



Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle

Holy Synod in Resistance



First Clergy-Laity Gathering of the Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle

Unity - Service - Witness

Thursday of Mid-Pentecost

April 27, 2012 (Old Style)

Holy Convent of St. Paraskeve

Acharnai, Attica

An Appeal for Unity

Anti-Ecumenism:

Towards the Surmounting of Fragmentation

A. *Introduction*

1. Anti-ecumenism, that is, the variform reaction against the ecumenical movement, has, since 1924, had an intense and decisive influence on the life of the local Orthodox Churches and of the Orthodox in the so-called Diaspora.

2. Anti-ecumenists everywhere, whether as organized and valid ecclesiastical bodies walled off in resistance and upholding the traditional Church Calendar, or as groups and isolated individuals within the New Calendar reform, in or out of communion with the ecumenists, are agreed upon the clear and entirely justified theological position that:

- ecumenism is a panheresy, the greatest ecclesiological heresy in the history of the Church, with very serious repercussions for soteriology, insofar as inter-Christian and interfaith theology and practice foster syncretism and gradually lead ecumenists outside the boundaries of the One and unique Church of the Orthodox.

3. It is truly distressing that, in their sacred resistance against syncretistic ecumenism, anti-ecumenist Orthodox are divided and fragmented, for the principal reason that they do not have a common ecclesiological self-understanding and since there prevails an unthinkable confusion of theological criteria, within a climate of collective self-justification and isolationism.

4. Nevertheless, it has always been our conviction that the fragmentation among anti-ecumenists, particularly within the Old Calendar movement, should induce us to prayer, repentance, and love, and that we ought to show eagerness for sacrifice, coöperation, and common action, despite the differences in ecclesiological self-understanding, to the end of overcoming these differences, in time, with God's help.

5. It must be admitted, in self-reproach, that concern for rapprochement between those at variance has not hitherto been sedulous, and that there has not been an unselfish interest in attaining to a deeper grasp of the ecclesiological position of others, let alone charitable patience and understanding in the face of other ecclesiological positions, with the result that the chasm between us widens and prejudices are perpetuated.

6. It is, therefore, with the prospect of inaugurating a collective struggle to surmount the fragmentation among Old Calendarist anti-ecumenists and, beyond this, to build bridges with New Calendarist anti-ecumenists, for the purpose of reinforcing the anti-ecumenical front, that we issue the present "Appeal for Unity," consisting of five points, invoking the mercy of the Divine Founder of the Church.

B. *Proposals*

1. Let all who belong to valid ecclesiastical bodies, desiring the reconciliation in Christ of those contending against the ecclesiological heresy of ecumenism and the gradual restoration of unity within the Old Calendar movement, affirm this publicly and officially by nominating three delegates for an immediate commencement of deliberations.

2. At the outset, let there not be any prerequisites for the convocation of delegates, but let us simply show a sincere and steadfast resolve to surmount the traumatic experiences of the past, for the sake of the greater goal of union, in the love and, of course, in the truth of Orthodoxy.

3. Without surrendering their ecclesiological identity or their administrative autonomy, and always within the framework of ecclesiastical œconomy, the delegates will form a joint coördinating body for dialogue and action, while at the same time, in a spirit of love and mutual respect,

submitting for discussion the ecclesiological and canonical issues that divide them.

4. The participation of monastics, and indeed of Athonites, should be sought, and they will be included among the delegates, as also will lay people, in genuine acknowledgement of the abilities and gifts of all of the Old Calendarist anti-ecumenists.

5. Let us set a reasonable time limit within which to ascertain the viability of the coördinating body, which will, of course, always act in concert with the particular ecclesiastical authorities of each delegation.

C. *Epilogue*

1. We realize that these proposals constitute a bold experiment, but at the same time we believe unshakably that love in Christ must always be bold, imaginative, and prepared for risks and sacrifices, by the Grace and aid of our Savior Jesus Christ.

2. It is our hope that our Lord will not turn His Face from us. Indeed, “hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5), through the intercessions of our Most Blessed Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and of all the Saints. Amen.

On behalf of the Gathering

† *Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi*
Acting President

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Secretary

Acharnai, Attica
April 27, 2012 (Old Style)
St. Symeon, Bishop of Jerusalem

