

Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece Holy Synod in Resistance



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Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece

Holy Synod in Resistance

Constitutional Principles

Introduction

1. The Holy Synod in Resistance (HSR) of the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece was established on April 5, 1985 (Old Style) by Their Eminences, Metropolitans Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle and Giovanni of Sardinia.¹

2. The Most Reverend founders of the HSR, in accordance with the Sacred Canons and the laws of the state, established a canonical synodal body for the union and coöperation of Orthodox Bishops in resistance to the panheresy of ecumenism.²

3. The purpose of this canonical synodal body was not to found another Church, but rather to form a union between resisters in the Orthodox Church who have lawfully and canonically walled themselves off from the ecumenists, who sundered the unity of the Church in 1924 through the introduction of the New Calendar, as envisaged by the reprehensible Encyclical issued by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1920, the first-fruits and basis of the heresy of ecumenism in the Christian East.

¹ For the events that preceded and led to the formation of the Holy Synod in Resistance, see *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 191 (November 1984), and also the First Encyclical of the HSR, April 5, 1985, in *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνστασις καὶ Μαρτυρία*, No. 1 (October-December 1985), pp. 19-20. For further supplementary clarifications, see “Ἐκκλησιολογικές, Κανονικές καὶ Ἱστορικές Διασαφήσεις τῶν Ἐνισταμένων ἐπὶ Ἑρωτημάτων τοῦ «Ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ»” (Ecclesiological, canonical, and historical clarifications of the Holy Synod in Resistance in response to questions from *Ἐκκλησιαστικός*), *Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐνστασις καὶ Μαρτυρία*, Vol. III, No. 3 (August 2010), pp. 26-41.

² The charter is to be found in the minutes of the Holy Synod in Resistance.

4. The aforesaid canonical synodal body had, and continues to have, as its sole purpose the reunion, through a general Orthodox Synod, in conformity with the Church's traditional and age-old Calendar, of the faithful who are today divided in matters of the Orthodox Faith and over the order of the Festal Calendar.

5. With regard to the constitution of the Holy Synod in Resistance, the intent has clearly been expressed that it function on the basis of the Sacred Canons and that it be governed by specific principles and articles of coöperation, which are as follows, in an improved, expanded, and restructured form.

Article I

Constitution—Headquarters—Purpose

1. Our canonical and unitive synodal body is constituted in the Name of the Holy, Coëssential, Life-Creating, and Indivisible Trinity, under the title: The Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece—Holy Synod in Resistance.

2. The headquarters of the HSR is the center of its Metropolis near Phyle, Attica, namely, the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina.

3. The purpose of the HSR is “to transform into concord the discord of those who are divided, so that the middle wall of enmity might be removed and that the original institutional aspect of the Catholic Church might recover its prestige” (Mansi, Vol. XIII, col. 408E); that is, its purpose is the union of the Church in the Faith and the concomitant unity of worship, which is unbreakably bound up with an unwavering effort to preserve the principles of the Gospel and, in general, the Traditions of the Church free from innovation.

4. The HSR will function, in canonical terms, on a provisional basis—that is, until the union of the Orthodox Church in faith and worship—as the Synod in Resistance of the anti-innovationist congregation of the Church, in anticipation of a unifying general Orthodox Synod to be convened in the future.

5. The HSR is independent of any other ecclesiastical or political authority and is self-governing through the Bishops who shepherd its Christian flock, within the framework of those articles of the Greek Constitution regarding freedom of religion and of the present Constitutional Principles.

6. The HSR represents, ministers to, and fosters the unity of the pious Orthodox Christians who comprise the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance to the panheresy of ecumenism and to the innovation of the New Calendar, in union with the canonical Bishops of anti-innovationist Orthodoxy in Greece and abroad.

7. The activities of the HSR center on: the theological promotion of anti-ecumenism, for the purpose of awakening the synodal conscience of the Church to confront the syncretistic heresy of ecumenism; the establishment of ecclesiastical communities of Orthodox in resistance in Greece and abroad; Orthodox missionary service and witness and, at the same time, the cultivation of philanthropic social ministry, in the context of Eucharistic unity.

8. The HSR recognizes and honors as special patrons in its sacred resistance to the heresy of ecumenism the Holy Three New Hierarchs Sts. Photios the Great, Gregory Palamas, and Mark of Ephesus, whose memorial is celebrated annually on the first Sunday in November.

