

Ecumenism: The Heresy of Our Times

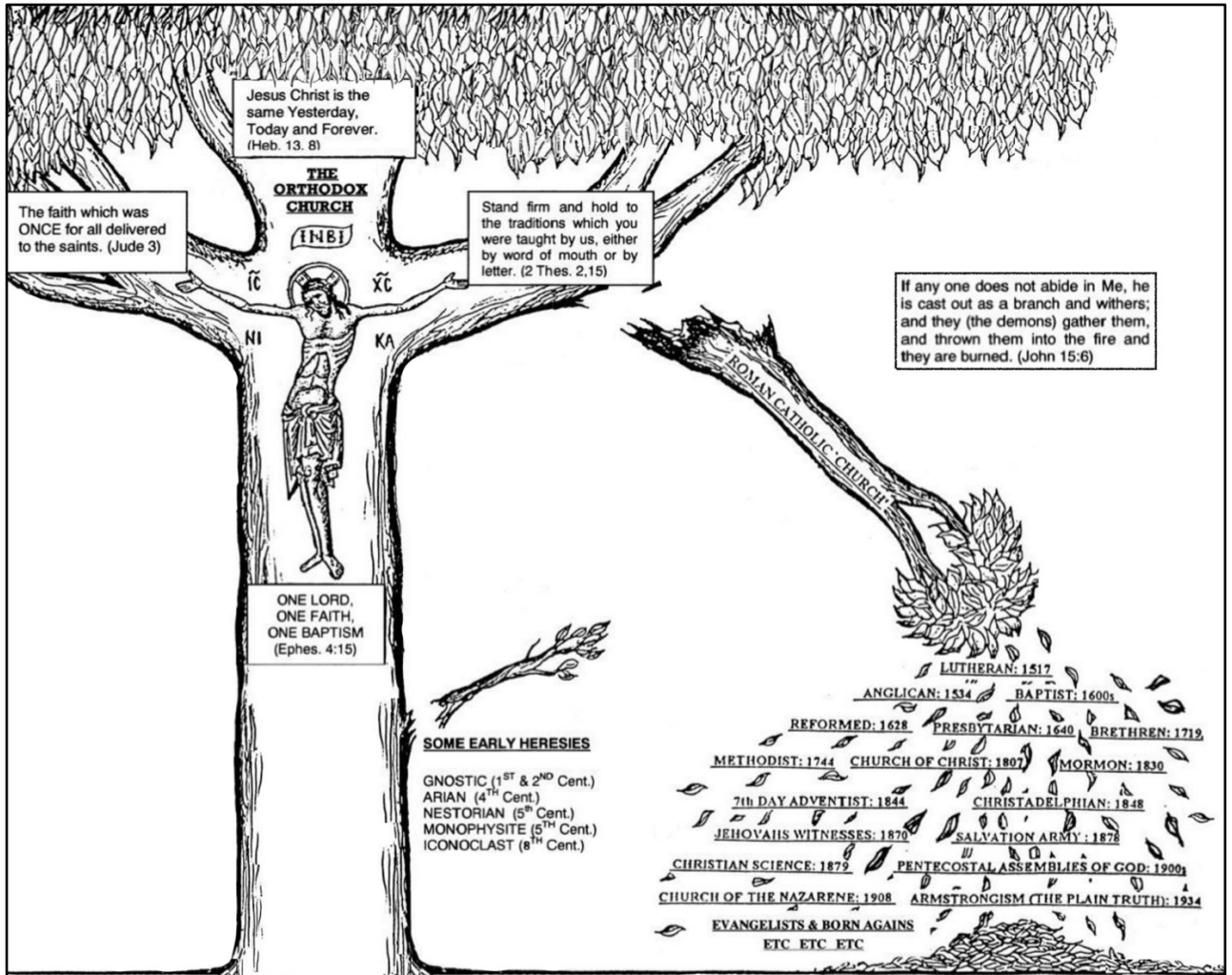


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1- Definition and Nature of Ecumenism

Ecumenism is a modern heresy that teaches that all Christian denominations make up the Church. According to ecumenism, churches with different dogmas are all part of the One Body of Christ, provided they agree on certain basic doctrines. In practice, ecumenism entails a focus on the externals of Church life (e.g. rituals and social mission) at the expense of absolute truth. For ecumenists, quarrelling over doctrines is dismissed as “hair-splitting” and “lacking in Christian love.” Modern ecumenism is often joined to moral laxity (“We’re all good people deep down,” “Everyone is going to Heaven”), theological liberalism, and even the belief that all religions worship the same God and that salvation is possible outside the Church. It will come as no surprise that all of these tenets directly contradict the Christian Gospel.

First of all, true Christians believe that there is no such thing as unessential or secondary doctrines. All of the Church’s doctrines, practices, and traditions are divinely inspired and essential for salvation. What one believes directly defines who one is and how one acts. To reject any part of the theological edifice destabilizes the whole. For this reason, unity in the Church is not a forced gathering of discordant and confused parts, but a natural unity based on faith and love:

“Till we all come in the **unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (i)

Christ promised His Apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them into “all truth,” (ii) that “the gates of Hell would not prevail against His Church,” (ii) and that He would be with them “always even unto to the end of the age.” (iv) Scripture calls the Church the “pillar and ground of truth, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, holy and without blemish.” (v) It is therefore inconceivable that the Church of Christ could teach falsehood or even half-truths. If a so-called church is found to preach falsehood, then we can be sure it is not the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church founded by Christ. Dogmatic minimalists who claim that “all you need is love” forget that belief in the truth is the precondition for salvation:

