



OLD CALENDAR ORTHODOX CHURCH OF GREECE
HOLY SYNOD IN RESISTANCE

Protocol N° 412

To the Holy Synod of the
Russian Orthodox Church Abroad,
per His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus,
New York, U.S.A.

Fili, Attika
22 November 2005 (Old Style)
Afterfeast of the Entrance of the *Theotokos*

Your Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus;
Your Eminences and Graces, Holy Hierarchs:

Beloved Brothers and Fathers in Christ, embracing Your Eminences and Graces, we beseech the Divine Founder of the Church to grant to us the gift of peace and unity.

Honoring and celebrating the Entrance of the Most Blessed *Theotokos*, this Great Feast of the Mother of God, we humbly pray that the Grace of her God-entreating adjurations might strengthen you, as well as all Orthodox Shepherds throughout the world, in the right teaching of the Word of Truth unto the end, that the world might believe.

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I. I have the honor of addressing to Your Eminences and Graces my present humble Epistle, with the unanimous consent and approval of our Holy Synod of the Orthodox in Resistance, after prayerful deliberation and the invocation of the guidance of the Mother of God.

At its recent annual meeting (thirty-first session/4 October 2005 [Old Style]), our Holy Synod was fully briefed concerning various activities and documents of your venerable Synod pertaining to the ongoing dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate.

Our particular interest was drawn to certain documents, which appeared simultaneously this past June on the official websites of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate.

The introductory document bears the title: “Concerning the Joint Working Meetings of the Commissions of the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia.” In one section of this document, there is a reference to our Holy Synod in Resistance.

May we be allowed, Most Reverend Brethren, to express not only our profound astonishment over the contents of the report in question, but also our sincere distress, because, by way of this document,

as well as other recent and related activities and documents of your Holy Synod in the course of its journey towards “Canonical Communion” with Moscow, it is demonstrated that any further hopes for the preservation or rekindling of our ecclesiastical communion have, unfortunately, been fully and irrevocably dashed.

II. These sentiments of ours are entirely justified, and all the more so in that, while awaiting an answer to our four-page Synodal Letter (Protocol No. 409/5 December 2004 [Old Style]), in which we responded to the Epistle, dated 4/17 November 2004, of your First Hierarch, His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus, we finally became cognizant of the aforementioned electronic [Internet] text, in which the aforesaid reference places in some confusion the meaning and chronology of our recent correspondence.

Thus, we feel obliged, Most Reverend Brethren, motivated by brotherly love in Christ, to remind you in brief of certain points in our Synodal Letters to you, with the assurance that this is not a question of causing further vexation to your Holy Synod, even as we will never relinquish our feelings of gratitude and respect for the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

(1) In our Synodal Epistle (Protocol No. 408/11 October 2004 [Old Style]), noting your protracted silence towards our Synodal Letter (Protocol No. 340/1 January 2001 [Old Style]), we observed that this silence, “coupled with a long-standing and total absence of Eucharistic communion with one another, and also with the onward march of ecumenism, as fostered by those reputed to be the official representatives of Orthodoxy (see, in this regard, the culminating event in the visit of Patriarch Bartholomew to the Vatican, 29-30 June 2004), and thirdly with the steady and rapid unionist rapprochement of your respected Synod with the Moscow Patriarchate—to which let us add the vigorously promoted concelebrations of your Hierarchs with official ecumenist jurisdictions, such as the Serbian Patriarchate—understandably gave rise to deep anguish in us and our rational flock and increased to the utmost our already expressed disquietude.”

At that time, we also said that “these startling and truly dramatic developments, which we, along with our Old Calendarist Orthodox brethren in Romania and Bulgaria, have been following with attention and prayer, and with which we must express yet again our fundamental disagreement, are diametrically opposed, according to our conviction, to the heroic stand taken by a number of holy persons and Confessors in Russia, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, and the Diaspora.”

And we concluded as follows: “If you continue—God forbid!—to abandon the splendid anti-ecumenical Tradition that you have hitherto upheld, and if, in addition, you persist in remaining silent in the face of the written appeals from our Holy Synod in Resistance through the beginning of the year of salvation 2005, we will be obligated, with the deepest sorrow, to regard as complete and decisive the rupture of all mutual ecclesiastical relations, which has already been in effect for some years, and to proclaim this officially, so as to inform our rational flock, which is gravely and justifiably concerned.”

(2) We immediately responded to the Letter of 4/17 November 2004 from His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus with our Synodal Letter (Protocol No. 409/5 December 2004 [Old Style]), in which the following points, among many others, were made:

“In any case, not wishing to raise objections to all of the thoughts contained in your frank Epistle, Your Eminence, I hope that you will allow our Holy Synod to abide by all that it upholds in its aforementioned Letter and to consider that this Letter remains in essence unanswered by Your Eminence *qua* First Hierarch.”

