

The Seventeenth Gathering for Orthodox Awareness

“Ecumenism Constantly Degrades Orthodoxy”

“Our Patriarchate has been left leaderless..”

By the Grace of our Lord, the seventeenth regular annual “Gathering for Orthodox Awareness,” organized every year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy by the Brotherhood of the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina at the behest of the Holy Synod in Resistance, was held on Sunday, February 23/March 8, 2009. That morning, a festal Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Monastery, followed by the customary procession with the Holy Icons.



The Seventeenth Gathering, held under the special patronage of the Three New Great Hierarchs, Sts. Photios the Great, Gregory Palamas, and Mark of Ephesus, had as its general theme: **“Ecumenism constantly degrades Orthodoxy.”**

The Novotel Convention Center (in downtown Athens) was filled to capacity by an unprecedented number of people interested in learning, through a sober and responsible presentation, about the burning issues of our Faith.

Their Graces, Bishops Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President of the Holy Synod, Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis, Ambrose of Methone, and Klemes of Gardikion,



were in attendance, along with many clergy, monks, and nuns, as well as several local political dignitaries.

The participation, for the first time, of the forty-member “Orthodox Ecclesiastical Byzantine Choir” (OEBEC), under the direction of the *Protopsaltes*, Mr. Michael Makres (who is also a music teacher) lent a special feeling to the occasion and greatly enhanced this Seventeenth Gathering.



The “OEBEC” chanted the following hymns (33:00’):

- “To thee, O Guardian Leader,” in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone, *Kontakion* • “Thine immaculate Icon,” in the Second Tone, *Apolytikion* • “As servants of the Trinity,” in the Fourth Tone, *Apolytikion* of the Three New Great Hierarchs • Verses from the Great Doxology, in the First Tone, by Petros Lampadarios († 1788) • Hymns of compunction from Great Lent, in the eight tones • “Come let us cleanse ourselves,” in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone, *Idiomelon*, from the compunctious Vespers service on the First Sunday of Lent, by Iakovos the *Protopsaltes* (†1800) • “God is with us...” in the Plagal of the Second Tone. Verses from Great Compline, by Petros Lampadarios († 1788) • *Kratema* “*terirem*,” in the First Tone, by St. John Koukouzeles (thirteenth century) • and “What God is great as our God,” in the Grave Tone.



His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President of the Holy Synod, delivered the keynote address, entitled: “Ecumenism Constantly Degrades Orthodoxy” (53:00’).

• **In the first part** of his address, Bishop Cyprian spoke about the relationship between *repentance* and *anti-heretical discourse*, in order to explain why we undertake a critique of the heresy of ecumenism during the period of Great Lent. • **In the second part**, His Grace succinctly described the contribution of Patriarch Bartholomew to the degradation of Orthodoxy. Although Orthodoxy has undergone division from the very inception of the ecumenical movement (1920, 1924)—especially under Patriarchs Athenagoras and Demetrios—this division is in danger of becoming de-

finitively entrenched under Patriarch Bartholomew. His responsibility in this regard is very grave, for, even though he is perfectly aware of the profound crisis through which ecumenism is passing, he nevertheless relentlessly persists in acting and speaking within the perspective of “a bold, sanguine ecumenical theology, which does not capitulate in the face of obstacles.” • **In the third part**, Bishop Cyprian referred to the dissenting stance of contemporary Athonite Fathers, who have reached the point of declaring that “**on the basis of the Sacred Canons, our Patriarchate has been left leaderless, in that Heaven has struck the present Patriarch from the list of Orthodox Patriarchs...**”

His Grace, Bishop Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis opened the Seventeenth Gathering (which completes fifteen years of these informative gatherings) and introduced the audience to its main theme. Finally, he delivered an epilogue to this important presentation (8:30’).

As in the past, a video documentary was shown—this time from the archives of our Gatherings, entitled: “Ecumenism: A Journey Outside the ‘Boundaries’ of the Church” (1996)—on the occasion of this fifteenth anniversary, in order to provide visual evidence that the ecumenical movement has, over the years, entailed a constant degradation, an intense derogation, and a literal betrayal of Holy Orthodoxy (50:00’).

During his concluding remarks (9:30’), Bishop Cyprian offered a special gift to the “OEBC,” in the person of its director, Mr. Michael Makres: a large Icon of the Three New Great Hierarchs, as a token of gratitude.

Reproductions of a superb Icon of St. Kosmas Aitolos—that Martyr and enlightener of our Nation—were distributed as a memento to the large audience. We who, by God’s mercy, are anti-ecumenists call upon the aid of St. Kosmas in our efforts to preserve our Sacred Legacy.

The Seventeenth Gathering for Orthodox Awareness, by the Grace of God, has been inscribed in the pages of anti-ecumenism, having contributed, by its format and its message, to the preservation and rekindling of an anti-heretical outlook in the face of the anti-Orthodox ecumenical movement.

Glory to God for all things!