“Without faith it is **impossible to please God.**” (vi)

“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and **belief of the truth.**” (vii)

“God desires that all men be saved, and to come unto the **knowledge of the truth.**” (viii)

Secondly, the claim that all religions worship the same God and that one can be saved outside the Church is a preposterous blasphemy that destroys the whole purpose of the Christian religion. For Christ said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life, but whoever denies the Son has not the Father." (ix) And as Saint Paul teaches, "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism." (x)

If ecumenism were true, then there is no reason for Christ to have come on Earth. There is no reason for Him to have died on the Cross. There is no reason for the Apostles to have toiled and struggled unto death to evangelize the world, for the millions of martyrs of the Roman Empire to have given up their lives denying the pagan gods, or, more recently, for the millions of Christian martyrs in Greece and Russia to have died standing up to the bloody Islamic and atheist states that wanted them to renounce their faith. Do the Jews who rejected the Son of God and crucified Him worship the same God as we? Do the Muslims who reduce Christ to a mere man and deny the Holy Trinity worship the same God? Or the pagan Hindus who sacrifice to idols and believe that all of Creation is God, do they worship the God of Abraham? Only shallow modern man rendered blind by the many material comforts surrounding him could ever believe such a falsehood.

2- The Protestant Origins of Ecumenism



Ecumenism is a peculiarly Protestant heresy that appeared in the century following the Protestant Reformation. The earliest traces of it are to be found in England. This is not surprising given that the Anglican Church is essentially the product of a political compromise between traditional Catholic ritual and Calvinist theology. Its deliberate theological vagueness and syncretistic spirit thus provided fertile ground for ecumenism. One of the first openly ecumenist statements we find were made in 1612 by King James I in a letter to the French cardinal Jacques Du Perron:

“Wherefore his Majesty thinketh that there is no more compendious way to the making of peace, then that things necessary should be diligently separated from things not necessary: **that all endeavours might be spent about the agreement in the necessary, and as touching the not necessary, that a Christian liberty might be granted**...For the communion of the faithful consisteth much in the public exercises of piety: and this is the chief bond of union so much desired by good men. **Wherefore if Christians could but agree about this, why might not all Europe communicate together?** only, granting a liberty to school-Divines with moderation to debate other opinions.” (xi)

In 1617, Marco de Dominis, a Catholic bishop from Dalmatia who had apostatized and embraced the Anglican creed, published a book called *On the Church Commonwealth*. In it, de Dominis reiterated the Jacobian principle that there should be “unity in necessary things, freedom in unnecessary things, and love in all things” (unitatem in necessariis, in non necessariis libertatem, in omnibus caritatem), a phrase that immediately became famous and gained wide-spread circulation. (xii)

On the continent, ecumenism was preached by the Lutheran theologian Georg Callixt (d. 1656) in an attempt to reconcile the Lutheran and Calvinist churches. Callixt eventually extended his project beyond just the Protestant churches, seeking to unite all Protestants and Catholics under the banner of the Apostles’ Creed. He believed that all three groups (Lutherans, Calvinists, and Catholics) already agree on the fundamentals expressed in this Creed, and differ only on “secondary” issues such as transubstantiation. Callixt wrote that because the churches disagreed on these secondary issues, full external unity was not yet possible, but that there still existed among them a “virtual and internal communion consisting in mutual goodwill, affection, and the desire and eagerness to remove the obstacles that prevent actual, external, and perfect communion.” (xiii)

In 1686, the French Calvinist Pierre Jurieu published a book entitled *The True System of the Church* in response to the Catholic theologian Pierre Nicole, who had accused the Calvinists of being schismatics. In his book, Jurieu claimed that sectarians, schismatics, and heretics are all part of the One Body of Christ:

“We maintain that the Church called catholic and universal is present in all sects, and that she has true members in all those communities that have not overturned the foundation of the Christian religion, regardless if they be separated from one another, even to the point of mutual excommunication. Mr. Nicole on the contrary wants the Church to be enclosed within one community separated from all others...Yet this is the opinion which I call the cruelest and most absurd which has ever been put forward.” (xiv)

Meanwhile, in Germany, a Lutheran theologian called Philipp Spener founded a new religious movement known as Pietism. Pietism wanted to shift the focus away from dogmatic formulations to individual piety and subjective religious experience. Like King James and the other ecumenists, Spener believed that there were primary and secondary doctrines in theology, and that Christians should shy away from theological controversies. He also taught that no creed or church could be infallible, as only the

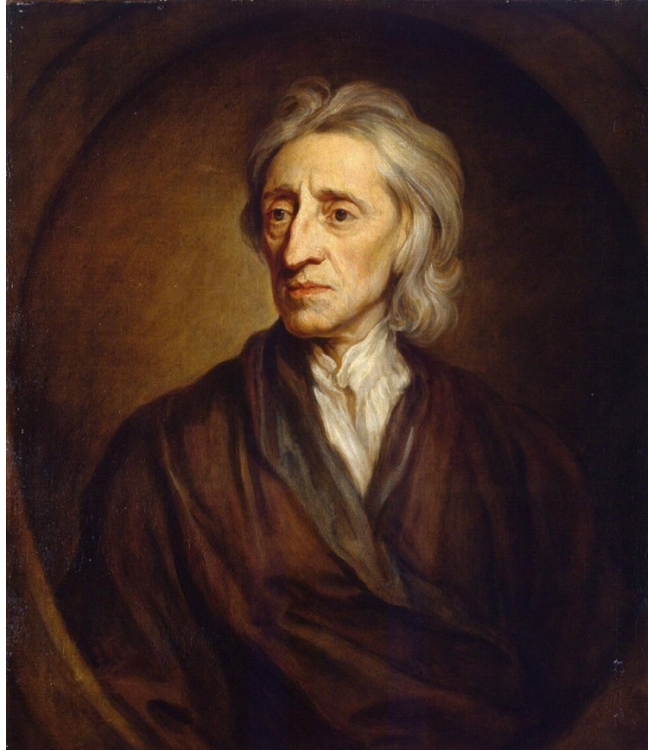
Bible had that privilege. (xv) Pietism proved immensely popular in Germany and Scandinavia, and later inspired an offshoot in Britain and America called Methodism. In the long run, Pietism further eroded the belief in absolute Christian doctrine.

