

Communiqué Regarding the Meeting Between the Pope and the Patriarch in Jerusalem

Athens, May 22/June 4, 2014

The Holy Synod of the (Old Calendar) Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece, under His Beatitude, Archbishop Kallinikos, hereby issues the following Communiqué regarding the recent ecumenical meeting in Jerusalem between Pope Francis of Rome and Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople:



1. This meeting, as is well known, took place on the fiftieth anniversary of the corresponding meeting between Pope Paul VI and the ecumenist Patriarch Athenagoras in 1964. During that event, which was described by its supporters as “epoch-making,” the Pope and the Patriarch, *inter alia*, in the course of a “secret conversation” formulated a “common program” for the advancement of their ecumenist union. That meeting took place concurrently with the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) of the Roman Catholics, as a result of which the Roman Church mounted an “onslaught of love,” as it has been aptly characterized,¹ in their ecumenical activities and, in particular, in their relations with the official Orthodox, on the basis of their Romanocentric or Papocentric ecumenism, in order to bring about a Uniata-style union, a new kind of ecumenist Unia. In fact, the 1964 Jerusalem meeting was held in

¹ See Protopresbyter Angelos Angelakopoulos, “Ο Μέγας Οικουμενιστής Πατριάρχης κύρος Ἀθηναγόρας (Μέρος Γ΄)” [The great ecumenist, Patriarch Athenagoras (Part III)], §6, <http://www.impantokratoros.gr/7E6EFCDF.el.aspx> (accessed June 19, 2014).

the wake of persistent entreaties and efforts on the part of the Uniate Patriarch Maximos IV.² Furthermore, the then Pope, Paul VI, *prior* to the meeting with Athenagoras, had a cordial meeting with the Uniate hierarchy, to whom he addressed an appeal that they preserve their traditions and liturgical *Typika*, and called the “separated brethren,” namely, the Orthodox, to union in one flock—*his* flock—emphasizing his “Primacy” and “Infallibility”!³

2. Although that meeting, which actually signalled the “inauguration of a new phase” in Orthodox-Catholic relations, met with an intense reaction on the part of eminent clergy, Athonite monks, and the majority of the Orthodox faithful, the Orthodox ecumenists rushed ahead unrestrainedly in their frenetic ecumenical endeavor, which was, and is, completely antithetical to the Synodal, Patristic, and canonical Tradition of the Orthodox Church, with the sensational act of the “lifting of the anathemas” in 1965.

² The Melkite (Greek Catholic) Patriarch of Antioch, Maximos IV (Sayegh) (1878-1967). It is interesting to note that this Uniate prelate, who is not infrequently lionized by Orthodox ecumenists for his redoubtable interventions—delivered in French rather than in the customary Latin—at the Second Vatican Council, was hardly benevolent towards the Orthodox, as can be seen from his somewhat curious attempt to assuage their fear of “disappearance” (absorption) in the event of their ecclesiastical union with the Church of Rome. Their negative attitude towards such a prospect, he wrote, “is the typical reaction of all Christian groups which refuse to consider any union because they think that any step in that direction is the beginning of disintegration. Union means dying to ourselves to a certain extent. They refuse to accept this death, as the Jewish people once refused it, though it would have opened for them the way towards a new life” (“The Eastern Rôle in Christian Reunion,” in Maximos IV Sayegh [ed.], *The Eastern Churches and Catholic Unity* [New York: Herder and Herder, 1963], p. 54). As Archimandrite Spyridon Bilales sagely remarks, “the Uniate patriarch sees as new life the acceptance by the Orthodox of anti-Christian primacy and infallibility and all of the other Papist heresies” (*Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ Παπισμός* [Orthodoxy and Papism], Vol. II [Athens: Ekdoseis “Orthodoxou Typou,” 1969]), p. 489). No less curious, and indeed, quite astonishing, was Patriarch Athenagoras’ expression of gratitude to Patriarch Maximos IV for “representing” the Orthodox Churches at the aforementioned Council: “You spoke for Orthodoxy at the [Second Vatican] Council. You were the voice of our common hopes” (cited in Emilius Inglessis, *Maximos IV: l’Orient conteste l’Occident* [Maximos IV: the East challenges the West] [Paris: Cerf, 1969], pp. 72ff.). Was the Patriarch perhaps envisaging that the Orthodox Church would end up, if she were to enter into union with Rome, in the same state of vassalage as the Uniates?

