



The Regular Annual Meeting of the Holy Synod in Resistance, Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece

Fortieth Meeting/October 4/17 and 5/18, 2013

I. **ON** Thursday, October 4 and Friday, October 5, 2013 (Old Style), the Holy Synod in Resistance of the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece convened its regular annual meeting, its Fortieth convocation.

a. On the morning of Thursday, 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, and especially our Elder and Metropolitan Cyprian, of blessed memory, who reposed in May (May 17/30, 2013), 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 (Athens), Greece.

b. At approximately 9:00 a.m., in the Meeting Hall of the Holy Synod (at the Monastery), His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, the Presiding 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.

c. Following the Blessing of the Waters, the Hierarchy began its deliberations, which were conducted over two days, in four sessions (9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.–8:00 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 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.

d. Absent for equally justifiable reasons was His Grace, Bishop Johannes of Makarioupolis, who serves the Holy Synod in Sweden, owing to serious health problems. However, he designated His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone as his representative.

e. In attendance, serving the need for translation into Italian, was Archimandrite Father Glykerios, from the Brotherhood of St. Cyprian.

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

- This special gift, that is, of the Synod Meeting proceeding in a truly Grace-filled manner, is to be ascribed to the blessing and noetic presence, in the Holy Spirit, of our Elder and Metropolitan Cyprian, of blessed memory, who does not cease to inspire us in our witness to Orthodox truth and life.

II. THE HOLY SYNOD dealt with all of the topics scheduled in a program that had been sent out in advance, and also published [on the Synod website], and which included, aside from the Blessing of the Waters, the announcement of designated proxies, the endorsement of the Minutes of the previous Convocation of the Holy Synod (the Thirty-Ninth, October 3, 2012 [Old Style]), and nine additional subjects.

a. To begin with, it was proposed that, contrary to the order already announced, the election of a new Metropolitan for the vacant See of the Holy Metropolis of Oropos and Phyle, as well as the appointment of a new President of our Holy Synod, be moved forward as the first subject, as being of particular importance vis-à-vis the subsequent topics. The proposal was accepted.

b. Since, as far back as the repose of our Metropolitan, of blessed memory (May 17/30, 2013), there had been something of a pre-Synodal crisis concerning who would be his successor, His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, the *Locum Tenens* and Presiding President, left the Synodal meeting room in order to facilitate the electoral process, given that he had expressed in writing, by way of a memorandum (August 2, 2013 [Old Style]), his inability to assume such a responsible and weighty ministry.

c. Finally, the reverend Members of the Holy Synod, following an intense and exhaustive discussion of the whole issue, including the misgivings put forward by His Grace, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi, unanimously elected Bishop Cyprian, hitherto *Locum Tenens* and Presiding President of the Holy Synod, the new Metropolitan of Oropos and Phyle. After being summoned back, he heard the Synod's decision and accepted it in a spirit of obedience, with self-reproach and contrition (cf. the "Minor Edict").

d. Thereafter, it was decided that the service of the Great Edict, as well as the Enthronement of the new Metropolitan, should be held on Saturday, October 6 (Old Style), the anniversary of his Episcopal Consecration (October 6, 2007 [Old Style]), and this indeed took place.

III. WITH REGARD to the second subject on the agenda, that of renewing the membership of the Standing Holy Synod, the following decisions were made:

a. During the Seventh Synodal Period (October 2013–September 2014), the Members of the Standing Holy Synod will be His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle (President) and Their Graces, Bishops Ambrose of Methone and Klemes of Gardikion (Secretary).

b. The possibility of a Hieromonk or Presbyter taking part in the Standing Holy Synod was tabled.

c. The resignation of His Grace, Bishop Chrysostomos of Christianoupolis from membership of the Standing Holy Synod was ultimately accepted.

IV. WITH REGARD to the composition of the Fourth Synodal Exhortation to the Christian Flock of our Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, His Eminence, the President of the Holy Synod, on the basis of prior discussion of the subject in the Standing Holy Synod, proposed that the new Synodal Exhortation should address and analyze the extremely critical and disquieting phenomenon of the persecution of Christians, regardless of Confession, on a worldwide level. He cited the various forms that this persecution takes—at times not open or official, in that secular, temporal, and non-religious states regard religion as an individual affair that precludes various public expressions thereof—and discussed the eschatological dimension of this phenomenon (“signs of the times,” “be vigilant,” etc.), touching also on its so-called “propheto-logical” and “Antichristological” side-effects and the dangers arising therefrom for the Orthodox ethos. The Holy Synod unanimously decided to accept this proposal.

