



The Orthodox Informer

“For it is a commandment of the Lord not to be silent at a time when the Faith is in jeopardy. Speak, Scripture says, and hold not thy peace.... For this reason, I, the wretched one, fearing the Tribunal, also speak.”

(St. Theodore the Studite, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1321)

■ The advancing course of the syncretistic axis of the Vatican, Athens, and the Phanar



Dossier

A. Vatican-Phanar

B. Vatican-Athens

“The foundations of the Faith have been undermined for decades by the panheresy of ecumenism.”

(*Protopresbyter Theodoros Zeses*, *Orthodoxos Typos*, No. 1665 [17 Nov. 2006], p. 1)

“Who is able to suffer these things without sighing? What is incontrovertible has become a matter of doubt.”

(St. Basil the Great, “*On the Holy Spirit*,” § 70)

THE RECENT occurrences at the Phanar (29-30 November 2006) and the Vatican (14-16 December 2006), involving *ecumenists* from the East and the West, have demonstrated, in the clearest and most forceful possible way, that the panheresy of *ecumenism* has deeply corroded the Orthodox self-awareness of those Shepherds who have embraced the *syncretistic vision* of the anti-Patristic *Encyclical of 1920*, the very foundation and basis of the contemporary *inter-Christian and interfaith movement*.

This corrosion has long been leading these Shepherds “**far from the way of the Holy Fathers**” (Father Theodoros Zeses, *O. T.*, No. 1670 [22 December 2006], p. 1), since their thoughts, words, and actions run entirely contrary to the **Patristic bequeathal**, which is most lucid in its exhortation to us:



Phanar, 30 November 2006



Vatican, 14 December 2006

“And may you have no communion with the schismatics, and by no means with the heretics”; “for you know how I, too, have turned away from them”; “rather, you should take care to unite yourselves firstly with the Lord and then with the Saints, so that they, also, might receive you as friends and acquaintances in the eternal abodes.””

(St. Anthony the Great, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XXVI, col. 969C-972A)

The recent advancement and reinforcement of the *syncretistic axis* of the Vatican, Athens, and the Phanar are finally awakening the volcano of *anti-ecumenism*, and hopeful developments are soon to be expected from the standpoint of *Orthodox resistance* and *walling-off*, especially on the part of the *New Calendarist anti-ecumenists*, for the rallying, at long last, of the truly Orthodox.

In conclusion, all of these things fully justify the stance of the Orthodox *anti-ecumenists*, *following the Calendar of the Fathers*, who have, since 1924, walled themselves off from the ecumenists, resisting the panheresy of syncretism in a God-pleasing manner.

♦ **A series** of texts on the subject, which we will be publishing, demonstrates this *awakening*, the truly Patristic character of which may it preserve to the end,

“for the union and harmony of the Church”; “that the divisions among the Churches might be banished and the bond of peace might join us all together”; “and that we might drive the inventors of vain discourses of innovation far from the precinct of the Church.”

(Seventh Œcumenical Synod, Mansi, Vol. XII, col. 1118E, 1003D; Vol. XIII, col. 404C)

Commentary on the Visit of Archbishop Christodoulos to the Vatican*

*“Through the visit of the Archbishop to the Pope,
we recognize the Vatican as a Church,
thereby degrading and relativizing the truth
of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church,
which is preserved by Orthodoxy”*

*by Archimandrite Athanasios Anastasiou,
Abbot of the Monastery of Great Meteora*

ARCHBISHOP CHRISTODOULOS and the delegation from the Greek Orthodox Church visited the Vatican these last days [December 2006].

Unfortunately, this visit confirmed the fears of all who had expressed their opposition.

The same things prevailed here as at the Phanar a few days earlier: **the sacrifice of theological truth on the altar of impressions, diplomacy, “social policy” and “good relations,” personal ambitions and aspirations, publicity, and sensation.** The entire visit, for that matter, was obviously organized according to purely social criteria, and in such a way that its essential nature and its consequences would be artfully disguised.

From the outset, those participating in the delegation stressed that the visit would (supposedly) have a merely formal character, and that discussions would be limited to social issues. **These are tactical moves that cause the faithful people to become disoriented, and which habituate and dull their consciences.**

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REGARDLESS of what was discussed at the Vatican, how-



ever, there are concrete and essential facts that cannot be expunged or overlooked, despite the systematic attempts to adorn or suppress them.