³ See Bilales, *Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ Παπισμός*, Vol. II, pp. 343-346.

The fallen Athenagoras, preferring the “currency of love,” as he conceived it,⁴ proclaimed that Orthodox and Papists constitute “one Church and one religion”!⁵

The so-called “Dialogue of Truth” between Orthodox and Papists that commenced in 1980 led to the notorious “Balamand Agreement” in Lebanon, in 1993, when both sides—without, of course, having resolved the dogmatic and other differences between them—declared themselves “Sister Churches,” which supposedly hold in common “the profession of apostolic faith, participation in the same sacraments,” and especially “one priesthood” and “the apostolic succession of bishops.”⁶

Likewise, the Unia, though condemned for the escalation of its violent activities against the Orthodox (1990 and on),⁷ was essentially granted recognition, and its representatives are now accepted as interlocutors in the Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue.⁸

⁴ See *ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 454-455.

⁵ “Why do we not automatically return to Mysteriological (Sacramental) communion? Because it is necessary for us to prepare our peoples for it, both theologically and psychologically. During the nine hundred years that have elapsed since 1054, we, the two worlds of East and West, have come to think that we belong to different Churches and different religions. And, as a result, the purpose of dialogues becomes quite evident. It is to prepare our peoples psychologically to understand that there is one Church and one religion, that we all believe in the same God—the Savior Christ. You and we respect all religions and we esteem the place and the time in which we live” (from a homily given by the Patriarch in the chapel of Lambeth Palace, London, November 13, 1967, cited in “Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople [1886-1972]: His Statements, Messages, and Activities,” *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1 [2001], p. 10).

⁶ “Uniatism, Method of Union of The Past, and the Present Search for Full Communion,” §13, *Eastern Churches Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1 (1993-1994), p. 19; see also http://www.prounione.urbe.it/dia-int/o-rc/doc/e_o-rc_07_balamand_eng.html (accessed June 18, 2014).

⁷ See Protopresbyter George Metallinos, “The Vatican’s Torpedo at the Unity of Europe: The Problem of the Unia at Front Stage,” *Orthodox Tradition*, Vol. IX, No. 4 [1992], p. 26 (see also <http://hsir.org/p/97> [accessed June 20, 2014]); “The Uniate Question: A Matter of Deception?” *Orthodox America*, Vol. X, Nos. 8-9 (98-99) (March-May 1990), pp. 4-5; “A Cry from Czechoslovakia,” *ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

⁸ See *The Balamand Union: A Victory of Vatican Diplomacy* (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, [1993]), pp. 13-16.

All of these factors constitute a triumph of Papal diplomacy and tactics. The Papists have come to the point of advocating the need for a new type of primacy for the Orthodox Churches⁹ and of affirming that unity entails the maintenance of diversity, the reestablishment of communion, mutual spiritual enrichment through the exchange of Divine gifts. The Orthodox ecumenists accept the notion of “Sister Churches” and acknowledge that “the Church is divided” and that they are endeavoring, by means of all of their ecumenist schemes, to restore “full communion” and unity, which is, however, in their view already being experienced and expressed through common prayers, joint statements, and coöperation at all levels, towards a putative “common witness” of faith to the world.

These concessions all represent an inadmissible ecclesiological legitimization of heterodoxy and its equation with Orthodoxy, as others have correctly observed,¹⁰ even as the Papists persist in their ancient and modern heresies and errors. Such ecclesiological innovations and absurdities patently alter the self-understanding and mindset of the Orthodox Church and demonstrate, in essence, the grave corrosion of the consciences of Orthodox ecumenists and their Uniatization.

3. Given this state of affairs, the anniversary meeting of Pope Francis and Patriarch Bartholomew some days ago in Jerusalem (Sunday of the Blind Man, May 12/25, 2014), was yet another milestone in their “irreversible” ecumenical confusion and apostasy.

