

“The official Church would do well to exonerate itself from two anathemas to which it is subject”

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**Elder Philotheos (Zervakos)  
Defends His Spiritual  
Son, the Present  
Metropolitan  
Cyprian\***



*Elder Philotheos Zervakos*

**A Second Momentous Letter**

**A** **IS WELL KNOWN**, since the innovating ecumenists—those despisers of Patristic Traditions and the Church Calendar—accept that heretics have Grace and Mysteries, they are tolerant and considerate towards them, whereas at the same time they do not cease from slandering the anti-ecumenist Old Calendarist Orthodox as allegedly being schismatics, deposed, and deprived of the Mysteries.

**The unfortunate** thing is that even the New Calendarists, as well as the monks of the Holy Mountain, who oppose the heresy of ecumenism (albeit hitherto only in print), uncritically adopt these slanders. Being clearly in terrible confusion themselves, they generate further confusion among the Faithful.

**We have repeatedly** demonstrated and proclaimed, with thorough documentation, that the depositions carried out by the innovating New Calendarist ecumenists are not true depositions, but pseudo-depositions, and that the Old Calendarist clergy are never actually deposed, but, rather persecuted;<sup>1</sup> their Mysteries have never lost Divine Grace and such clergy have even received God’s blessing in greater abundance.<sup>2</sup>

**Unjust depositions** for steadfastness in the Truth of the Faith and Holy Tradition are not valid, nor do they bring about any negative result, as we ascertain from the case of St. John Chrysostomos who, though unjustly deposed twice and exiled, continued to carry out his Episcopal duties: “And he taught, Consecrated many Bishops, and Ordained scores of Priests and Deacons. He also performed many miracles while in exile, both when alive and after death.”<sup>3</sup>

**This truth is also** corroborated by the ever-memorable Elder Philotheos (Zervakos) (†25 April 1980 [Old Style]), who, as the Confessor of our spiritual Father, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, gave his blessing for us to join the Old Calendar movement, on account of the ecumenical excesses of the State Church (1969), and who encouraged us, in our further journey, with many and various letters, which we are intending to make public in due course.

**On 16 May 1973**, the Saintly Elder of Paros sent a letter to the “man of God,” the celebrated Papa-Demetris Gangastathis (†1975), a parish Priest in Platanos, Trikala, which letter primarily dealt with “Father Cyprian, who has joined the Old Calendar movement, for which the official Church has deposed him.”<sup>4</sup>

**We are publishing** this truly momentous letter with especial joy and, indeed, on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the repose of that blessed Priest, Papa-Demetris (16/29 January 1975); but we are also publishing it in order to dispel of the murky cloud of slander generated both by the deplorable ecumenists and by the yet more deplorable New Calendarists and Athonites who, while they disagree with the ecumenists, are at the same time sinking together with them.

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*Paros, 16 May 1973*

*To the most revered and beloved brother in Christ and concelebrant, Father Demetrios, greetings.*

*Christ is truly risen, granting life eternal and the Heavenly Kingdom to all of the Faithful who maintain right belief and have knowledge of the truth.*

*I received your letter and am responding to your questions.*

*Firstly, concerning Father Cyprian, who has joined the Old Calendar movement, for which the official Church has deposed him, but who still carries out his office, Liturgizes, and is designated “Abbot of the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina,” let me inform you of the following:*

*If the official Church deposed him only on account of the Old Calendar, in order for his deposition to be valid, it would be necessary:*

- *for all Old Calendarists to be deposed;*
- *to condemn the Old Calendar itself;*
- *[to condemn] even the First Œcumenical Synod, which, on the basis of the Old Calendar—the so-called Julian Calendar—prescribed that the Feast of Pascha remain unaltered and eternal;*
- *to condemn all of the six Œcumenical Synods, which followed the Old Calendar;*
- *[to condemn] the Synod of Antioch, which, in its first Canon, decrees that whoever dares to alter the decree of the First Œcumenical Synod (which prescribed that Pascha remain unaltered), be deposed, if a clergyman, and excommunicated, if a layman.*

\* \* \*

*No Synod, either Œcumenical or local, introduced the New Calendar into the Orthodox Church.*

*It was uncanonically and illegitimately introduced by Œcumenical Patriarch Meletios [Metaxakis, 1871-1935],<sup>5</sup> a Thirty-third degree Mason,<sup>6</sup> with six Hierarchs<sup>7</sup> of unorthodox beliefs, in order to show contempt for the Orthodox Church and the Traditions of the Holy Apostles and the Holy Fathers, while being in agreement with the innovationist, modernist, schismatic, and heretical Papists and Lutheran-Calvinist Protestants.*

*The New, Gregorian, Papal Calendar, which Pope Gregory [XIII, 1572-1585] first introduced into the Western Church, and then attempted to introduce also into the Eastern Orthodox Church, was not only not accepted by the Orthodox Church, but was even anathematized in two local Synods that convened in Constantinople.<sup>8</sup>*

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*The official Church would do well to exonerate itself from two anathemas to which it is subject:*

• *The first anathema is that of the Seventh Œcumenical Synod which decrees: “Whosoever violates any Church Tradition, written or unwritten, let him be anathema.”*

*The First Œcumenical Synod, composed of 318 God-bearing Fathers, gave us the Old Calendar.<sup>9</sup> The New Calendar was given by Pope Gregory and the Freemason, Meletios Metaxakis.*

