



**The Regular Annual Convocation
of the Holy Synod in Resistance
Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece
Thirty-Eighth Meeting /October 4, 2011 (Old Style)**



I. ON MONDAY, October 4, 2011 (Old Style), following a formal notice of invitation (a letter dated August 11, 2011, Old Style, bearing the Synodal Protocol Number 616), the Holy Synod in Resistance of the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece summoned its Regular Annual Convocation, its Thirty-eighth Meeting.

a. Although, on the basis of the foregoing published program, it was anticipated that there would be two days of Synodal deliberations (October 4-5, 2011 [Old Style]), in order to deal with the issues on the agenda, in the end, and with considerable effort, discussion of the subjects on the agenda was completed within a single day, so that our Hierarchs from abroad could depart for their respective countries in time to avoid being stranded in Greece, owing to the strikes and demonstrations that had already been scheduled.

b. On the morning of Monday, October 4, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated, as well as a Memorial Service (*Τρισάγιον*) for the repose of those members of the Holy Synod previously gone to their rest, served by the junior most in rank among the Hierarchs, Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, in the Cathedral at the headquarters of our Metropolis, that is, the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, in Phyle, Attica, Greece.

c. At approximately 9:00 a.m., in the Meeting Hall of the Holy Synod (at the Monastery), His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, Acting President, celebrated the Service of the Small Blessing of Waters (*Άγιασμός*) for the new Synodal Period, with the Members of the Synod in prayerful attendance.

d. Following the Blessing of the Waters, the Hierarchy began its deliberations, which were conducted in two sessions (9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.), and in which the following Hierarchs participated: Their Eminences, Bishops Michael of Nora and Silvano of Luni and Their Graces, Bishops Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis, Auxentios of Photike, Ambrose of Methone, and Klemes (Clement) of Gardikion, Secretary, and, by teleconferencing, His Eminence, Archbishop Chrysostomos of Etna, who was unable to be present in person owing to the state of his health.

e. Absent for equally justifiable reasons was His Grace, Bishop Johannes (John) of Makarioupolis, who serves the Holy Synod in Sweden, owing to serious health problems. He had, however, designated His Grace, Bishop Auxentios of Photike as his representative.

f. In attendance, serving the need for translation, were Archimandrite Father Glykerios and Hieromonk Father John, from the Brotherhood of St. Cyprian.

g. The Synod Meeting proceeded flawlessly, by the Grace of God, being conducted in a spirit of prayerful humility, love, mutual respect, and peace. Each Hierarchy had ample time in which to express his opinions and to elucidate them in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and fraternal esteem.

h. To begin with, the minutes of the Thirty-seventh Convocation (October 4-5, 2011, Old Style) were read, and endorsed and signed by all the reverend members of the Holy Synod.

i. Next, it was determined that the Thirty-ninth Convocation would be held, with God’s help, on the two days of October 3 and 4, 2012, Old Style (October 16-17, 2012, New Style), in morning and afternoon sessions, at the headquarters of our Metropolis.

j. The Holy Synod dealt in all with six subjects which were on the program set out in its agendum and four which were not on the agendum.

II. THE ACTING PRESIDENT spoke at length about the two spheres of activity in which he is directly involved, and for which he bears primary responsibility: the Holy Synod and the Metropolis.

a. The work of the Holy Synod. The Standing Holy Synod has been functioning on a regular basis; fifteen sessions were held during the Fourth Period of its proceedings (October 2010-September 2011), with *circa* eighty pages of minutes (a report, in this respect, is slated to be published). There has been excellent and productive coöperation between the members of the Standing Holy Synod, who dealt, during this period, with a very broad range of issues and problems. Two fundamental documents of our Holy Synod have been published: *Constitutional Principles* and *By-Laws for the Functioning of the Standing Holy Synod*. The members of the Standing Holy Synod have cultivated inter-Orthodox relations (with the Romanian and Bulgarian Old Calendar Churches and with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad), expended much effort in caring for the sorely-trying Diocese of Alania, and taken an active rôle in expanding our Synod’s website.

b. The work of the Metropolis. Our Synod has been involved in celebrating the Holy Mysteries, in the ministry of preaching, and in ministry to our brothers and sisters in need. The St. Philaret the Merciful Orthodox Women’s Guild has produced an annual report of its proceedings in the area of social service (October 1, 2010-September 30, 2011: financial assistance totalling €130,000 [for full details, see the report on its website: www.agiosfilaretos.gr]). Pastoral visitations were made (1) abroad (to Kenya, Georgia, and South Ossetia), and (2) within Greece (all of our parishes, monasteries, convents, and *metochia* [dependencies] receive constant guidance and edification from the visits made by our Hierarchs, with celebrations of the Divine Lit-

urgy, homilies, and special gatherings). A pilgrimage was made to the Holy Land. We have endeavored to maintain the Synodal Fund for Charitable Assistance. As well, preparations are underway for an extraordinary clergy-laity gathering (October 28, 2011, Old Style) and a special lay assembly (during the coming November); plans are being made, too, for a clergy-laity gathering every six months; and the publication of our periodicals and calendars continues.

c. On the basis of a remark recorded in the minutes of the Standing Holy Synod (Tenth Session of the Fourth Period, May 11, 2011, Old Style), "...the Acting President added that we should be concerned about the grave divisions within our country [Greece], and we cannot pass over them lightly." The Acting President initiated a wide-ranging discussion of this issue, and various thoughts and opinions were expressed about any possible overture from the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece.

d. At the suggestion of the Acting President, particular attention was devoted to the question of our relations and the deepening of our unity with the Old Calendarist Orthodox in Romania and Bulgaria and in the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, the urgency of which remains undiminished.