V. WITH REGARD to the subject of the Proceedings of the Standing Holy Synod for the Sixth Period (2012-2013), the Secretary, Bishop Klemes of Gardikion, read aloud a detailed eight-page report, wherein he described in summary form the many-sided and multilevel work of the Standing Holy Synod during the preceding period, which encompassed topics pertaining to the Synod (developments within the Synod, Sister Churches, Dioceses of the Holy Synod in Resistance, Missionary Communities abroad, the official dialogue with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece, ecumenism and anti-ecumenism, and divers other issues), as well as topics pertaining to the Metropolis.

VI. WITH REGARD to the activities of the Diocesan Bishops, in addition to a written report by the Reverend Father Anders Åkerström, pastoral representative of the seriously ailing Bishop Johannes of Makarioupolis in Sweden, the remaining

Most Reverend and Right Reverend Hierarchs delivered oral reports on various matters in their own Dioceses (His Eminence, Bishop Michael of Nora—Cagliari, Sardinia; His Eminence, Bishop Silvano of Luni—Pistoia, the remainder of Italy, Sicily, and the foreign mission in the Togolese Republic, Africa), and also in other Dioceses and mission territories in which they are active (His Grace, Bishop Auxentios of Photike—the U.S.A. and Canada; His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methone—North Ossetia, England, Kenya, Congo, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Malaysia; His Grace, Bishop Klemes of Gardikion—the Czech Republic and Slovakia). Finally, His Eminence, the President of the Holy Synod delivered a general report on internal and external issues pertinent to our varied activities in the administration of the Mysteries, the ministry of preaching, and service to our brethren.

- For almost four hours, there were constructive discussions of all of the issues involving our Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in various regions of Europe, Africa, Asia, America, and Oceania, and solutions were proposed and directions given for the progress of our witness, by the Grace of the Divine Founder of the Church.

VII. THE FINAL SESSION of the Synod meeting was probably the most thought-provoking and crucial, insofar as it pertained to the unity and harmony of the anti-innovationist Orthodox struggling against the calendar innovation and the heresy of ecumenism (1920-). In a spirit of sincere love and respect, as well as profound circumspection and insight, and at times even with boldness, it dealt, on the one hand, with the issue of relations with our brethren in the Old Calendar Church of Romania, and on the other hand, with the course of the dialogue with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece.

a. At the outset, and for nearly three hours, the Synod discussed broadly and in detail the course of the aforementioned dialogue, with reference to two recent presentations: one by us, entitled “Observations on the Formation of the Holy Synod of the Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Greece During the Years 1960 and 1962 and Subsequent Developments and Prospects” (August 2013, 16 pages); and the other by the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece, entitled “Concerning the Proposal for Union in the Document Submitted in the Month of August 2013, on the Part of the Committee of the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Community in Resistance” (October 1, 2013, 4 pages).

- Finally, the Members of the Synod registered what was in principle a positive and optimistic view of the proposals put forward by the other side (the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece), which are nonetheless, of course, in need of further study and scrutiny by the committees for official dialogue, which commenced in December of 2012; and in general, they expressed a desire that the dialogue be contin-

ued, especially given that the ecumenists are constantly deviating from bad to worse, while the New Calendarists are hardening their stance against us yet more.

b. Next, with regard to relations with the Romanians, and again for nearly three hours, this issue was subjected to a detailed analysis, to the end that its complexity, gravity, and delicacy might be understood by all, since it has given rise to major problems within the fold of our Romanian brethren, and also in relations between our Greek and Romanian Churches.

- It was deemed right and necessary that we not take any “negative” steps for now; that we maintain good relations with those Romanians who accept us, that is, the overwhelming majority of their clergy and laity, in prayer, love, patience, and hope, until the very end; that we should cultivate further our dialogue for union with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece as an indirect response to divisive tendencies within the Romanian Church, in the firm belief that our relations with the Romanians will ultimately be judged by the outcome of this dialogue; and finally, that we should not remain mere passive spectators to the distressing developments in Romania, but should actively intervene by way of fraternal and conciliatory proposals, beginning with the “Peaceable Epistle” of our newly elected Metropolitan and First Hierarch Cyprian, written for the sake of averting division within Romania—on the basis, indeed, of the noteworthy “Ecclesiological Position Paper” of our Sister Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria, under His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza, a text which has been translated into Romanian and which is, at the same time, being put to use in the dialogue with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece—as a point of convergence for all of the anti-ecumenists of Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, and of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, in such a way that this complex issue that has arisen might ultimately serve a unitive purpose, unto the glory of the One and Indivisible Trinity.

VIII. GLORY TO GOD for all things! In gratitude and hope, our Holy Synod continues its journey, constantly keeping before it the vision of the impressive legacy of our Metropolitan Cyprian, of blessed memory, and seeking the Divine enlightenment of the Comforter, the guidance of the *Theotokos* and of all the Saints, as well as the prayers of its pious reason-endowed Flock everywhere.

*From the Chancery of the Holy Synod
† Bishop Klemes of Gardikion*

*October 14/27, 2013
Holy Fathers of the Seventh Œcumenical Synod*