



# Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece

## Holy Synod in Resistance



### A Report Presented Before the Hierarchy of the Holy Synod in Resistance Concerning the Proceedings of the Standing Holy Synod (Fifth Period, October 2011-September 2012)

**D**uring the Fifth Period of its activity, from October of 2011 through September of 2012, the Standing Holy Synod met in thirteen sessions (that is, it held roughly one session per month). The sessions were prolonged—each lasting between five and six hours—and in them the Standing Synod dealt with a multitude of issues.

Inevitably, a peaceful spirit of coöperation and mutual respect prevailed at these sessions, even when there were disagreements, with rare incidents of disputation in certain difficult instances.

The issues that were dealt with pertained to the Synod, and also to the Metropolis, since the Members of the Standing Holy Synod serve in the Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle, Greece.

## I. Issues Pertaining to the Synod

### a1. Sister Churches

The Standing Holy Synod dedicated a large part of its synodal work to issues involving its Sister Churches.

- **Romania**

The Synod deliberated in nine sessions on matters pertaining to its relations with the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Romania, which in recent years have been destabilized by external forces and have become

sensitive and delicate. With the preservation and reinforcement of these relations as its point of reference, the Standing Synod endeavored at all costs to respond to the new challenges peacefully and decisively, culminating in an Inter-Synodal Consultation of its Members with the Hierarchy of our Romanian brethren in Slătioara, Romania, on August 4/17, 2012 (concerning which a special report has been compiled), with the positive result that our unity has been sustained.

### • Bulgaria

A problem arose with our Sister Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria as a result of the assuredly well-intentioned intervention by a Bishop of our Holy Synod in the re-examination of the case of one of its former Priests, who had been deposed. This intervention, however, created certain tensions, which were suitably addressed by the Standing Synod through the issuance of a “Synodal Assurance” on the subject. By virtue of our “Constitutional Principles” we do not interfere in the internal affairs of our Sister Churches, just as they, for their part, do not interfere in our own internal affairs. In addition, our fraternal communion was expressed through our official participation in the Feast Day of the Cathedral of the Dormition of the *Theotokos* in Sofia this past August.

### • The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad

The Standing Synod was informed about meetings between Members of our Holy Synod with Hierarchs of the ROCA in Greece and abroad, which it evaluated in two sessions, and also about matters of interest, on which the Synod of Bishops of the ROCA had deliberated, in two further sessions.

## a2. Dioceses of the Holy Synod in Resistance

The Standing Synod dealt in turn with issues pertaining to the Dioceses of our Holy Synod, either for its own information on important events or in an effort to support Diocesan work with visits by its Members. Thus, it was informed about the visit by Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, the Acting President, with a group of faithful to the Diocese of Nora, in Cagliari, Sardinia, and also about the publication of the missionary periodical *Orthodox Sardinia*; it was also informed about the visit by Bishop Ambrose of Methone to the Diocese of Luni, in Pistoia, Italy; from time to time it received information, and when necessary offered its opinion, on matters involving the Exarchate in America, while it dealt in many sessions with issues pertaining to the Diocese of Australia and to the Diocese of Alania through Bishop Ambrose, the *Locum Tenens* in both venues.

### a3. Missionary Communities Abroad

The Standing Synod took care of various issues, problems, requests, and needs of our missionary communities abroad. In three sessions it dealt with matters pertaining to our communities in Sweden; in eight sessions with issues and needs of our missionary communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo; in two sessions with matters pertaining to our missionary communities in Kenya; in three sessions with issues pertaining to our monasteries in England; in two sessions with matters pertaining to the Orthodox Eparchy of Gldani in Tbilisi, Georgia; in five sessions with issues pertaining to our communities in the Czech Republic; and in two sessions with matters pertaining to our community in Slovakia.

### a4. Unity Within the Old Calendar Movement and Relations with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece

The Standing Synod dealt with the burning issue of achieving unity within the Old Calendar movement: in two sessions the discussion was prompted by a letter on the subject from certain Athonite Fathers, while in two other sessions it centered on its own “Appeal for Unity” towards the surmounting of the division that exists.

