



ENCYCLICAL

At the Outset of the New Ecclesiastical Year
(2010 • 7518)

A Return to the Principles of the Orthodox Ethos

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ:

May the Paternal blessing of our much-revered Elder, Metropolitan Cyprian, be our strength, guidance, and consolation during the new Ecclesiastical Year, by the intercessions of the *Theotokos* and of all the Saints. Amen!

For more than a year, with the eruption of the well-known financial crisis, our homeland has been on the threshold of a crucial turning-point. By means of this crisis, the Providence of God has helped us, in a loving way, to undertake both personal and collective self-criticism.

The Lord has given all of us who would call ourselves Christians a salutary opportunity, in terms of the theological and ecclesiastical aspect of this crisis, to become conscious of our grave responsibility for the emergence of such a calamity.

We need to be acutely critical of ourselves and to reject self-justification, for if Christians are the soul of the world, then when the world is suffering or ailing, it means that its soul is ailing. In other words, it is Christians who are ailing.

It has been correctly observed that the crisis through which our homeland is passing is “theological, since many Christians live a worldly life, have become detached from practicing their faith, and are behaving in a manner that is contrary to everything that Christ and the Church enjoy.”

In truth, it seems that Christians have succumbed to a chiliaric vision: individual and collective egotism, prosperity, consumerism, and concern for social status have banished the ethos of Orthodoxy,

which is centered on the Cross, self-sacrifice, asceticism, and service to others.

We have forgotten that we have been granted the supreme gift of belonging to the “holy nobility of God”; that we are called to holiness; that our goal is to embody God-Manhood (*Theanthropismos*), which is genuine and authentic humanism, becoming partakers of the Divine Nature, showing ourselves to be visible signs of the Uncreated Energies of the Holy Trinity, for the peace and salvation of the world.

The recent crisis, therefore, is at a national and an international level, by God’s leave, compelling us, as Christians, to return to the founding principles of the Orthodox ethos. When we reject ambition, acquisitiveness, and hedonism as a way of life, then we become imitators of our Savior, Who exorcised these three demons on the Mount of the Temptations. Hence, “behold, Angels will approach and minister to us” in our endeavor to become peacemakers in Christ.

Our constant return to these principles, in the light of the Most Blessed *Theotokos* and of all the Saints, will transform us and the world, and this crisis will prove to be a salvific opportunity and a true blessing. Amen!

† Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi,
Acting President of the
Holy Synod in Resistance

September 1, 2010 (Old Style)
Beginning of the Third Year
of the Indiction

