



STANDING HOLY SYNOD IN RESISTANCE

Regular Sessions

I (October 10, 2007 [Old Style])
and II (October 24, 2007 [Old Style])

I. On October 10, 2007 (Old Style) and October 24, 2007 (Old Style), the Standing Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Greece, Synod in Resistance, convened for its regular meetings (I and II).

1. His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, as Acting President, presided over these two sessions, which were attended by the Hierarchs elected at the recent meeting (the thirty-fourth/October 4, 2007 [Old Style]) of the entire Holy Synod in Resistance, namely, Their Graces, Bishops Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis, Ambrose of Methone, and Klemes of Gardiki-on, the latter serving as Secretary.

2. The two sessions were held at the Headquarters of the Holy Synod in Resistance, that is, at the Holy Monastery of Sts. Cyprian and Justina, near Phyle, Attika, Greece.

3. The Standing Holy Synod convenes on a regular basis every two weeks, on Tuesday; when there is an impediment, the date of the next session will be determined by the members of the Synod.

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II. The Standing Holy Synod dealt with eight matters in all, of which the following were deemed worthy of publication.

1. The Synod unanimously decided to accept the petition for acceptance of the Reverend Archpriest Dragan Sarasevic, of Sydney, Australia, who was Ordained in Serbia in 1978 and who heretofore belonged to the Australian Diocese of the Serbian Patriarchate, and to send him a pertinent Letter of Acceptance. The Synod also decided that His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone should discuss with Father Dragan the particu-

lars of his reception during his visit to Australia (October 26-November 6, 2007 [Old Style]).

- The Archpriest in question is unequivocally opposed to ecumenism and is in full agreement with our ecclesiological position.

2. It was unanimously decided to take drastic measures to reconstitute and reinforce our mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone, who has overall responsibility for foreign missions, was charged with implementing and expediting these measures, with the assistance of Hieromonk Mark (Kaseya) Agiokyprianites, who hails from the Congo.

3. The Synod decided to send a Synodal Epistle to our Hierarchs, through which they are to be reminded of the following points of liturgical order, with a view to establishing definitive and uniform practice throughout our Synod.

3A. At the Great Entrance, the officiating or presiding Hierarchy is to commemorate by name, first and foremost, the Most Reverend First Hierarchy of our Holy Synod.

3B. At “Among the first...,” an officiating Vicar Bishop is to commemorate the First Hierarchy and his own Hierarchy; the ruling Bishop is to commemorate only the First Hierarchy; the First Hierarchy is to commemorate “Every Episcopate of the Orthodox...”

3C. During simple Priestly Divine Liturgies, Deacons and Presbyters, at the Great Litany and the Litany of Fervent Supplication, are to commemorate, first, the First Hierarchy and then their own Hierarchy, and at “Among the first...,” they are to commemorate, together, their own Hierarchy.

- **As a point** of clarification, the foregoing order, though differing in certain respects, was already decided upon in the past, for the sake of indicating and emphasizing—especially abroad—the identity of our clergy’s ecclesiastical authority, as distinct from the plurality of various ecclesiastical bodies, especially those on the Old Calendar.

4. In view of this, the members of the Holy Synod are reminded of the correct order, established from of old, according to which the following rules apply when Vicar Bishops take part in a concelebrated Hierarchical Liturgy:

- Vicar Bishops, both when concelebrating with our First Hierarchy and Metropolitan (or with his representative or with the Acting President) and when concelebrating with their ruling Hierarchy,

→ are to wear only a *Kalymmauchion* and *Epanokalymmachon* (i.e., not a Mitre) and only one *Enkolpion* (i.e., the *Panagia*), and are to carry only a short staff (i.e., a *Mpastouni* [walking stick]).

• This order holds good even if they are concelebrating with Hierarchs from a Sister Church that observes a different order.

5. The Standing Holy Synod was informed by the Secretary of recent developments in our relations with various Russian Orthodox Christians, on the basis of correspondence and materials published on the Internet. The Synod was also notified of various rumors circulating, chiefly in Russian, but also in English, on the Internet, which are sometimes patently irresponsible and malicious, and to which the Synod is prepared to offer a detailed refutation, when such is deemed expedient and necessary.

5A. For the present, all that needs to be said is that our Hierarchy has decided to declare its readiness to reactivate the dialogue with the so-called “official” New Calendar Church of Greece, on the basis of our ecclesiological principles.

• Such a dialogue would be held, were it actually to be realized, within the framework that has already been made public (see *Άγιος Κυπριανός*, No. 323 [November-December 2004], pp. 118-119, and *Όρθόδοξος Τύπος*, No. 1557 [July 2, 2004], p. 5). Under no circumstances should the objective of such dialogue be construed as our absorption within, submission to, or incorporation into the innovationist New Calendar Church, or as a union of the kind negotiated by the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Moscow Patriarchate—which we have, moreover, sternly condemned and rejected—, but as an attempt to confront ecumenism, which has divided the Orthodox since 1920.

