

The Third Visit of the Ecumenist Patriarch Bartholomew to the Vatican*

The “Overtures of the Dialogue of Love, made by the cut-and-slice ‘salami’ method, lead us, time after time, to new and unpleasant surprises”

(Andreas Theodorou, †2004)



Patriarch Bartholomew prays together with Pope John Paul II in a markedly official capacity, celebrating, with him, the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul at the Vatican, on 29 June 2004 (New Style).

1. In October of 2003, the well-known university professor **Protopresbyter Theodore Zisis**, on the occasion of a visit to the Vatican by the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Athens, Father Thomas Synodinos, together with thirty Priests and Deacons from the Archdiocese

(15-20 September 2003), affirmed the following tragic truth: “**Papism is entirely**

and universally entering into our faith and our life” (*Ορθόδοξος Τύπος*, No. 1522 [17 October 2003], p. 5).

2. This correct, though very belated, affirmation assumed its full and tragic dimensions this year with the third official visit of the ecumenist **Patriarch Bartholomew** to the Vatican on the occasion of its **Patronal Feast (29 June)** and also for the purpose of jointly celebrating, at the highest level, the fortieth anniversary of the first **meeting** of the Primates of Constantinople and Rome in **Jerusalem (5 January 1964)**.

3. Although that **meeting in Jerusalem** has been characterized and continues to be viewed by ecumenists as a supposedly **epoch-making** event, for those who are truly Orthodox, it was a very **severe blow** against Orthodox Tradition that brought about an enormous

rupture in the ecclesiological self-understanding of Orthodoxy.

4. Especially since 1964, we have observed, on the one hand, the gradual enfeeblement of the **Orthodox self-understanding** that the Most Holy Orthodox Church herself alone constitutes the One and only Church; and, on the other hand, the gradual loss of any sense of the **essence and power of heresy**.

5. The **decade of the 1960s** was a **milestone** in relations between Orthodox and Papist ecumenists: to the concerted overtures of the Papists towards the East at the **Second Vatican Council** (1962-1965), the Orthodox have responded in an equally concerted way through the three **Pan-Orthodox Consultations of Rhodes** (1961, 1963, and 1964), with the Patriarchate of Constantinople leading the way, and **high-handedly**, at that.

6. The ecumenist **Patriarch Athenagoras** (†1972) showed himself to be the most thorough-going exponent of the syncretistic **Dialogue of Love**, not least because, after his meeting in Jerusalem with **Pope Paul VI** (†1978), he did not see any further impediment to minting, in tandem with ecumenists of all shades and descriptions (Orthodox, Papist, Protestant), a “common currency”: “**the currency of love**”!

7. It is well known, from an Orthodox point of view, that “*there is no ‘Dialogue of Love’ without a Dialogue of Truth; otherwise, such a dialogue is unnatural and false*”; “*the separation and division between love and truth promoted by heretics and humanists*” “*has never existed and is not the way of the Fathers*” (Archimandrite Justin [Popovich], †1979), and “*is a futile and inane endeavor*” (Andreas Theodorou, †2004).

8. The recent **meeting in Rome** (29 June 2004) rekindles and brings to a head the syncretistic **Dialogue of Love**, because it was admittedly pursued and realized in the name of the latter dialogue, in order to “cover” the tremendous void of official **theological dialogue**, which has, in essence, run aground, through the fault of the Vatican, to be sure, and on account of the prodigious ecclesiological issue of the Unia, even though, from the outset (1980 *et seq.*), it has been used as a **tool** for a *de facto* union of Orthodox and Papists.

9. The reciprocal annual participation in the **Patronal Feasts** of Rome and Constantinople is viewed by ecumenists as a “*sacred tradition*,” which commenced in 1969 at the initiative of the Vatican, during the reign of Patriarch Athenagoras, and as a “*prevalent and praiseworthy custom of our two Churches*” (Patriarch Bartholomew, 30 November 1994), with the aim of “*deepening and promoting communion between the two Sister Churches*” (P. Gregoriou).

10. However, the source of these meetings is to be found in the inception of the **ecumenical movement** and particularly in the **Patriarchal Encyclical of 1920**, the very “*founding charter of the contemporary ecumenical movements*” and one of the “*expressions of a far-sighted ecclesiastical policy*” (Evangelia Barella, 1994) of the Phanar, which included among the planned ecumenical “*steps towards the firm foundation of a common Christian outlook*” the “*common celebration of Patronal Feasts and Patron Saints*” (Gregorios Larentzakis, 1987).

11. These *meetings* are not conceived by ecumenists as simple courtesy visits, since by their own admission “through these common celebrations one form of ecclesiastical communion is simultaneously manifested and experienced” (Gregorios Larentzakis, 1987) and thereby “the two Churches articulate and live the theology of communion and proclaim their mutual recognition and acceptance of one another” (Demetrios Salachas, 1978).

12. The Old Calendarist Orthodox in **resistance to the heresy of ecumenism** affirm and point out with particular emphasis that *meetings* of the Jerusalem-Rome-Constantinople variety

- contribute to the gradual indoctrination of our people with **ecumenism and Papism**;
- conduce to the “*gradual exhaustion and weakening of the immune system of the Orthodox ecclesiastical organism*” (Andreas Theodorou, 1988);
- make very evident the “*breach*,” the “*rupture with Tradition*,” and the “*cutting off*” of the Orthodox ecumenists from the “*Church of the Saints who are alive in Heaven*” (Father Theodore Zissis, 2003);
- contribute to the further “*destruction*,” the “*demolition of confes-*

sional boundaries” and to keeping “*the door wide open to the poison of heresy, syncretism, and ecumenism*” (Father Theodore Zissis, 2003);

- emphasize very heavily the lamentable truth that “*the heroic Great Church of Constantinople, imprisoned in the Phanar, has been, for a century now, in a new captivity following that of the Turkish Yoke—the captivity of ecumenism*” (Father Theodore Zissis, 2003).

13. It is by now inconceivable that those who are truly Orthodox should continue to confront these **critical conditions** merely *journalistically* and with cheap *alarmism*.

- They ought to put into practice all of the stipulations of healthy Patristic and God-pleasing resistance and walling-off, which require us to break communion with the innovators, in order to avoid the soteriological consequences of a protracted and deadly entanglement with the heresies of the West in the context of the ecumenical movement.

* Source: Άγιος Κυπριανός, No. 321 (July-August 2004), pp. 84-85.