

Synodal Announcement

August 11, 1994

1. The Holy Synod in Resistance of the True (Old Calendar) Orthodox Church learned very belatedly of the text of an Encyclical (Number 102, February 14, 1994) from the "Holy Provincial Synod of the Church of Crete."

In this Encyclical, the Holy Synod advises the "pious Faithful of the Most Holy Church of Crete" to be attentively on guard against the unlawful missionary activity of various schismatic, heretical, para-Christian and un-Christian movements, among which the first place is occupied—according to the Encyclical—by "the various factions of Old Calendarists, who are zealous 'not according to knowledge.'"

2. As a result of this, the Holy Synod in Resistance considers herself obligated to state the following points in brief:

(a) Panheretical Papism is not included in the list of the various enemies of our immaculate Faith, as enumerated in the Encyclical.

This does not surprise the Old Calendarist Orthodox, because already since 1971, with the visit of Cardinal Jan Willebrands to Crete (May 20-23), the semi-autonomous Church of Crete has been, in essence, united with Papism.

We are not exaggerating, for: the Papist Cardinal was received with honors and accolades suitable only for an Orthodox Hierarchy. The Cardinal blessed the packed congregation in the Church of St. Menas; Willebrands, in vestments, took part in the Vespers celebrated in the Church of St. Titus (May 20); the Cardinal blessed the people jointly with the Archbishop; Willebrands blessed the table at an official dinner in his honor; the Cardinal visited the dioceses of the island, where he was given an enthusiastic welcome by the Metropolitan, the clergy, the monastics and the laity, with peals of bells and the chanting of "Εἰς πολλὰ ἔτη, Δέσποτα" ("Many years, Master"); Willebrands was present, again praying jointly from the *Parathonion*, on Sunday (May 23) at the Divine Liturgy celebrated by the Archbishop of Crete in the Church of St. Menas in Heracleion, where addresses of ecumenist content were delivered and gifts were exchanged "to the applause of the Christian people," as the choirs chanted the *polychronion* of Patriarch Athenagoras I and Pope Paul VI, and "after the Divine Liturgy the Archbishop and the Cardinal blessed the clergy and the people to the manifest emotion of all"! (see a full chronicle of these events in P. Gregoriou, *Journey to Unity*, Vol. 2 [Athens, 1978], pp. 252-273).

(b) Likewise, Lutheranism is not listed in the Encyclical among the heresies against which the faithful people should guard.

This, however, is also no surprise to the Old Calendarist Orthodox, since the Cretan Metropolitan Irenaios of Kydonia took part in the visit of Patriarch Bartholomew to Sweden last year, in order to participate in the celebrations of the four-hundredth anniversary of the Synod of Uppsala (1593), which decided that Lutheranism would be the official Christian doctrine of Sweden.

The great fall of Patriarch Bartholomew and his entourage in Sweden has been correctly and justly called "The Ecumenical Spectacle of Uppsala, August 20-21, 1993" and shows that Orthodox ecumenists have united officially with the Lutherans (see *Hagios Kyprianos*, Nos. 255-257, July-December 1993, pp. 172-175).

(c) Ecumenism, Christian and non-Christian, is not mentioned as a clear heresy in the Encyclical from Crete.

It is natural that the Old Calendarist Orthodox should not be surprised about this “omission” either, since Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, under whose jurisdiction the Church of Crete falls, is a leader and pioneer in the panheresy of Ecumenism.

However, the Hierarchs of Crete should not forget that it is futile for them to denounce the various “New Age” movements (as they did in their Encyclical), while at the same time they participate in the so-called Ecumenical Movement, within which confessional syncretism and relativism are rampant. Moreover, the “unionist” vision of this movement—a movement which ultimately identifies with the pan-religious vision of the “New Age”—is expanded through the decisive contribution of Orthodox ecumenists by their clear affirmation of the venerable spiritual experiences and traditions of other religions.

(d) Finally, though not to dwell too much on the relevant “omissions” of the Encyclical, not even the panheretical association of the World Council of Churches is listed among the varied enemies “in sheep’s clothing.”

Obviously this is because of the fact that the “Orthodox Academy of Crete” frequently hosts conferences of the WCC and “supports” the programs of this anti-Orthodox organization in Geneva, as was the case this year (June 4-10, 1994: Conference of the “Joint Working Group” of the WCC and the Papists, at which Metropolitan Irenaios of Kydonia and Apokoronos represented the Patriarchate of Constantinople; see *Enimerosis*, I-1994/6, p. 2).

And this at the very moment that the WCC, this statutory organ of the Ecumenical Movement, has been officially accused, with supporting documentation, of cultivating dogmatic syncretism and having a clear pan-religious orientation, as was demonstrated beyond doubt at its seventh General Assembly (Canberra, Australia, February 1991).

3. The four characteristic voluntary “omissions” of the Encyclical cited above show all too clearly that the Orthodox Christians in Greece who follow the traditional Church Calendar are not schismatics, but are engaged in resistance, walled off from Latinizing shepherds who are sympathetic to heretics.

These Latinizing shepherds are not genuine successors of the Holy Apostles, but “false teachers” and “false shepherds” (Canon 15 of the First-Second Holy Synod), and the Faithful—as the Holy Fathers stipulate—should not have communion with a Bishop who “is manifestly at fault either in point of piety or in point of righteousness—that is to say, ... who is either heretical or unjust” (Canon XXXI of the Holy Apostles, Interpretation of St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite).

Orthodox Tradition on the matter in question is very clear: “As for those who pretend to confess the correct faith, but commune with heretics, if they do not refrain from so doing after being instructed, you should not only hold no communion with them, but you should not even call them brethren” (St. Basil the Great, *PG*, Vol. CLX, Col. 101C).

4. We shall gladly await a more recent Encyclical from the “Holy Provincial Synod of the Church of Crete,” in which the heretical character of Papism, Lutheranism, Ecumenism, and the World Council of Churches is bluntly proclaimed, in which case it will be demonstrated that the Church of Crete is in fact struggling in a God-pleasing way, as She professes, by guarding the Apostolic Faith “with every sacrifice from attempts to alter and adulterate it.”

† Archimandrite Cyprian
Secretary of the Holy Synod