9. The HSR has its own proper seal, bearing in its midst the representation of a two-headed eagle with a Cross and surrounded by a title that reads: OLD CALENDAR ORTHODOX CHURCH OF GREECE–HOLY SYNOD IN RESISTANCE–1985.

Article II

Membership of the Holy Synod

1. The HSR consists of one Metropolitan, of ruling (Diocesan) Bishops, and of Assistant Bishops who perform pastoral duties as assigned by their ruling Bishops.

2. The HSR includes one and only one Metropolitan, the Metropolitan of Oropos and Phyle, who is always its First Hierarchy (President).

3. In the HSR, the offices of Archbishop, and also of Titular Metropolitan or Bishop, are not used.³

4. The HSR sedulously avoids granting its ruling Bishops the same titles as resident Bishops belonging to the ecumenist New Calendar Churches.

5. Assistant Bishops of the HSR always bear the titles of heretofore illustrious Orthodox dioceses.

6. Assistant Bishops of the HSR are full and active members of the Holy Synod of Bishops (HSB).

7. The Bishops of the HSR are addressed as follows: the Metropolitan and First Hierarch as “His Eminence” (*Sebasmiotatos*), a ruling Bishop likewise, and an Assistant Bishop as “His Grace” (*Theophilestatos*).

8. At the Divine Liturgy, in the Diptychs (“Among the first...”), the Metropolitan and First Hierarch of the HSR commemorates “Every Episcopate of the Orthodox,” and the Bishops “Our Metropolitan (*name*).”

9. The HSR does not permit the coexistence in the same person of the two ecclesiastical ministries of Bishop and Abbot; but in entirely exceptional instances, which dictate this coexistence, the HSR is to make a final decision.

Article III

Meetings of the Holy Synod

1. The HSR convenes regularly as the Holy Synod of Bishops (HSB) once a year, in the first week of October, at the center of its Metropolis in Phyle, Attica, and on special occasions whenever deemed necessary by the Metropolitan, in consultation with the Bishops.

2. The HSB is always convoked by its Metropolitan and First Hierarch, in coöperation with the Standing Holy Synod (SHS), with which he draws up the agenda. This agenda, together with the

³ The honorary title of “Archbishop” bestowed in 1995 on the Bishop of Etna, California is to be retained, but his successor will continue his Hierarchical ministry as simply the ruling Bishop of Etna.

precise date for the convocation of the HSB, is to be communicated to the members of the Synod at least thirty days in advance.

3. The HSB has the Standing Holy Synod as its permanent administrative organ. The latter, as the executorial body of the Hierarchy, carries out its activities on the basis of the By-Laws for its functioning that have been articulated and approved by the Synod.

4. In no instance may the SHS substitute for, challenge, or circumvent the HSB either directly or indirectly; rather, it deliberates and acts in conformity with the synodal judgment of the latter.

5. On the day of the convocation of the HSB, an inaugural Divine Liturgy is to be celebrated by the Bishop who is junior in rank.

6. At this inaugural Divine Liturgy of the HSB, there is to be a Memorial Service, with *Kollyva*, for all of the deceased Bishops of the HSR.

7. Meetings of the HSB are to commence with the celebration by the Metropolitan and First Hierarch of a special Blessing of Water for the inauguration of the new synodal period.

8. If the Metropolitan and First Hierarch is absent or indisposed, the senior Hierarch deputizes for him at the meeting of the HSB.

9. A Bishop who is absent with just cause from the HSB may authorize one of the participating Bishops, if possible in writing, to act as his delegate, but such a Bishop can represent only one absentee.

10. A ruling Bishop who is absent or indisposed may appoint as his representative to the HSB one of the clergy of his diocese, who must, of course, possess comparable prerequisites of age, character, and knowledge.

11. At meetings of the HSB, Bishops are to wear *Epanokalyvmachia* and *Enkolpia* and to be seated when making remarks.

12. The HSB, at its regular meetings, may decide to discuss other matters apart from those on the agenda, but it must endeavor to cover the items on its agenda in as much time as is required for this purpose.

13. The HSB deals with all of the basic issues that concern the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance, and the election of the Metropolitan and Bishops for the furtherance of the work of the Synod in Resistance belongs to it exclusively.

14. The atmosphere during meetings of the HSB must be liturgical, since the Synod is an extension of the Divine Eucharist, wherein the edifice of the Body of the Church is actualized liturgically.

15. The members of the Hierarchy ought, especially in Synod, to show respect for the First Hierarchy, just as he, too, ought to show respect for the members of the HSB, so that in every way sacred decorum and the ethos of the Church may shine forth and that they may thus experience concelebration and common ministry in a genuine form.