III. On the basis of the foregoing, Most Reverend Brethren, insofar as, in the meantime, there has emerged a climate that is diametrically opposed to that which led us, in 1994, to Eucharistic communion, our Holy Synod in Resistance has now categorically and finally decided—with deepest sorrow—officially to sever ecclesiastical relations with you.

The recent course of your Holy Synod, specifically with regard to its relations with the ecumenist Patriarchate of Moscow and to its conception of ecumenism, as this is expressed, for example, in your agreed statement with the Moscow Patriarchate, “Concerning the Attitude of the Orthodox Church Towards the Heterodox and Inter-Confessional Organizations,” is totally incompatible with its ecclesiological self-understanding as it was in 1994, since in its Resolution, at that time, to enter into union with us, it confessed the following:

“...[T]he Council [Synod] of Bishops holds that at the present time, when apostasy is spreading and many [so-called] official representatives of Orthodoxy, such as the Patriarchate of Constantinople and other Patriarchates, are succumbing to and embracing the position of the modernists and ecumenists, it is very important for the true Orthodox to unite, stand together, and oppose the betrayers of the Orthodoxy of the Holy Fathers” (Resolution of the Synod of Bishops, No. 3/50/148, 3/16 August 1994).

IV. Having set forth at length, Most Reverend Brethren, our ecclesiological views (especially in our Synodal Epistles: Protocol No. 340/1 January 2001 [Old Style], Protocol No. 408/11 October 2004 [Old Style], and Protocol No. 409/5 December 2004 [Old Style]), on the basis of which we repeatedly expressed to you our anxieties and objections regarding the truly new orientation of your Holy Synod towards the syncretistic ecumenical movement, our Holy Synod, at its thirty-first meeting (4 October 2005 [Old Style]), arrived at the following decision, which was distressing, in view of the bond of love in Christ that has existed [between us] for decades, but obligatory, for the sake of consistency with its own ecclesiological position:

1. Resolved: to sever, fully and decisively, ecclesiastical communion with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, under His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus, whose name has, for a year, already been deleted from the Diptychs.

2. Resolved: by a majority, out of extreme *oikonomia*, and for purely pastoral reasons not to declare, for the time being, this rupture of communion formally or to implement it in full.

3. Resolved: that the formal declaration and full implementation of this Act will take effect without further ado, immediately and automatically, upon the opening of communion between the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate.

4. Resolved: that the present Synodal Epistle shall be published on our website after its dispatch to the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, and that all of the relevant official documents will be published when the decision to break communion is fully implemented.

5. These Synodal Resolutions, and the fourth in particular, are also deemed necessary for the further purpose of formally and officially keeping informed our rational flock in Christ and the Old Calendarist Orthodox in Greece and abroad, in general, who are ascertaining, to their sorrow, that yet another sacred champion is succumbing to the pressures of the panheresy of ecumenism.

That which was already resolutely pointed out years ago by the ever-memorable Andreas Theodorou, Professor at the School of Theology of the University of Athens (†2004), is now becoming clearer:

“Ecumenism, this dreadful beast of the Apocalypse, this two-headed ecclesiological monstrosity, is completely suffocating the entire immaculate Body of Orthodoxy with its tentacles. The danger posed by ecumenism is perhaps the greatest in the history of the Orthodox Church.”

And it is, in fact, the “greatest” [danger], because, as Konstantinos Mouratides, another anti-ecumenist professor [at the University of Athens], most correctly observes:

“In the domain of the World Council of Churches [and of inter-confessional organizations in general], that which is categorically ruled out and condemned by the teaching” of the Holy Fathers, “that is, coöperation between Orthodoxy and heresy, and, correspondingly, between Orthodox and heretics, in matters of Faith, is coming to fruition—collaboration in composing theological documents, joint participation in worship services, and joint representation of the Christian religion in discussions of the great problems facing humanity”; however, participation of such a kind constitutes “a flagrant transgression of the God-inspired sacred Canons and fundamental ecclesiastical principles, through which the very essence and the general redemptive course of Orthodoxy is attacked.”

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With inexpressible sorrow, but also in the hope that the Grace of the Mother of God, through the intercessions of St. John Maximovich [of Shanghai and San Francisco], the most holy Metropolitan Philaret, and all the Russian New Martyrs, will awaken anew your Patristic zeal, so that your Holy Synod might prove once again to be an estimable force, a fortress and a fortified city, and a shield and breastplate of Orthodoxy in our truly apocalyptic times, we remain, as the least among Orthodox Hierarchs,

*† Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili,
President of the Holy Synod in Resistance*