The most substantial of these is the granting of ecclesiastical recognition to the Pope and the Vatican by our Church. The texts, addresses, and the overall presence and behavior of His Beatitude and of his retinue gave this impression: that **they were accomplishing a visit to a “Sister Church,” to a “beloved brother,” to a “most holy Bishop,” and not to a heresiarch, not to the center of panheresy, which gave rise to the greatest distortion of Christianity and which has never ceased to be an open wound for our Church and our nation.**

This is the reason for such fervor, euphoria, effusiveness, so many hugs and embraces. This is the reason for the extravaganza and sensationalism, in the attempt to cover up the **deviations, concessions, and compromises.** This is the reason for the social tactic, the references to general topics, and the devout wishes (*vœux pieux*), which create an artificial reality, a spurious image grounded in confusion, disorientation, and one-sided information.

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NO discussion or responsible and comprehensive briefing preceded this visit. There was no pertinent resolution by the Hierarchy, which was bypassed and disregarded, despite the fact that it alone was qualified to make a resolution on such an important matter. Many Bishops have reacted against this disregard for the Hierarchy, expressing their opposition to the Archbishop’s visit to the Vatican in writing.

The *pleroma* of the Church—the clergy, monastics, and the faithful people of God, **who have repeatedly and in every possible way expressed their strenuous opposition to the ecumenical overtures made by our local Church—has been bypassed and disregarded.**

And the question arises: Who determined His Beatitude’s visit to the Vatican and who approved it? Who approved the text of the Joint Communiqué signed by the Archbishop and the Pope? Was this particular text written with the knowledge

and approval of the Hierarchy? With what authorization were the mutual commitments made for coöperation and joint progress with the Vatican, “for the strengthening of the credibility of the Christian message”? **Do we consider that the message of Orthodoxy lacks credibility and is in need of Papal reinforcement?** With what authorization were the commitments made for the promotion of interfaith dialogue, which the Vatican systematically uses for the consolidation of the rôle of the Pope as a religious world leader?

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IT IS a fact that His Beatitude, Archbishop Christodoulos, with his visit to the Vatican, did not, in essence, represent the Church of Greece and did not express the mind and the will of the faithful people, pious clergy, and monastics of our Church.

The discovery is truly painful—and we are most deeply pained and grieved by this fact—that His Beatitude chooses to exchange the esteem and love of the pious clergy and people for Papal recognition and to be vouchsafed a place in the ecumenical firmament. **He chooses his entry into the rationale of compromises, relinquishments, and concessions to the Pope under the pretext of social dialogue.**

We [Greek Orthodox] fervently seek dialogue and coöperation with the Pope, expecting recognition and support thereby. And it is especially lamentable that other Orthodox Churches take similar actions individually and independently, without any prior consultation or coöperation with the rest of the Orthodox Churches. This tactic is frequently aimed at resolving their internal problems, the promotion of nationalistic demands, and also (which is even worse) the buttressing of their positions and their dominance over other Orthodox Churches.

A deplorable image is thus presented of a divided Orthodoxy, with its leaders having recourse to the Pope and establishing him as an arbiter of matters that are not merely religious in nature and as a source of recognition and esteem, whereby they themselves confirm his role as a religious world leader. Orthodoxy is not a matter of one or a few; rather, it is a common matter of Orthodox Churches and their *pleroma*.



Archbishop Christodoulos and his retinue during the address of Pope Benedict XVI of Rome (*Ekklesia* [January 2007], No. 1, p. 26).

THROUGH THE

Archbishop's visit to the Pope, we recognized the Vatican as a Church, thereby degrading and relativizing the Truth of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church preserved by Orthodoxy.

And with what in return? The agreement to coöperate with the Pope for the preservation of the religious character of Europe!

But the Europeans have rejected Christianity on account of the deplorable and distorted image that was created and presented to them by the Pope. This very Papism, theologically discredited and decayed, which is unable to put forth a spiritual message or curb the waves of rejection on the part of its own faithful, we recognize and esteem, we coercively "proclaim" a Church, and we establish as our ally in an effort to solve the problems that Papism itself has created.

This venture would perhaps convince the gullible. It is not, however, able to persuade the faithful people who, with helplessness, displeasure, and profound sorrow, follow this entire staged performance at the Vatican.

For the people are in possession of both judgment and sense, so as to recognize and understand the real truth, the motives, expediences, and their consequences. They are in possession of judgment and memory, so as not to forget His Beatitude's previous promises to be faithful to tradition in matters of the Faith. Nor do they forget the Archbishop's declarations and the plethora of "explanations" offered in 2001 in excuse for the visit, at that time, of the former Pope to Greece and his formal reception, with ecclesiastical honors and recognition, on the part of our Church.