16. The HSB is to pay close attention to matters pertaining to its communion and further collaboration with the other like-minded Sister Churches that are walled off in Orthodox resistance.

17. The HSB, while in plenary session, acts, when necessary, as an ecclesiastical tribunal of the second instance for Presbyters, Deacons, and monastics, its decisions being final.

18. The HSB, if it includes enough Bishops—not counting the members of the SHS or, with the exception of the First Hierarchy, those Bishops who also sit on the ecclesiastical tribunal of the first instance—to make up a quorum of twelve in number, is to act as an ecclesiastical tribunal of the second instance for Bishops, its decisions being final.

19. If there are not this many Bishops in the fold of the HSR, the SHS is to appeal to the like-minded Sister Churches, requesting them to send the corresponding number of Bishops to form a thirteen-member extraordinary synodal tribunal, to be presided over by the Metropolitan of the HSR, its decisions being definitive and final.

20. The ruling Bishops are obligated to submit to the HSB a report on activities pertinent to their pastoral duties and concerning the general state of their dioceses, which are to be read and discussed at the meeting and deposited in the Chancery.

21. The duties of recording the minutes and of Secretary of the HSB coincide with those of the SHS (see the “By-Laws for the Functioning of the Standing Holy Synod,” Articles V and VI).

Article IV

The Metropolitan and First Hierarch

1. The one and only Metropolitan, who is also the lifelong First Hierarch of the HSR, is to be accorded due honor as the one who presides over the ministry of the Synod and coördinates it.

2. However, the Metropolitan, who is not to be equated *tout court* with one who is *Primus* according to the order set forth in the Sacred Canons, exercises his lofty ministry in direct coöperation with, and dependence on, the permanent administrative organ of the Hierarchy, namely, the Standing Holy Synod, for the safeguarding and enhancement of the collective administration of the Church, that is, Orthodox cœnobitic conciliarity, according to which any conception of a “super-Bishop” is precluded.

3. The Metropolitan is to be commemorated first at all Divine Services, and then the local Bishop.

4. The Metropolitan is to wear two *Enkolpia*, i.e., a Cross and a *Panagia*, only when celebrating the Mystery of the Divine Eucharist, like the other Hierarchs; outside of the Divine Liturgy, he is to wear only one, the *Panagia*.

5. Official communication with like-minded Sister Churches is to be carried out exclusively through the Metropolitan.

6. The Metropolitan represents the HSR before every state, municipal, or judicial authority, in Greece or abroad, and also before courts of every instance and jurisdiction in Greece and abroad.

7. The Metropolitan may, through his own agency, with the unanimous approval of the SHS, designate as his deputy a member of the Synod, who will represent it on one or more issues or entirely, in the capacity of representative of the HSR.

Article V

Administrative Structure

1. The Holy Synod in Resistance, functioning on a provisional basis and in anticipation of a unifying general Orthodox Synod to be convened in the future, acts in a moderate way and thus is struc-

tured administratively, not as a jurisdiction parallel to the New Calendar Church or as its substitute, but as walled off and in resistance within the limits of the One and unique Orthodox Church.

2. The HSR includes one and only one Metropolis, the Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle, having as its headquarters the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, near Phyle, Attica, and extending to the borders of the Prefecture of Attica.

3. The whole of Greece constitutes a Metropolitan region under the Metropolitan of Oropos and Phyle, administered by him and his Assistant Bishops, who cannot for the time being exceed three.

4. The HSR is to issue any final decision on the establishment of a new diocese or the suppression of a certain diocese, and also on the amalgamation of dioceses, insofar as this is pastorally necessary.

5. The HSR has outside Greece dioceses and also ecclesiastical communities which may in the future be elevated to dioceses, when the appropriate canonical preconditions are met, their territorial area, appellation, and headquarters being determined through a special synodal act.

6. Both the Metropolis and the dioceses of the HSR are subdivided into parishes, which have as their center their respective parish Churches.

7. When the Metropolis or a diocese of the HSR falls vacant, the SHS appoints a member of the Hierarchy *Locum Tenens*, with limited jurisdiction, until the election of a new Metropolitan or Bishop to fill the vacant see.

8. The ruling Bishops of the HSR may have Assistant Bishops, provided it is deemed necessary by the Synod.

9. In the event that an active Metropolitan or Bishop, from wheresoever he may come, approaches the HSR and is accepted into it (and, at its discretion, maintains his rank and title for life), he will continue to shepherd his metropolis or diocese, constituting a full and active member of the HSB.