The ecumenist Patriarch of Constantinople has proclaimed his faithful continuation of the trail blazed by such “ecclesiastical luminaries” as Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul VI in 1964: these two “Church leaders” were supposedly “sent from God” fearlessly to overcome the rupture in the

⁹ In a lecture delivered at the University of Graz in 1976, “Die ökumenische Situation—Orthodoxie, Katholizismus und Reformation” [The ecumenical situation: Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and the Reformation], Joseph Ratzinger (now Pope *Emeritus* Benedict XVI) stated that “Rome must not require more from the East with respect to the doctrine of the primacy than had been formulated and was lived in the first millennium” (*The Principles of Catholic Theology*, trans. Sister Mary Francis McCarthy [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987], p. 199).

¹⁰ Cf. Andreas Theodorou, *Η Ορθοδοξία χθές και σήμερα* [Orthodoxy yesterday and today] (Athens: Ekdoseis “Orthodoxou Typou,” 1973), p. 21.

unity of the Church, something which none of the “holy men” from East or West succeeded in accomplishing during the second millennium!

In their “Joint Declaration,” the Pope and the Patriarch, regarding one another as “members of the same Christian family” and recognizing each other in an ecclesiastical sense, albeit without full communion as yet, jointly confess that they are progressing, by means of dialogue—and not only by this means—in searching for an “exchange of gifts” and in deepening their “grasp of the whole truth”!¹¹ And all of this, while praying together, giving joint blessings, signing documents together, offering a “common witness”¹² and working together, supposedly, for the good of humanity¹³—affirming their support, moreover, for interfaith dialogue, for the peace of the world!¹⁴



At the same time, the Pope and the Patriarch alluded to the common celebration of Pascha, for which they have a great longing,¹⁵ spoke about “communion in legitimate diversity” (without true dogmatic unity),¹⁶ and

¹¹ “Joint Declaration by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Francis,” §4, <http://www.apostolicpilgrimage.org/joint-declaration> (accessed June 18, 2014).

¹² *Ibid.*, §5, 9.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, §7.

¹⁵ “Asked about his meeting in Jerusalem with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, the pope said they discussed what he called the ‘ridiculous’ problem of Catholic and Orthodox churches celebrating Easter on different dates, and the possibility of common efforts by the churches to protect the natural environment” (“Pope Francis reaches out to Muslims, Jews during 3-day trip,” <http://catholicnewsheald.com/component/content/article/47-news/rokstories-vatican/5621-pope-arriving-in-holy-land-calls-for-religious-freedom-in-middle-east> (accessed June 18, 2014).

¹⁶ “Joint Declaration by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Francis,” §4.

also disclosed their intention jointly to convoke an ecumenical (or rather, ecumenist) synod in Nicæa in 2025!¹⁷

However, the “unexplained” fire in the Grotto of the Nativity of Christ in Bethlehem, barely a day after these ecumenical misdeeds,¹⁸ is an obvious sign of Divine displeasure at all of these events, which were, nevertheless, characterized by an outspoken Metropolitan of the New Calendar Church of Greece, who enjoys the reputation of being a traditionalist, as “ingenious diplomacy” on the part of the Phanar!¹⁹ Not long ago a hackneyed denunciation of us, the True Orthodox Christians, was issued from the office of this Metropolitan. In this document—the contents of which are undeserving of significance or attention, as they have already been dealt with sufficiently in the past—we are also invited to engage in dialogue with the New Calendar Church, in order to be “reincorporated” into it, even though the majority of us have never belonged to the New Calendarists and have no need of such “rehabilitation”! This invitation came in response to the gratifying event of our union, in a single Synod, with our Old Calendarist brethren of the erstwhile Holy Synod in Resistance.²⁰

4. Our joyous union in True Orthodoxy this past March was achieved, with God’s help, on the basis of a common ecclesiological document, “The True Orthodox Church and the Heresy of Ecumenism: Dogmatic and Canonical Issues.” With this union in True Orthodoxy, the Grace of God forestalled a barrage of ecumenical events—the meeting in Jerusalem chief

¹⁷ “Bartholomew: With Francis, we invite all Christians to celebrate the first synod of Nicaea in 2025,” <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Bartholomew-:-With-Francis,-we-invite-...hristians-to-celebrate-the-first-synod-of-Nicaea-in-2025-31213.html> (accessed June 18, 2014).