By the 18th century in England, the distinction between necessary and unnecessary doctrines had given way to Latitudinarianism. Latitudinarianism was the belief that the creed one subscribed to and the ritual one followed were actually irrelevant for salvation, and that the Gospel was enough. Latitudinarians, also called Broad Churchmen, exerted considerable influence on the Church of England at this time, so much so that Latitudinarianism has been called its “prevailing characteristic.” (xvi) An example of this view can be seen in the following quote by Bishop Benjamin Hoadly in 1717:

“The Nature of God’s Worship was once declared by Him. And it is easy to judge, whether of the Two is most becoming a Subject of the Kingdom of Christ, that is, a Member of his Church; to seek all these particulars in those plain and short Declarations of their King and Lawgiver himself: or to hunt after Them through **the infinite contradictions, the numberless perplexities, the endless disputes, of Weak Men, in several Ages**, till the Enquirer himself is lost in the Labyrinth, and perhaps sits down in Despair, or Infidelity. If Christ be our King; let us shew ourselves Subjects to Him alone, in the great affair of Conscience and Eternal Salvation: and, without fear of Man’s judgment, live and act as becomes Those who wait for the appearance of an All-knowing and Impartial Judge; even that King, whose Kingdom is not of this World.” (xvii)

In other words, truth is not to be found in the “numberless perplexities” and “endless disputes” of theologians, but in the “plain and short declarations” of the Gospel. However, because Latitudinarianism offered no fixed principles to decide which doctrines were in fact “Biblical” and which were not, it opened the door to scepticism and rationalism. A proponent of the first view was the liberal philosopher John Locke. Locke’s position was that no one is able to determine which creeds are correct here on Earth; only God will decide that in the future age. Therefore, in the meantime, all Christian groups should simply tolerate one another:

“I esteem that toleration to be the chief characteristic mark of the true Church. For whatsoever some people boast of the antiquity of places and names, or of the pomp of their outward worship; others, of the reformation of their discipline; all, of the orthodoxy of their faith—**for everyone is orthodox to himself**—these things, and all others of this nature, are much rather marks of men striving for power and empire over one another than of the Church of Christ...It will be answered, undoubtedly, that it is the orthodox church which has the right of authority over the erroneous or heretical. This is, in great and specious words, to say just nothing at all. **For every church is orthodox to itself**...So that the controversy between these churches about the truth of their doctrines and the purity of their worship is on both sides equal; nor is there any judge...by whose sentence it can be determined. **The decision of that question belongs only to the Supreme judge of all men, to whom also belongs the punishment of the erroneous.**” (xviii)



The English philosopher John Locke

Other individuals went further than Locke and began questioning fundamental Christian dogmas such as the Holy Trinity, original sin, and the atonement of Christ on the Cross. They believed that these dogmas were unbiblical corruptions brought into the Church in later centuries, and they proposed that reason and not tradition should be the sole criterion for deciding truth. These issues came to a head in England in the 1690s during the so-called Trinitarian controversy when the clergyman Stephen Nye began writing tracts denying the Holy Trinity. (xix) Other rationalists like Matthew Tindal and John Toland taught that Christianity properly understood is really identical to the universal “natural religion” that all men possess and can apprehend through reason alone. Things like doctrines, worship, and rituals were superstitious concoctions of which God had no need. A quote from Tindal’s 1730 book, *Christianity as Old as Creation*, provides some insight into how far indeed Protestantism had fallen away from Orthodoxy:

“Ecclesiastic history is full of miracles done by such madmen as Simeon Stylites, who had no other dwelling than a pillar, on which he spent the best part of his life; and it was owing to these superstitious notions, that such numbers of Monasteries and Nunneries were soon founded to the great oppression and depopulation of the Christian world; not but that the impudent forgeries of Athanasius, and other such like Saints about miracles done by Monks, helped to increase this superstition; whilst the Prelates, though they encouraged those severities on others, were far from practicing any on themselves.” (xx)

From this irreverent rationalism it is no great leap to abandon Christianity altogether, which is in fact what happened in many intellectual circles in Europe in the 18th century, especially in the Protestant countries. The new religion of Europe became

Deism, which held that God created the world but no longer intervened in it. Deism was the religion of Voltaire and the French Revolution, and significantly influenced Freemasonry (the first Grand Lodge was founded in 1717 in London). By denying Divine Providence, Deism paved the way for the materialism and atheism of the 19th century which in turn bore fruit in the destructive wars and revolutions of the 20th. Thus, we can see how the abandonment of absolute truth in the 17th century and the desire for doctrinal compromise led—step by step over the course of barely three centuries—to the complete rejection of Christianity and the destruction of Europe. For this reason, the modern-day Ecumenists who allege that all churches and religions must unite in a “common front” to oppose materialism and secularism are either dishonest or deluding themselves.

