.17), and No. 22 (93.08.18–29).

⁹ "Koinonia in Witness," in Thomas Best and Günther Gassman (eds.), *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia: Official Report of the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, Santiago de Compostella, 1993* (Faith and Order Paper No. 166; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1994), pp. 124 and 126.

¹⁰ Archimandrite Gennadios (Lymouris), "The Seventh General Assembly of the World Council of Churches: Its Theological Problems and the Orthodox Presence and Witness" [in Greek], *Gregorios Ho Palamas*, No. 738 (May–August 1991), p. 359 (*emphasis ours*).

“Every Landmark of the Fathers Has Been Moved”

The author of this work points out the heretical character of ecumenism and the legitimacy of the struggle against ecumenism which the Old Calendarist Orthodox are waging.

He also sets forth the secure Patristic boundaries of this anti-ecumenist endeavor, which validate it and preserve it from hazardous deviations.

The ecumenists have upset the dogmatic and ecclesiological landmarks, the foundations and bulwarks, of the Orthodox Church. “*Every landmark of the Fathers has been moved; every foundation, every bulwark of dogma has been shaken*” (St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 213A).

However, according to the author, there lurks a danger for the Old Calendarist Orthodox anti-ecumenists: their diverse oversights and excesses damage the credibility of their witness, since the “the right doctrine of true religion” is capable of being distorted “*in the direction of excesses or in that of deficiencies*” (St. Basil the Great, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. xxxii, col. 213C).

In spite of this, we must continue the struggle against the panheresy of ecumenism with all might and sacrifice, casting our hope on Divine Providence.

Front cover photo: The Basilica of St. Peter, the Vatican, on the Patronal Feast of Rome, June 29, 1995. Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople is empowered to bestow a joint blessing with Pope John Paul II to the Papist congregation, on the basis of the official position of the ecumenists of the Phanar, that the Orthodox Church and Papism are “Sister Churches,” “working in the same field and in the same vineyard of the Lord.”