*The official Church accepted it without difficulty, despising and violating the Tradition of the First Œcumenical Synod, and consequently incurring the aforementioned anathema of the Seventh Œcumenical Synod, as well as the following anathema of the same Synod:*

*“Any innovation made against Church Tradition and the teaching and formularies of the Holy and ever-memorable Fathers, in the past or in the future is subject to threefold anathema” (Synodikon of Orthodoxy).*

*The illegitimate and uncanonical introduction of the New, Papal Calendar by Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis<sup>10</sup> is an innovation antithetical to the Tradition of the Holy and God-bearing Fathers.*

• *The second anathema is that of the herald of God, the Apostle Paul:*

*“If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:9).*

*The Holy Apostles have handed down to us a fast after the Sunday of All Saints, which the illegitimate introduction of the New Calendar at times completely eliminates.*

*The Fast of the Holy Apostles is either non-existent, or sometimes lasts one day, sometimes two. This year it is four days.*

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*But are even the so-called True Orthodox Old Calendarists exempt from anathemas?*

*They are transgressors and despisers of the first Tradition: the great commandment of Love.*

*They have despised, violated, and cast aside the commandment of Love, hating one another, biting one another, beating one another.*

*They re-Baptize and re-Chrismate many New Calendarists who have been Baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

*The Orthodox Church accepts even heretics, provided they have been Baptized with the Orthodox form of Baptism. It re-Chrismates those who have denied Christ or their Baptism; it does not re-Baptize them.*

*Certain Old Calendarist zealots believe and think that the Mysteries are invalid without the [Old] Calendar and that without the [Old] Calendar there is no salvation.*

*There is no greater heresy than this!*

\* \* \*

*Dear Father Demetrios:*

*For forty years I have been beseeching and still beseech God to bring to an end the fearsome turmoil, the frightful tempest of the Church and to restore peace to it; and one night I heard an invisible voice saying:*

*“To the perverse, God sendeth perverse ways.” [cf. Proverbs 21:8—God permits perverse and dishonest people to be caught up in inextricable and ruinous ways.]*

*I am distressed, disheartened, I mourn and lament, and do nothing else, as one of little faith, than to call out with the voice of Peter: “Master, save us, we are perishing!” [cf. St. Luke 8:24] Save us, O Lord, from the present crooked, perverse, depraved, polluted, shameful, and wicked generation.*

*Let us not completely despair, however, but let us continue crying out like Peter: “Master, save us, we are perishing!” And let us hope that as One sympathetic, compassionate, and merciful, He will extend His hand to us, as to Peter, and will say to us: “O ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt?” [cf. St. Matthew 14:31].*

*Wish and pray and implore that the Heavenly Father enlighten the leaders of the Church to cease biting one another, so as not*

*to consume [one another], but to make peace among themselves and return the Church to the Traditional Orthodox Calendar, so that it might become once more one Church.*

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*With brotherly love in Christ,  
† Archimandrite Philotheos Zervakos*

\*Source: *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 324 (January-February 2005), pp. 151-154.

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#### Notes

1. See St. Maximos the Confessor, “Account of the Proceedings Which Took Place Between Abba Maximos and His Companions and the Officials in the Chamber,” §14, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XC, col. 128D.
2. See St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite, *Ἴερον Πηδάλιον* [The Rudder], p.30 (opinion of St. John Chrysostomos).
3. St. Photios the Great, *Myriobiblos*, §96, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CIII, col. 357C.
4. See *Παπα-Δημήτρης Γκαγκαστάθης-Ὁ Ἄνθρωπος τοῦ Θεοῦ, 1902 ἕως 29.1.1975, Βίος-Θαύματα-Νουθεσίαι καὶ Ἐπιστολαί* [Papa-Demetris Gagastathis: *The Man of God, 1902–29 January 1975: Life, Miracles, Counsels, and Letters*] (Thessaloniki: “Orthodoxos Kypsele” Publications, 1975), pp. 274-278,
5. By “introduced,” the Holy Elder means the decision to introduce and implement the New Calendar taken by the so-called Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople (10 May-8 June 1923), presided over by Patriarch Meletios (Metaxakis) who, on 10 July 1923, was forced to depart for the Holy Mountain and, on 20 September 1923, abdicated the throne. The implementation of the change, which was characterized as a “correction of the Julian Calendar,” was carried out in 1924, when Gregory VII (Zervoudakis) was Patriarch (December 1923-November 1924).
6. See our article “Ecumenical Patriarch Meletios Metaxakis (1871-1935): Freemason, Innovator, and Ecumenist,” *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol.XVII, Nos. 2-3 (2000), pp. 2-11. [see also this website].
7. By “six Hierarchs,” the Holy Elder certainly does not mean the members of the Patriarchal Synod, but rather the Episcopal representatives who, together with others, took part in the so-called Pan-Orthodox Congress in Constantinople in 1923: Kallinikos of Cyzikos, Anastassy of Kishinev (who was present up until and including the fourth session—a total of eleven sessions—, and who did not sign the seven

decisions), Alexander of North America, Gabriel of Montenegro, Basil of Nicæa, and James of Dyrrachion.

8. The Papal Calendar was condemned, to be precise, by three Pan-Orthodox Synods convened in Constantinople under Patriarch Jeremiah II (1536-1595) in 1583, 1587, and 1593.

9. “Gave,” in the sense that “the First Œcumenical Synod which, on the basis of the Old Calendar—the so-called Julian Calendar—prescribed that the Feast of Pascha remain unaltered and eternal,” as the Holy Elder says in the introduction to his letter.

10. See note 5.