How did ecumenism arise? Looking at the multitude of diverse heresies that have flooded Christendom in recent centuries, the answer is actually quite simple: ecumenism appeared because the Western Church lost the true doctrine of what the Church is. Let us examine this doctrine presently.

3- The Orthodox Doctrine of the Church



Belief in the Church makes up the ninth article of our Creed: “I believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.” What does this mean?

The unity and holiness of the Church is founded on the Eucharist: by eating the flesh and blood of Christ, we literally assimilate His Body to our own; we thus become part of the same body and—through His deified flesh—participants in the divinity, grace, and eternal life of God. All Christians who are living and have ever lived are part of this One Body, which is why we have such a close relationship with the Saints in Heaven. They are not simply historical figures of bygone ages, but living people with whom we have a continuing communion. This is the true meaning of the word “catholic:” that which embraces all. The Church is not a simple association of people like a social club

or a guild, but a miraculous organism uniting all the faithful on Earth and all the saints in Heaven under the eternal headship of Christ. This is why it is the object of faith.

Because we all constitute one body with the Apostles, the Martyrs, and the Saints, we naturally share the same belief in the truth and the same hope in the Gospel which they possessed. Saint Paul who preached in the 1st century was animated by the same Holy Spirit that inspired Saint John Chrysostom in the 4th, Saint John Damascene in the 8th and Saint Gregory Palamas in the 14th, the very same Holy Spirit which continues to breathe life and enlighten us today. Therefore, if one preaches something that contradicts Scripture or the Holy Fathers, it is a sign that he is not of the Church, for he does not possess its Spirit. He is a foreigner and intruder to the household.

Everything in the Church testifies of this one Spirit: the Old Testament, the Psalms, the New Testament, the writings of the Holy Fathers, the lives of the saints, the hymnography of the services, the iconography, the prayers, the rituals: everything with one harmonious voice declares the same truth in different ways. The whole is present in each part. That is why to do away with even the smallest part of the Church's tradition would be to strike at its very essence. Those who find contradictions between "Old" and "New", "Scripture" and "Tradition," or between one Holy Father and another prove only that they do not have the mind of the Church. They are not of the Church, which is why they cannot understand her language.

From the preceding feature (unity in the truth) comes the final characteristic of the Church: its apostolicity. The doctrine of the Church does not change from age to age. It is the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (xxi) The Church is not something we "think up;" it is not a theory or a philosophical system one constructs, but a historical reality, a precious heirloom entrusted to us by God and handed down reverently from the time of the Apostles. We are not masters but humble trustees of this "pearl of great price." (xxii) Consequently, no one has the right to either add or remove anything from the apostolic deposit. We may only seek to clarify it when it is attacked, and to nurture it and allow it to bear fruit.

To prove that we are part of Christ's Church requires us to be able to prove that what we received comes directly unchanged from the Apostles. If a man were to come up to you and say he was your brother, you would naturally ask to see evidence of his kinship to you. Similarly, if one says that he is a Christian, he must be able to provide his spiritual genealogy. We must ask: from whence did he receive the faith? The spiritual genealogy of the Church is called apostolic succession. Apostolic succession forms an unbroken chain that connects the faithful of today with the Church founded by Christ on Pentecost.

The chain functions like this: the faithful participate in the Holy Mysteries; these Mysteries must be performed by a canonical priest to be valid; this canonical priest must have been ordained by a right-believing Bishop who was himself consecrated by other right-believing Bishops in an unbroken succession stretching back to the Apostles, who were given the "keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" (xxiii) and made "ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." (xxiv) In the words of the 1672 Council of Jerusalem, the Bishop is "a successor of the Apostles...a living image of God upon the earth, and...a fountain of all the Mysteries of the Catholic Church,

through which we obtain salvation.” (xxv) During every Divine Liturgy, the priest commemorates the name of his Bishop and the Bishop commemorates the names of his fellow Bishops. In this way, they indicate that they share the same faith and are all One Body.



Apostolic succession does not only mean the historical sequence of ordinations, but chiefly the substance of what is passed on from generation to generation. At any point in the chain, a layman, priest or bishop could have mingled human doctrines and innovations into the deposit he was entrusted with. When such things occurred, the Body of the Church gathered together in a council to reaffirm the truth. If possible, it tried to heal the schism; if this was not possible and the rebel or innovator remained unrepentant, it would cut him off from the Body as an unworthy member to prevent the infection from spreading further. This conciliar system is also a reflection of the catholicity and unity of the Church described above: since all are members of the One Body, all are trustees of the apostolic deposit. An attack against the Church and its truth is an attack against all its members.

Over the centuries, many such councils were held. The most important of these were called in antiquity to defend the Church against blasphemies against the nature of Christ and the Holy Spirit (for an overview of these councils, see the section [Ecumenical Councils](#) on this website). These councils were called “ecumenical” because they assembled Christians from the entire world, not just a particular region (*ecumene* means “world” in Greek). The councils did not “create” doctrines; they

simply testified to what was already believed and what the Fathers had received from the Apostles. In addition to clarifying the faith, these holy bishops promulgated canons, i.e. practical rules for the proper governance of the Church. Again, these canons were not simply invented, but were codifications of already-existing practices and customs that had been received from the Apostles and the Holy Fathers. The dogmatic decrees and canons of the Ecumenical Councils constitute eternal memorials to the faith and practice of Christ's Church.