The Standing Synod was also informed about developments in the domain of the Old Calendar movement, which developments it assessed, and it addressed the problem of “rebaptisms” within the movement in two sessions.

The Standing Synod also devoted particular attention to relations with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece in ten sessions, arising from either positive or negative news, incidents, and developments, with a view to inaugurating an official dialogue with this Church.

### a5. Ecumenism and Anti-Ecumenism

The Standing Synod, on the basis of sober and reliable information, discussed and assessed developments in the heresy of ecumenism and in the corresponding reaction on the part of anti-ecumenists, chiefly those following the New Calendar (walled-off or not), in six of its sessions. It is noteworthy that five reports on this subject, namely developments in ecumenism and anti-ecumenism, have been compiled by its Chancery, since the ecclesiological heresy of ecumenism constitutes, in essence, the primary *raison d'être* for our Holy Synod.

## a6. Various Topics

The Standing Synod was informed in three of its sessions concerning the interest shown toward documents by its Members on important matters of Faith and the postings on various Internet sites demonstrating this interest. These facts demonstrate that the struggle and witness of our Holy Synod is having an ever-widening impact and reception.

In three sessions the Standing Synod also observed the progress of the anti-ecumenist community under Bishop Artemije in Serbia and evaluated the negative, as well as the positive, aspects of relations therewith, on the basis of related incidents.

The Standing Synod also found it necessary to remove two clergymen from the clergy register of our Holy Synod. In addition, it examined three petitions from clergymen to come under our Synod, which petitions it rejected, and approved the Ordination of new clergymen.

The operation of the Synodal Fund for Charitable Assistance and the progress of its important work is reported below.

## II. Issues pertaining to the Metropolis

With regard to the presence and activity of our Holy Synod in Greece, and also to the coördination of its pastoral work and of its anti-heretical and philanthropic witness and ministry in general, the Standing Synod addressed:

(1) the organization, convocation, direction, and rôle of the extraordinary clergy-laity gathering of the Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle, and also the first regular such gathering, in three sessions. These gatherings had important and positive results: among other things, they set in motion the functioning of the Synodal Fund for Charitable Assistance, so that it might conduct its multifarious work, especially for the assistance of needy clergy and, in general, for the accomplishment of its charitable mission;

(2) the organization and coördination of the Nineteenth Convocation for Orthodox Awareness, on the Sunday of Orthodoxy this year, as an important witness of our Faith;

(3) the account of the work of the St. Philaret Orthodox Women's Guild;

(4) concerns regarding better organization of the catechesis of adults and children, in two sessions;

(5) issues and problems involving its clergy, both in Greece and abroad, as well as the assignment of parish Priests, in eight sessions;

(6) the allocation of the liturgical and, in general, the pastoral work of its Members here in Greece, at each one of its sessions.

(7) procedures for dealing with sundry liturgical and pastoral issues and questions (e.g., the use of the Small and Great Blessings of Waters, celebration of the Divine Liturgy for Romanians [residing in Greece], the problem of the dissemination of unexamined “prophecies,” ways and means of coping with the economic crisis and of providing support for our suffering people, the correction of defective Baptisms, the ascertainment of persons suitable or unsuitable for the Priesthood, the rejection of requests for “dispensations” in the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, etc.).

### III. Epilogue

The work of the Standing Synod during the Fifth Period of its incumbency is recorded in seventy large pages in its Book of Minutes, and we can say that it was important from every standpoint. It reflects the energetic work of a vibrant ecclesiastical community, journeying in anguish and tribulation, but not without Divine consolation, towards the fulfillment of its visions and especially towards the meeting of its faithful people with the Lord of Glory in the Kingdom of the *Eschaton*.

With regard to any mistakes—involuntary, to be sure—that may have occurred, we invoke the holy goodwill and forbearance of the Body of the Church. Whatever good things have been accomplished are to be reckoned a blessing of Divine compassion and Grace, through the prayers of our ailing Metropolitan and First Hierarch Cyprian.

Phyle, Attica  
September 2012

† *Bishop Klemes of Gardikion*  
*Secretary of the Holy Synod*