The excuse at that time was that the visit was "imposed" upon us by the government, which had invited him as head of state.

[In his interview, however, with the Italian journal *Espresso*,

he revealed his true inclinations regarding the visit of the Pope to Athens.

“I maintain excellent relations,” he stated, **“with the Greek Catholic Community. Certain of its Bishops were fellow students of mine in the Catholic school operated by the French Marianist Brothers [the Leontios School]. We made definite strides together: for example, we made possible the visit of the Pope in 2001, which met with fierce resistance on our side; but we brought it off, to everyone’s satisfaction”** (See *Orthodoxos Typos*, 3 March 2006, p. 5.)]

Now that His Beatitude and the other members of the delegation have visited the Vatican of their own accord, their excuse is that we are returning the visit of the Pope and will discuss only social, and not religious, issues.

Next time, the Pope will visit Greece in return for our visit. Having already cultivated a spirit of good coöperation between us, and having achieved a “community of viewpoints” in social and cultural issues, we will also be able to discuss theological issues and to make greater overtures and concessions in matters of the Faith.

Their tactic is easily discernible and predictable. Under cover and with maneuvering, we gradually proceed, step by step, each time gaining a new position, until we attain our ultimate goal.

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THEY also offer the justification that “we are not changing our Faith” and that “we are not making any concessions in matters of doctrine.”

Does the official ecclesiastical recognition of the Pope and the Vatican not discredit the meaning of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church? Does it not constitute a relativization of the Faith and the truth? Is truth not affected and denigrated when it is placed on equal terms with error and heresy?

Is the official recognition of heresy and our association with heresiarchs perhaps a small concession in matters of the Faith?

During His Beatitude's visit to the Vatican, he placed a gold-plated wreath at the tomb of Pope John Paul II, which bore the following inscription: "He served for the Gospel," an excerpt from the Epistle to the Philippians by the Apostle Paul. Such honor and such recognition for the leader of the greatest heresy, which completely distorted the spirit and truth of the Gospel!

Shortly before his departure from the Vatican, His Beatitude stated the following revealing words, indicative of his intentions, in his address to Cardinal Kasper:

"Tomorrow, we depart, leaving behind us brothers, with whom we will continue to meet and converse, speaking the truth in love. We depart full of gratitude and satisfaction: gratitude for your brotherly hospitality and the gestures of honor shown to us, which are indications of the inception of a new age of good relations and trust; satisfaction, because we had the special blessing, in the first place, of worshiping at sacrosanct places of our common Faith and devotion, and, in the second place, of harmonizing our Christian witness and coordinating our fertile cooperation in the Europe of common principles and values."

The ease with which we enter into the "new age" is revealing, as we misapprehend the past and the legacies of the Holy Fathers.

"...Our forefathers, who bequeathed the split to us, were hapless victims of the serpent, the author of evil, and are already in the hands of God, the Just Judge. We beseech God's mercy on their behalf, but we ought, before God, to redress their errors" (!),

stated the Ecumenical Patriarch during the Patronal Feast of 1998.

Is this the "purging of the ecclesiastical memory" that must be cultivated, as His Beatitude wishes in his address to the Pope?

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THE WITNESS, however, of the Holy Fathers is unalterable and age-old. It is the expression of the experience of the Holy Spirit and the illumination of the Saints, who unerringly professed and

proclaimed the exactitude and truth of our Faith.

This witness is not confined to a particular time period, but rather maintains its essential value and message in every age and circumstance. “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

This is the common conviction of Orthodox Christians. These things are also intuitively perceived by Roman Catholics, who resist and react in opposition. For they are very well aware, by their centuries-old experience and their memory of history, that **Orthodoxy and our nation have never derived benefit from Papism, nor has the Vatican changed its tactic under any circumstance; it has not repudiated any of its heresies.**

In contrast, our side continually makes concessions and compromises. This course of continual concessions fills the Orthodox *pleroma* with bitterness and pain.

The faithful people of God, the monastics, and the clergy are distressed and indignant over this incalculable course of ecumenical overtures.

The people pray and wait for their ecclesiastical leaders to hearken to their request and their desire, so that these and like actions, which have proved unwise and detrimental, will not be repeated.



* **Source:** *Παρακαταθήκη*, No. 51 (November-December 2006), pp. 7-10. “Reprinted from the special edition of *Ἐν Συνειδήσει*, by the Monastery of Great Meteora.” Publication lay-out ours. Emphasis added by the journal and by us.