In summary: to be a Christian, one must be baptized into a church that has apostolic succession, respects the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils, and is in communion with other right-believing churches.

4- The Western Doctrine of the Church

a. The Papacy



Beginning in the 13th century, the doctrine of God's Church was progressively obscured in the West. Instead of being the mystical unity of the faithful in the Body of Christ, the Church was defined in purely external terms: to be in the Church one needed to be subject to the authority of the Bishop of Rome. The first official dogmatic statement to this effect came at the Fourth Lateran Council (1213-15) which claimed that the Roman church "through the Lord's disposition has a primacy of ordinary power over all other churches inasmuch as it is the mother and mistress of all Christ's faithful." (xxvi) In 1302, Pope Boniface VIII issued his famous bull *Unam Sanctam* which stated: "We declare, we proclaim, we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff." (xxvii) In 1327, Pope John XXII declared that anyone who rejected the divine primacy of the Pope was a heretic:

"That blessed Peter the Apostle had no more authority than the other Apostles had nor was he the head of the other Apostles. Likewise that God

did not send forth any head of the Church, nor did He make anyone His vicar...We declare by sentence the above mentioned articles...to be contrary to Sacred Scripture and enemies of the Catholic faith, heretics, or heretical and erroneous.” (xxviii)

During the same period, certain canonists and writers began advancing the idea that the Pope was infallible. This was only a natural development of the idea of papal primacy: after all, if the Church rests on the Pope and the Church is without error, then the Pope—by virtue of his office—must be without error also. Thus, it was no longer Apostolic Tradition, the Ecumenical Councils, or the Church Fathers who were the touchstone of truth, but the person of the Pope. According to Augustinus Triumphus of Ancona (d. 1328), a disciple of Thomas Aquinas, “the judgement of the Pope and the judgement of God is one and the same,” while according to the canonist Alvarus Pelagius (d. 1352), “the Pope is not simply a man but is like a god on Earth.” (xxix)

Not surprisingly, the Roman innovations were not met without resistance. The influential canonists Huguccio (d. 1210) and Joannes Teutonicus (d. 1245) adhered to the traditional view that the Pope was subject to error and could be a heretic. (xxx) The 14th and 15th centuries also saw the emergence of the conciliarist movement. Conciliarist writers and theologians like John Quidort of Paris (d. 1306), William Durandus the Younger (d. 1328), Jean Gerson (d. 1429), Pierre D’Ailly (d. 1420), Francesco Zabarella (d. 1417), and Nicolas of Cusa (d. 1464) taught that only the Church was infallible; while they conceded that the papal office was of divine origin and needed to be respected, they believed that it was an office of oversight and stewardship and that a Pope could be deposed by a council of bishops if he erred. Other writers like Marsilius of Padua (d. 1342) and William of Ockham (d. 1347) went even further and denied that the papal office was divinely instituted or that the Pope was the head of the Church. Both of these writers proposed conciliarist systems of their own.

From an Orthodox perspective, all of these approaches are flawed as they failed to restore the ancient criterion of truth: faithfulness to the apostolic tradition and the Ecumenical Councils. Subordinating the power of the Pope to a council of bishops simply relocates the problem: instead of one infallible bishop, it creates an infallible college of bishops. But according to Orthodoxy, truth is not a matter of numbers or consent. In fact, there have been many false councils in history that have taught heresy, just as there have been individual saints who preserved Orthodoxy when many churches had fallen into error, as in the case of Saint Maximus the Confessor. Faithfulness to the apostolic deposit is what defines the Church. Conciliarism is subordinate to apostolicity, not the other way around.

If such an approach had been followed by the Western church, the question of the papacy could have easily been resolved:

- Canon 6 of the First Ecumenical Council states that each church retains jurisdiction over its respective provinces (i.e. Rome’s jurisdiction is limited).
- Canon 8 of the Third Ecumenical Council states that it is forbidden for a bishop to assume control of a province that has not been under his authority or the

authority of his predecessors from the very beginning (i.e. Rome's universal pretensions are unlawful).

- Canon 28 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council states that the Pope was granted prerogatives by the Church because he presides over the capital of the Roman Empire (i.e. the papacy is not divinely ordained).
- Canon 28 of the Council of Carthage, which was ratified by the Fathers of the Quinisext Council, states that it is forbidden for clergy or bishops to bring canonical appeals to jurisdictions other than their own (i.e. it is unlawful for the Pope to interfere in other jurisdictions).
- Apostolic Canon 34 states that a metropolitan cannot act without the consent of the other bishops in his province (i.e. all bishops including the Pope are equal).