¹⁸ “Φωτιά στο Σπήλαιο τής Γέννησης στη Βηθλεέμ” [Fire at the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem], <http://www.romfea.gr/ektakta-nea-2/24560-2014-05-27-07-19-33> (accessed June 18, 2014).

¹⁹ “Εὐφυής διπλωματία, ἡ αἰρετική πολιτική Βαρθολομαίου κατὰ τὸν Πειραιῶς Σεραφεῖμ;” [“Ingenious diplomacy,” the heretical policy of Bartholomew, according to Seraphim of Piræus?], http://paterikiparadosi.blogspot.com/2014/05/blog-post_6691.html (accessed June 18, 2014).

²⁰ “Μία Ἄνοικτη Πληγὴ Στὸ Σῶμα Τῆς Ἐκκλησίας: Σύντομος σχολιασμός τοῦ Παλαιοημερολογητικοῦ ζητήματος” [An open wound in the Body of the Church: a brief commentary on the Old Calendarist question], <http://www.impantokratoros.gr/2837A100.print.el.aspx> (accessed June 18, 2014).

among them—through our co-signing of an Orthodox Confession of Faith which decisively confronts heresy, makes momentous observations, and provides salutary remedies for the unity of the Church and for the realization of Her saving work.

Thus, on the basis of our common Confession, the fallen Patriarch Bartholomew, walking in the footsteps of the hapless Athenagoras, is a false bishop and a false teacher,²¹ and those who commune with him, indifferent towards, tolerating, or accepting his mentality and his actions, are perishing together with him, thereby ceasing to be canonical or in communion with the Church. The heresy of ecumenism, through the implementation of its reprehensible practices which deny the ecclesiological and soteriological exclusivity of the Orthodox Church, estranges the innovators from authentic Orthodoxy. The True Orthodox Church is the continuator of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

Consequently, we call those caught up in innovation to desist from ecclesiastical communion with the spokesmen of ecumenism and to wall *themselves* off for the sake of preserving the uniqueness, unity, and Catholicity of the Church, so as to bear witness to the Faith and to summon those who have deviated to repent and join the True Orthodox Church.

If the appeal for dialogue with the New Calendar Church is to have any meaning, it must be viewed in the light of all the foregoing. It should be understood solely as aiming at the liberation of the New Calendar Church from *her* ecumenist fetters, so that she might return to the Orthodox path and so that together we might press forward in dealing effectively with syncretism in its various forms. However, as long as she remains blatantly and scornfully deaf to the pleas of her own theoretically anti-ecumenist Bishops—who can be counted on the fingers of one hand—that she be *truly* Orthodox, she demonstrates that her condition is incurable and that she is not receptive to help from the True Orthodox in accomplishing her salvific recovery and return.

The more the process of “apostasy” mushrooms through such enterprises as the meeting between the Pope and the Patriarch in Jerusalem, and any similar ventures that ensue or will ensue, the greater the responsibility of

²¹ Canon XV of the First-Second Synod (“A Contribution to the Theology of Orthodox Resistance and Walling-Off, <http://hsir.org/p/r44> (accessed June 20, 2014).

the True Orthodox Churches of Greece and abroad to struggle in repentance and prayer, to safeguard the treasure of the Faith at all costs, to uphold the good legacy²² unto death, through confession of the Truth in love,²³ to maintain a genuine missionary witness, and to engage in charitable ministry to all who are in need.

Brethren, “watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit you like men, be strong,”²⁴ and may the God of peace be with you!

From the Chief Secretariat of the Holy Synod



²² II St. Timothy 1:14.

²³ Cf. Ephesians 4:15.

²⁴ I Corinthians 16:13.