10. If a Metropolitan or Bishop who has thus come to the HSR has in any way been removed or departed from his throne, his Churches and flock, if they are in Greece, are annexed (become dependencies of) to the Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle; but if they are outside Greece, they are either annexed to an existing

diocese of the HSR or to a newly founded diocese, at the discretion of the HSB.

11. At any rate, in such a case, it would be better for the Metropolitan in question to accept, of his own volition, demotion to the status of a ruling Bishop, and, if he is in Greece, to the status of an Assistant Bishop, retaining his title, but as he was previously [before becoming a Metropolitan—*Trans.*]; likewise, it would be better for a ruling Bishop in Greece to accept demotion to the status of an Assistant Bishop.

12. Petitions of Presbyters and Deacons who wish to belong to the HSR, from wheresoever they may come, are, if they are in Greece, to be reviewed by the SHS; but if they are abroad, are to be reviewed by the ruling Bishop of whatever place they are from, in concert, in any case, with the SHS.

13. The Metropolitan and the ruling Bishops of the HSR each have their own seal, bearing in its midst the representation of a two-headed eagle with a Cross, and surrounded by a title that reads: OLD CALENDAR ORTHODOX CHURCH OF GREECE—HOLY SYNOD IN RESISTANCE—1985—METROPOLIS OF OROPOS AND PHYLE/DIOCESE (*name*).

Article VI

Foreign Missions

1. Any mission conducted in a region outside Greece and not falling within the competence of a diocese of the HSR is to be regarded as a foreign mission.

2. Such missionary regions belong to the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of the Synod in Resistance and are served directly by the First Hierarchy, in coöperation with the Standing Holy Synod.

Article VII

Clergy and Monastics

1. Clergy and monastics belonging to dioceses of the Holy Synod in Resistance are not, without the knowledge, permission, and blessing of their local Bishop, to go from parish to parish for the celebration of the Holy Mysteries or the exercise of pastoral ministry, nor are they to depart from the territory of their diocese without the knowledge of the local Bishop.

2. Only married Presbyters are to serve in parishes; but if there is a dearth of married Priests, then parishes may be served by Hieromonks temporarily and by *oikonomia*, with the permission and blessing of the local Bishop. However, Hieromonks are not to remain or live in the world, but are to return with all haste to the monasteries of their repentance.

3. Clergy ought to have good relations and coöperate with their local Bishop, keep him generally informed of their pastoral work, and receive his blessing, so as to enjoy spiritual security and to embody the genuine ethos of the Church.

4. Any clergyman who has specific difficulties in his relationship with his local Bishop may appeal through a petition to the Standing Holy Synod.

5. Churches, monasteries, hermitages, and religious associations, even if they are going to have the character of a legal entity in private law (or public law, if abroad), are to be constructed and are to function solely at the behest and with the written permission and blessing of the local Bishop and under his ecclesiastical supervision, and their charters are to incorporate, apart from other legally necessary provisions, canonical ordinances that attest to their spiritual relationship with the Bishop and to his oversight of them.

6. Private Churches and private Chapels, even if they have been founded with the blessing of the Bishop, do not constitute an unwavering duty for parish Priests, who may serve them from time to time only with Hierarchical permission and blessing.

7. Monks and nuns are not permitted to remain in the world, except in the necessary discharge of their obediences, and that without excessive tardiness, but are to dwell in God-pleasing asceticism in their monasteries, in the registries of which their names are legally and canonically inscribed.

8. The HSR blesses and encourages in its jurisdiction only cœnobic monasticism, as this is regulated by canonical ordinances, and in no way does it tolerate the existence of so-called mixed monasteries or the reprehensible practice of unmarried women serving as housekeepers in any form whatsoever.

Article VIII

Canonical Transgressions

1. If the Standing Holy Synod finds out, either following an accusation or in some other way, that a clergyman of the Synod in Resistance has succumbed to a canonical transgression which carries an ecclesiastical penalty, it is to assign the local Bishop, or somehow or other to order one of its members, to undertake the necessary inquiries.

2. Such inquiries are to be conducted in the presence of a secretary specially appointed by the SHS.

3. If inquiries are to be conducted against a Bishop, including the First Hierarchy, he must be summonsed by three designated members of the SHS, in order to provide information to the entire SHS prior to the commencement of an investigation.