How many conflicts and scandals could have been avoided had these canons been respected!

b. Penance and Indulgences



Parallel to the transformation in the doctrine of the Church came a transformation in the doctrine of penance. In the early Church, acts of penance were viewed as medicinal measures applied to uproot the passions from the soul. They were not seen as goals in themselves, but as a means for achieving God's grace. As Patriarch Jeremias of Constantinople explains:

“The confessor should not be angry with the spiritually sick but should combat the sickness and oppose the lusts, curing the disease of the soul

by more effective methods as necessary. As, for instance, in the case of arrogance, by greater efforts to attain humility. In immoderate sleep, through keeping vigil in prayers. In laziness of the body, through toil. In unwarranted eating, through abstinence, etc. And let him who is being healed not regard the penances as tyranny because out of compassion consideration is brought to bear for the salvation of the soul.” (xxxii)

By the 13th century, this doctrine had become distorted in the West. Penance came to be viewed as consisting in three parts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction. (xxxii) External acts like fasting, almsgiving, and vigils—which formerly had an instrumental value—were reinterpreted as payments to satisfy one’s moral debt to God. Saints who performed more good works than evil possessed an “abundance of merits” which went into the treasury of the Church, whereas the souls of repentant sinners who died before they could offer proper satisfaction to God went to Purgatory where they suffered their penalty until they repaid their debt. (xxxiii) The Church could use its good works and the merits of its treasury to settle the debt of those in Purgatory and allow them to enter Heaven. It could also use its abundance of merits to remit the penalty of those still on Earth. (xxxiv) Such a remission of sins was known as an “indulgence.” This is the official belief of the Roman Catholic church to this day. (xxxv)

The legalistic system of “satisfaction” and “indulgences” proved to be very destructive. Firstly, it created the false impression among believers that one could be justified by simply performing external acts without any true repentance. Secondly, it was an affront to the sovereignty of God as it usurped His right to remit sins: all one had to do was “pay” God in good works, and He would forgive you. This contradicted the words of Saint Paul: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” (xxxvi)

We can see a similar logic at work in both the doctrine of the Papacy and in that of satisfaction: just as the Church began to be defined in an increasingly external manner (submission to the Pope) at the expense of faithfulness to the truth, so repentance was increasingly identified with external actions (acts of satisfaction) at the expense of the interior state of the soul. In the Orthodox Church, while believers certainly pray for the deceased and make offerings on their behalf such as alms, fasts, and vigils, these offerings are never viewed as some sort of “payment” but simply as means to entreat God and call upon His mercy. God alone decides whose sins He remits because He alone offered His blood as propitiation for all of humanity. The Church Fathers explain this quite clearly:

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem: “Let me use an illustration for an argument. For I know that many of you say: ‘What does it avail a soul departing this world, whether with or without sins, to be remembered at the Sacrifice?’ Well, suppose a king banished persons who had offended him, and then their relatives wove a garland and presented it to him on behalf of those undergoing punishment, **would he not mitigate their sentence?** In the same way, offering our supplications to him for those who have fallen asleep, even though they be sinners, we, though we weave no garland, **offer Christ slain for our sins, propitiating the merciful God on both their behalf and our own.**” (xxxvii)

Saint John Chrysostom: “But grant that he departed with sin upon him, even on this account one ought to rejoice, that he was stopped short in his sins and added not to his iniquity; and help him as far as possible, not by tears, but by prayers and supplications and alms and offerings.... For if the children of Job were purged by the sacrifice of their father, why do you doubt that when we too offer for the departed, some consolation arises to them? **Since God is wont to grant the petitions of those who ask for others.** And this Paul signified saying, “that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.” (2 Corinthians 1:11) Let us not then be weary in giving aid to the departed, both by offering on their behalf and obtaining prayers for them: **for the common Expiation of the world is even before us.**” (xxxviii)

Saint Mark of Ephesus: “But if souls have departed this life in faith and love, while nevertheless carrying away with themselves certain faults, whether small ones over which they have not repented at all, or great ones for which—even though they have repented over them—they did not undertake to show **fruits of repentance**...all such ones, we affirm, are helped by the prayers and Liturgies performed for them, **with the cooperation of the divine goodness and love for mankind.** This divine cooperation immediately disdains and remits some sins, those committed out of human weakness...while other sins, after a certain time, by righteous judgments it either likewise releases and forgives—and that completely—or lightens the responsibility for them until that final Judgment...The saints, being moved by love for mankind and compassion for their fellow countrymen, **desiring and daring what is almost impossible, pray for the deliverance of those departed in faith.**” (xxxix)

c. Scholasticism



A third innovation in the West that further undermined the traditional doctrine of the Church was the development of Scholasticism. Scholasticism was a method of

theological enquiry that developed in the 12th century and reached its apogee in the 13th. Stated simply, the scholastic program was to recast all the dogmas of the faith in the form of logical syllogisms, that is, to prove Christianity using human reason. While the early Church Fathers had used syllogisms in a negative fashion to show the inconsistency and absurdity of heretical positions, the Scholastics used them as a positive method for the discovery of truth. Consequently, revealed doctrines that surpassed human reason like the Holy Trinity, grace, and the sacraments—which were formerly accepted on the authority of Holy Tradition—were reformulated in the language of Aristotelian logic.

This rationalism led to the creation of radical new dogmas. The first major innovation came in the mid-12th century when the teacher Peter Lombard claimed that God is identical to His divine essence. (xi) This doctrine, which traced its origins to the Aristotelian philosopher Boethius in the 6th century, was formally adopted as dogma in Canon II of the Fourth Lateran Council and was later expounded by Thomas Aquinas. (xli) According to the new teaching, the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not actually distinct, as all the Holy Fathers and Ecumenical Councils had previously affirmed; they exist only as relations (*relationes*) within the divine essence. (xlii) In this way, the Scholastics replaced the personal God of Christianity with the impersonal God of the pagan philosophers. For as Saint Gregory Palamas explains:

“When God was conversing with Moses, He did not say, ‘I am the essence,’ but ‘I am the One Who is.’ Thus it is not the One Who is who derives from the essence, but essence which derives from Him, for it is He who contains all being in Himself.” (xliii)

