

## **The Holy Synod in Resistance Celebrates the Sunday of Orthodoxy**

**O**n the Sunday of Orthodoxy, February 8/21, 2010, the members of our Holy Synod concelebrated the customary festal Divine Liturgy at the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, Phyle, Attica (Headquarters of the Holy Synod in Resistance). His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President of the Holy Synod, was the principal celebrant, with the participation of Their Graces, Bishops Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis, Ambrose of Methone, and Klemes of Gardikion, Priests, and Deacons. A large crowd of devout Orthodox was in attendance.



Before Holy Communion, Bishop Ambrose spoke about the meaning for Orthodoxy of the Holy Icons, the restoration of which we honor and celebrate on this great day.



After the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, despite the fierce winds, the clergy and lay people held the traditional procession with the Holy Icons around the newly-built Cathedral. During this ceremony, the Bishops read portions of the Synodikon of Orthodoxy, and exclaimed

“Anathema” to the heretics and “Eternal be their memory” to the Confessors of our Holy Orthodox Faith.

That evening (7-9 p.m.), the regular annual “Gathering for Orthodox Awareness” was held in the auditorium of the Annunciation of the *Theotokos* Spiritual Center, in Kolonos, Athens. These Gatherings are organized by the Brotherhood of the Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina at the behest of the Holy Synod in Resistance, with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle, First Hierarch of the Holy Synod, and under the supervision of Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, acting in the ailing Metropolitan’s stead.

The Eighteenth Gathering, held under the special patronage of the Three New Holy Hierarchs, Sts. Photios the Great, Gregory Palamas, and Mark of Ephesus, drew a large audience—as many people, to be sure, as the confined space



of the Spiritual Center could contain. The two-hour long program, of a very high standard, included the following elements:

I. Ecclesiastical hymns chanted by the “Hellenorthodoxe Kleironomia” Choir, under the direction of Hieromonk Dionysios Hagiokyprianites. The choir chanted the *Apolytikion* of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, “Thine immaculate Icon,” in the Second Tone; the *Apolytikion* of the Three New Holy Hierarchs, “As servants of the Trinity,” in the Fourth Tone; verses from the Great Doxology by Petros Lampadarios, in the First Tone; and the *Evlogetaria* of the Resurrection, by Petros the Peloponnesian, in Plagal of the First Tone.



2. A brief introduction to the Gathering by Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi.

3. An address by the Secretary of the Holy Synod, Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, entitled: “The Censure of Error and the Confession of Orthodox Truth in Relation to Contemporary Ecumenism,” in two parts. During the intermission, the choir chanted verses from the Polyeleos, “By the waters of Babylon,” by Chourmouziou Chartophylax, in the Third Tone, with *kratema* by Georgios Tsatsarones.



In his address, Bishop Klemes examined—on the basis of the Holy Fathers of the Church, and especially of St. John Chrysostomos—the meaning of censure in the domain of the Church: that is, when it is permitted, by whom

it is exercised, and what it has in view. In the face of heresy, he stressed that all members of the Church, without exception, bear responsibility for defending our Faith, with the clergy in the forefront. We must, without fanaticism or hatred for those of other faiths, struggle against heresies and not against heretics as persons. He also stressed the need for a confession of the Truth at a time of “ecumenical disorder” in the Church, with reference to the decisive views of St. Maximos the Confessor.

In the face of the heresy of Roman Catholicism, and also of the monotheistic religions of Judaism and Islam, Bishop Klemes succinctly summed up the standpoint of St. Symeon, Archbishop of Thessalonica († 1429), by which we should be guided and which condemns as completely unorthodox the views and actions of contemporary ecumenical Church leaders in the realm of innovationist Orthodoxy (i.e., the New Calendar Church). An examination of the birth of contemporary ecumenism (1910), the participation of the Orthodox therein (1920), and the



foundation of the World Council of Churches (1948), demonstrated the corrosion of Orthodox ecumenists in the context of an anti-Patristic and anti-traditional movement.

Finally, in a discussion of the contemporary dialogue between Orthodox and Roman Catholics (1980-), His Grace demonstrated that this dialogue was conceived on the basis of Papist ideas and has in view the fulfillment of their aspirations towards unification—far, yet again, from the outlook and thinking of the Holy Fathers. In Greece, especially beginning from last year, a sharp crisis has arisen between the supporters and opponents of the movement towards unification, having as its chief point of reference the now well-known “Confession of Faith Against Ecumenism.” Polarization in this regard is increasing, and the challenges arising therefrom are significant.

Bishop Klemes consequently stressed the sanguine message of renescent anti-ecumenism and the responsibility of Orthodoxy in today’s world, as an offering in the spirit of the *Philokalia* and as a call to repentance, for the restoration, unification, and salvation of all *in Christ*.

4. The program also included a ten-minute video of the address by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in a Jewish synagogue in New York last October, which bore witness to the anti-canonical and anti-Patristic theory and practice of ecumenism, contrary to the spirit of the Gospel.

5. Bishop Cyprian brought the gathering to a prayerful close, and the Byzantine Choir chanted “*Ton Despóten*” and “What God is Great as our God.”

6. Despite the fact that it was held in a smaller space, owing primarily to economic difficulties, the Eighteenth Gathering stands in organic continuity with the sober witness and contribution to anti-ecumenism by the Holy Synod in Resistance. May its strong messages bear fruit during the current crucial turning-point in the Orthodox Church, which is traveling through the Clashing Rocks of the relativization of the truth and of syncretistic ecumenism.