III. WITH REGARD to the subject of renewing the membership of the Standing Holy Synod, it was resolved, yet again unanimously, that during the Fifth Synodal Period (October 2011-September 2012), the same members should continue to offer their services, namely, Their Graces, Bishops Cyprian of Oreoi (Acting President), Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis (who nonetheless proposed that he be exempted for personal reasons), Ambrose of Methone, and Klemes of Gardikion (Secretary).

IV. WITH REGARD to the subject of their activities, the following Hierarchs reported at length:

a. His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, the Acting President, spoke about our missionary communities in Kenya (which he visited in person in January), in the Congo (on the basis of information provided to him personally by Archimandrite Father Mark, who is in

charge of our mission in that country), in Georgia (which he visited in person in March), and in Sweden (which he visited in May, also basing his comments on a written report by the Reverend Father Anders Åkerström), regarding which—in spite of various problems—there are extremely auspicious prospects, as long as our interest and contribution are maintained undiminished.

b. His Eminence, Bishop Michael of Nora, talked about the difficulties that he faces in Sardinia.

c. His Eminence, Bishop Silvano of Luni described the pastoral problems in Italy and his struggles and anxieties, but expressed his satisfaction in Christ that the preparation of a convent in the wider Pistoia area is advancing to completion and within a few months will receive its first resident nuns.

d. His Grace, Bishop Auxentios of Photike set forth in brief the life and the problems faced by our Exarchate in America (the Priests, the economic crisis, pastoral matters in certain parishes, and also legal issues involving Church property, etc.).

And finally,

e. His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone spoke about our communities in Australia and England, the former which he visited last November, and the latter which he visited in March and September of this year, submitting for the archive of the Holy Synod a “Report on Expenditures for Missionary Work” there (October 2010-September 2011: €27,740).

V. BISHOP AMBROSE of Methone spoke about the present and future of the Diocese of Alania. He visited South Ossetia twice during the past year and assumed the responsibility of *Locum Tenens* of this Diocese, following the acceptance by the Holy Synod of the petition for retirement from His Eminence, Bishop George, for reasons of health (April 22, 2011, Old Style). The latter is now designated a retired Hierarch, with the title “formerly of Alania.” The outcome of a legal battle and also of the impending parliamentary elections in this small state will clarify the future of Church affairs and of our presence in South Ossetia.

VI. WITH REGARD to the prospect of a “Common Declaration” of Greek, Romanian, Russian, and Bulgarian Old Calendarists, several points were mentioned in the introductory remarks by the Acting President (see §II.d), and the issue was tabled, especially in view of the fact that His Eminence, Metropolitan Vlasie (Romanian Old Calendar Church) and His Eminence, Metropolitan Agafangel (Russian Orthodox Church Abroad) could not come for the Feast of Sts. Cyprian and Justina (October 2), although His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza (Bulgarian Old Calendar Church), who did come, had already sent in good time a letter containing his thoughts on the matter.

VII. THE ACTING PRESIDENT spoke about a “Pastoral Epistle” on the part of the Holy Synod to the pious faithful of the Orthodox in Resistance. He had an outline of this document before him, and he described its basic themes: the unity of Shepherds and their flock, especially during this critical period in history, and the respect of the faithful for their Hierarchs in the context of the ethos of the Orthodox Church. Further work on this Epistle was unanimously approved.

VIII. HIS EMINENCE, Bishop Silvano of Luni commented on the following three subjects, which he had submitted in writing this past August, though after the agendum of the Synod had been drawn up:

a. The election of a Metropolitan. He withdrew this proposal, owing to the lateness of the hour and to fatigue.

b. A Constitution for the Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle. There was a lengthy and fruitful discussion of the subject, and a generally positive opinion was expressed on this proposal and on other related topics. However, the Acting President set forth certain insurmountable obstacles to such a Constitution, as well as the prerequisites for its composition and implementation, and all the more so because it appeared to avoid the issue of our ailing First Hierarch and Metropolitan and to envision the appointment of his successor. In the end, this proposal was quietly withdrawn.

c. Mission in Togo. Bishop Silvano proposed the development of an Orthodox Mission in Togo, a country in West Africa, insofar as he

has already established ties with certain people from there. This proposal had already received Synodal approval and has now been renewed and formalized, though by œconomy, of course, since on the basis of the *Constitutional Principles* of our Holy Synod, Missionary Communities outside our existing Dioceses come under the jurisdiction of the Metropolis (Article VI).

From the Chancery of the Holy Synod

† Bishop Klemes of Gardikion

October 7, 2011 (Old Style)

Holy Martyrs Sergios and Bacchos