A second new dogma that emerged at this time which has been referred to as a “Copernican revolution” in the realm of theology was the idea of “created grace.” (xliv) The Church traditionally taught that God’s grace makes us “partakers of the divine nature,” “joint-heirs with Christ,” “gods and children of the most High.” (xlv) But in the 13th century, the scholastic philosopher Alexander of Hales, following the Aristotelian distinction of “substance” and “accidents,” was the first to propose that grace was a created form in the soul, different from the uncreated grace which God possessed. (xlvi) This doctrine was a logical deduction of the doctrine of absolute divine simplicity proposed by Peter Lombard: after all, if everything in God is identical to His essence, then for someone to be deified by God’s grace would mean that he actually becomes a part of God’s essence, which is absurd; consequently, grace cannot be uncreated but must be a created gift. This is all very logical, but it rejects the essential mystery at the heart of Christianity: that God truly became man and imparted eternal life and glory to His creation. Therefore, to deny uncreated grace is to deny man’s salvation.

A third novel doctrine introduced by the Scholastics was the knowability of the divine essence. This teaching was articulated most fully by Thomas Aquinas, and was another corollary of the doctrine of absolute divine simplicity. Aquinas believed that God had created the world from ideas pre-existing in His mind; (xlvii) since God’s mind, according to Aquinas, is identical to His divine essence, (xlviii) it followed logically that creation is patterned after God’s essence and that His essence can be apprehended—however faintly—by studying creation. (xlix) The knowability of the divine essence is another unchristian doctrine reminiscent of paganism because it blurs the distinction between the creation and the Creator “who dwells in unapproachable light which no

man has seen or can see.” (I) That Aquinas’ position represents a distinct departure from the traditional belief of the Church is evident when one compares it to what was written on the same subject only a century before him by the respected church writer Hugh of Saint Victor:

“If you think of earth, if you think of heaven, if you think of all that is in heaven and on earth, none of these is God. Finally, if you think of the spirit, if you think of soul, this is not God. ‘I know,’ you say, ‘that this is not God, yet this is like God, and God can be demonstrated by His likeness.’ See what similar thing you would show, if you should wish to demonstrate the spirit and the body, of what nature this likeness would be, and yet farther apart are God and spirit than spirit and body. **For all things that are created are less distant from each other than He who made is from that which He made. What God is cannot be thought, even if it can be believed that He is, nor can it be comprehended of what nature He is.** ‘What,’ said the Apostle, ‘eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man,’ (1 Corinthians 2:9); this is what we wish to say, if however, we can say what we cannot think. ‘What eye hath not seen nor ear heard,’ because it is not perceived by sense. ‘Neither hath it entered into the heart of man,’ since it is not comprehended by thought.” (li)

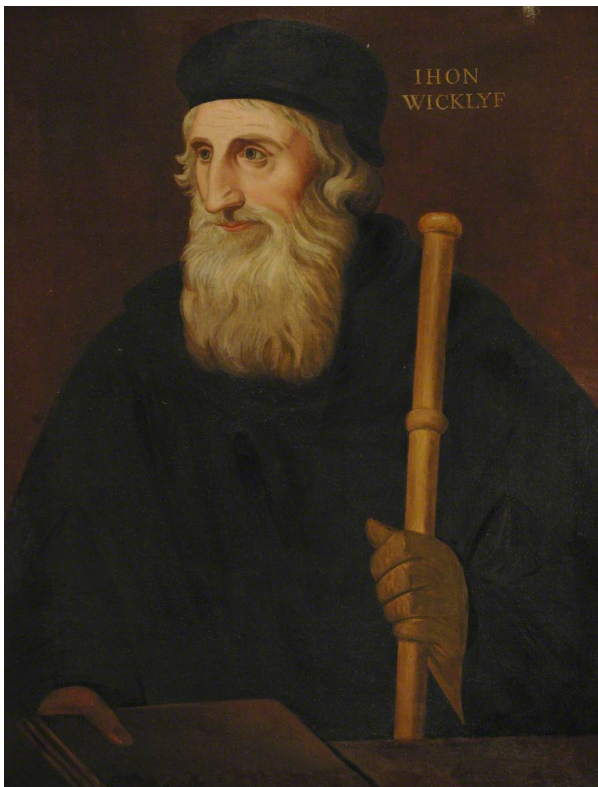
Scholasticism was not only characterized by its novel method and doctrines but also by its proud and inquisitive spirit. When discussing the faith, the ancient Church Fathers did not speculate on religious questions but spoke only of those subjects that had been directly revealed to them by God. Accordingly, the title “theologian” in the Church was reserved for great ascetics and holy men who had distinguished themselves by their outstanding communion and knowledge of the divine, such as Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. Theology was not a matter of abstract speculation, but the concrete experience of the saints passed down from generation to generation. As Saint Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” (lii) And in the words of Saint Peter, “we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.” (liii)