5B. The envisioned dialogue, as well as all of the other decisions made at the regular annual Meeting (the thirty-fourth/October 4, 2007 [Old Style]) of the Holy Synod in Resistance, are not only known to the ailing First Hierarch of our Holy Synod, His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian, but are in every way concordant with his spirit, since: 1) the dialogue that he undertook with the New Calendar Church of Greece (1998-2000) was set in motion with the unanimous agreement of the Hierarchy (at its twenty-fifth Meeting, on October 3, 2000 [Old Style]); 2) he was present at the two recent Consecrations, in prayerful attendance (he was also photographed together with the Hierarchs); and, finally, 3) he visited the Meeting of the Hierarchy while it was in session and gave it his blessing.

5C. Especially noteworthy is a recent interview with Metropolitan Laurus, of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad—who entered, this past

May, into formal union with the Moscow Patriarchate—in the periodical *Vestnik* (October 25, 2007), published by the St. Andrew Theological Seminary in Odessa (under the Moscow Patriarchate), in which, *inter alia*, his language about our Holy Synod and about relations between the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and ourselves (1994-) is not dismissive, but circumspect.

- Of course, Metropolitan Laurus, either misinterpreting our ecclesiological principles or not fully understanding them, gives the impression that our objections to ecumenism would be effective only if we were in union with the [innovating] Church. In so doing, he is clearly reiterating the ecclesiological error, that is, that Orthodox walling-off supposedly leads to a departure from the unity of the Church. On the contrary, the Synodal and Patristic Tradition affirms that the anti-innovationist flock exists securely within the unity of the Church while remaining, at the same time, out of communion with the innovationists.

“It behooves us to eschew communion with those whose opinions we abhor” (St. Athanasios the Great).

“The Synods and the other Fathers decree that we should eschew communion with those whose opinions we abhor” (St. Gennadios Scholarios).

5D. With regard to our relations with His Eminence, Bishop Agafangel of Odessa and Tauris, after we sent our Epistle to His Eminence (Protocol No. 452/October 12, 2007 [Old Style]—see the appendix, in which the letter is reproduced in its entirety), we received a positive response from him (November 1, 2007 [New Style]).

His Eminence, Bishop Agafangel is now expecting to visit us in Greece very soon for a Synodal consultation, in which we will make joint decisions regarding our further coöperation.

At the Headquarters of the Holy Synod in Resistance,
October 27, 2007 (Old Style)
Holy Martyr Nestor of Thessalonica
From the Chancery of the Holy Synod
† Bishop Klemes of Gardikion



Orthodox Church of Greece
Holy Synod in Resistance

Protocol No. 452

To
His Eminence,
Bishop Agafangel of Odessa and Tauris
Odessa, Ukraine

Fili, Attika
October 12, 2007 (Old Style)
*Sts. Philip the Deacon
and Theophanes the Confessor*

Most Reverend and exceedingly beloved Brother in Christ, Bishop Agafangel of Odessa and Tauris:

I greet you with a holy kiss of love, peace, and unity in the Holy Spirit, conveying to Your Eminence, at the same time, sincere sentiments of profound esteem from our much-revered First Hierarch, Metropolitan Cyprian, and the honorable members of our Holy Synod in Resistance.

I hasten, in my capacity as Acting President, to which the love and confidence of our Hierarchy elevated me during its recent regular Meeting (the thirty-fourth/October 4, 2007 [Old Style]), to inform your Eminence of all of the decisions made by the Synod—unanimously, in fact—at the Meeting in question with respect to our ecclesiastical communion (seventh resolution).

“It was unanimously decided—following the union of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, under Metropolitan Laurus, with the Moscow Patriarchate—that our Holy Synod should maintain communion with His Eminence, Bishop Agafangel of Odessa and Tauris, who disagrees with this union and has broken off relations with the Holy Synod under Metropolitan Laurus.

Our communion with His Eminence, Bishop Agafangel remains in force, since it has never been ruptured; it will be maintained and further consolidated; we will cooperate with him in Consecrating Bishops,

when requested to do so, in order to strengthen his jurisdiction; we will invite Bishop Agafangel to Greece as soon as possible, in order to formalize our communion with him through a synodal consultation and to sign a ‘Memorandum Regarding Principles of Coöperation.’ Simultaneous communion on our part with the Synod of Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk and Siberia (in Russia) is at present not possible, since the latter is not in communion with Bishop Agafangel.”

In keeping with this resolution, we invite you with especial joy, Your Eminence, to come to Greece, in order that we might confirm and formalize our ecclesiastical unity in Christ and deal together with any problems related thereto.

We would make one special request: that your journey to Greece be made after November 6/19, since His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone will then be back with us after two successive trips abroad.

Please be assured, Holy Master, of our profound esteem and love in Christ for your person, and also of our fraternal prayers.

Least in the Lord,

† Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi
Acting President of the Holy Synod

† Bishop Klemes of Gardikion
Secretary to the Holy Synod