4. The investigator is first to cross-examine the witnesses [for the prosecution] and examine the documentation and whatever kind of evidence has been adduced in order to prove the charges, and then to summon the accused to defend himself, after he has previously provided him with copies of the assembled evidence and expounded the individual arguments of the prosecution.

5. Finally, the investigator is to cross-examine the proposed witnesses for the defense and, after the inquiry has concluded, is to submit a written statement, with his findings, to the SHS.

6. The SHS, having ascertained from a study of the statement that the person under investigation is guilty of sinful behavior, if a Presbyterian, Deacon, or monastic is involved, convenes as a canonical ecclesiastical tribunal of the first instance for further adjudication.

7. If, however, a Bishop is involved, it renders him subject to a canonical trial, and if it is possible to constitute, in conformity with the

Canons, a twelve-member ecclesiastical tribunal of the first instance for Bishops, the SHS is to refer the case thereto.

8. But if it proves impossible to constitute such a tribunal for Bishops on the basis of Article III.18 of the present charter or of Article VII.4 of the “By-Laws” for the SHS, the SHS is to refer the case to the HSB, which, through a canonically justified decision, is to suspend and expel the miscreant from the Holy Synod in Resistance.

9. After a penalty has been pronounced or a suspension has been put into effect, it can be remitted, diminished, or turned into a reprieve granted by the HSB, under the indispensable condition that the repentance of the miscreant is proven and that his transgressions are not impediments to the Priesthood.

Article IX General Ordinances

1. The Holy Synod in Resistance, with regard to the promotion of Orthodox resistance and witness, has, in its concern for ecclesiastical education, established institutions to meet this need, but it prays that it will be vouchsafed by the Divine Founder of the Church to operate in the near future, at the headquarters of its Metropolis, a foundation with the title of the “St. Paul Orthodox Ecclesiastical School.”

2. It is the wish of the HSR that all dioceses, Churches, monasteries, and institutions which foster its unitive and pastoral vision should function on the basis of charters endorsed by the Hierarchy and containing the same general principles, with the exception of particular points of law that vary according to place and circumstance.

3. The HSR does not intrude into the jurisdictions of Sister Churches that are walled off in resistance, nor does it involve itself in their pastoral, administrative, and other problems, unless asked to do so.

4. On matters subject to dispute and doubt, especially concerning canonical order, it prefers as a rule the milder solution of *oikonomia*,

as long as this is permitted by Holy Tradition, deferring such matters to a unifying general Orthodox Synod to be convened in the future, so that it might resolve them in an authentic, Catholic, and decisive manner.

5. The Bishops are especially concerned that the lay members of the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance should participate actively in the various activities of their Shepherds, thereby activating the richness of the charisms of the Royal Priesthood.

6. Representatives of the parishes and ecclesiastical communities should be encouraged by the Bishops of the HSR to come together at the local, national, regional, and international levels at regular intervals, in the form of clergy-laity gatherings, for the deepening and enhancement of their unity in Christ, for the furtherance of Orthodox resistance, and for the cultivation of philanthropic social ministries.

7. A Synodal Charitable Fund operates under the direct supervision and control of the ruling Bishops and within the purview of the SHS, with the aid of parishes and monasteries of the HSR throughout the world, primarily to provide for the basic financial needs of indigent clergy and for missionary work, and in general for the promotion of social outreach.

8. The HSR has compiled and approved an “Order for the Reception into the Old Calendar Orthodox Church” for discrete and responsible use by its Shepherds in receiving those coming in good conscience from the ecumenist New Calendar Church.

9. Any issue not clearly covered by the present Constitutional Principles is to be dealt with in accordance with their spirit and their ecclesiological foundations.

10. The present canonical and unitive synodal body will cease to exist and its work will be submitted to the judgment of the Church when, with God’s help, the longed-for union [of Orthodox Christians—*Trans.*] in the Faith is realized through the condemnation of the panheresy of ecumenism and the general restoration of the Festal Calendar handed down by the Fathers.

11. The present Constitutional Principles of the Holy Synod in Resistance, ratified by the Hierarchy at its thirty-seventh Meeting (October 4–5, 2010 [Old Style]), may be modified following a pro-

posal by a two-thirds majority of its Bishops, but such modifications are in no instance to touch, either directly or indirectly, on the ecclesiological basis, the preconditions, or the prospects of canonical Orthodox walling-off and resistance.

Acting President
† Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi

Secretary
† Bishop Klemes of Gardikion