The opinion that theology was essentially a contemplative activity persisted in the West into the 11th and 12th centuries. Peter Damian, an influential monastic reformer and papal legate, vigorously attacked secular knowledge for “disturb[ing] the purity of the Church’s order with the cloud of its curiosity.” Damian maintained that insofar as philosophy is useful, it should be but a servant (ancilla) to theology; otherwise, “in following the conclusions of external words, it errs, and loses the internal light of virtue and the right path of truth.” (liv) Another prominent anti-Scholastic was the renowned Benedictine Abbot Bernard of Clairvaux. During a famous controversy with the philosopher Peter Abelard, Bernard criticized the latter for “striving to explore with his reason what the devout mind grasps with a vigorous faith” and accused Abelard of “prefer[ring] the innovations [of the philosophers] and his own novelties to the doctrines and faith of the Catholic Fathers.” (lv) Bernard also thought that God is “more worthily sought through prayer than through dialectics” and that “knowledge for the sole purpose of knowing is unseemly curiosity.” (lvi) Lastly, Hugh of Saint Victor taught that

in questions of doctrine “faith is not aided by any reason...but rather reason is admonished not to contend against [faith].” (lvii) He believed that the tenets of Christianity cannot be proven rationally but must be accepted on authority. For “by what likeness can those things which transcend all likeness and comparison be argued and proven, unless that from the faith and devotion of preceding saints we gather that we ought not to be incredulous about those goods which are predicted as to come?” (lviii)

With the advent of Scholasticism, the old method of contemplation, faith and tradition was gradually replaced by logic, reason, and disputations. “Theology” became a subject one could study just like any other secular pursuit. A diversity of questions and mysteries that Holy Tradition had reverently passed over in silence—such as the manner in which the bread and wine of the Eucharist become the Body and Blood of Christ—were scrutinized scientifically. The universities became filled with dissertations, hair-splitting distinctions, and conflicting schools of thought as one teacher after another formulated his own theories. For example, Aquinas and his disciples disagreed with the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary while Duns Scotus and his followers affirmed it. In the end, Scholasticism reduced theology to the level of human speculation and created the impression that the truth was something one discovered academically, not something absolute that already existed in its fulness in the Church.

5- John Wycliffe and the Doctrine of the Invisible Church





John Wycliffe (top left), Martin Luther (top right), Ulrich Zwingli (centre)

All three of these currents—the debates about the papacy, the distortion of the doctrine of penance, and the rationalism of the scholastic schools—came together in the late Middle Ages to produce a climate of profound dissatisfaction and desire for reform. Within this context, the writings of the English theologian John Wycliffe proved to be very influential.

John Wycliffe (d. 1384) rejected the doctrine of papal supremacy and held that only Christ is the head of the Church. He believed that the pope's authority is restricted to its earthly portion (the Church militant) provided that he is moral and follows the law of God. (Ixi) Wycliffe accepted the beliefs in Purgatory and the superabundant merits of the saints, but he argued that God alone has the authority to grant indulgences, and only to those who have sincerely repented. (Ix) Finally, Wycliffe criticized the ever-changing logical systems of the schools and the proliferation of theological terminology. (Ixi) Ironically, though, his proposal to correct the errors of the Church was equally steeped in rationalism. In fact, Wycliffe's solution was to make Holy Scripture the ultimate arbiter of all matters. As he wrote:

“Every man ought to be a theologian—assuming he first have the correct disposition—and then the truth will follow, unfailingly manifesting itself. For just as all rivers flow into the sea, so is all created authority supported by this first authority [Scripture]: it is whence syllogisms derive their form, the reason particular maxims hold true, the ground for the sense or the letter, tradition or human reason... **Whence it seems to me that all other proofs that do not trace back to this principle are defective**, and can only be called topical proofs with regard to the conclusion, as they can just as easily be false.” (Ixi)

From an Orthodox perspective, elevating Scripture as the sole criterion of truth is incorrect. Scripture is part of the Apostolic deposit, which is why it is true and we revere it. But the Church was not founded on Scripture; it was founded on the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. God did not bequeath us a book (as the Muslims believe with their Koran), but something inestimably more valuable: His only-begotten Son. Of course, Scripture and the Church can never contradict each other because they are both inspired by the Holy Spirit and it was the Church that wrote and preserved the Bible. But to try to found the Church on Scripture is like making a tree reliant on one of its branches. Many foundational practices of Christianity such as the sign of the cross, the prayers of the liturgy, or the veneration of icons are not explicitly mentioned in the New Testament, but this does not mean that they proceed from any lesser authority.

While the Western church had erred by over-externalizing the faith, Wycliffe went to the other extreme by claiming that the Church was something purely spiritual:

“Just as under the Old Law, when the Jews fell away from the worship of imperceptible things, the signs of the adulterous generation increased, so under the New Law, when the love of heavenly things grows cold, it is to be expected that **human traditions and ceremonies of perceptible things prevail when religion and the love of the imperceptible is forsaken.**”

(lxiii)

In line with this strict dichotomy between the flesh and the spirit, Wycliffe believed that the Church included only those predestined to go to heaven; those who were foreknown by God to be damned belonged not to the Body of Christ but to the body of Satan and had the devil for their head. (lxiv) Although the foreknown were outwardly members of the church and could even occupy clerical offices, they were foreign to it spiritually. Hence Wycliffe’s maxim that one could be “in” the Church but not “of” the Church (in ecclesia sed non de ecclesia). (lxv) This theology of the Church also affected Wycliffe’s doctrine of the Eucharist: he rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation because he believed that Christ is not visible to our material eyes but can only be apprehended spiritually. As he said, “no human sense but purely the intellect can perceive the Body of Christ through faith.” (lxvi)

Wycliffe’s error was partially a revival of the heresy of the Donatists, an ancient sect that did not believe that sinners could be members of the Church of Christ. This teaching was condemned in the early centuries because Christians do not believe that the holiness of the Church depends in any way on the holiness of her members. The Church is holy because her head is Christ and she is a vessel of God’s sacraments. As Saint Augustine writes, “it is Christ always that justifies the ungodly, by changing his ungodliness into Christianity; it is from Christ always that faith is received, Christ is always the origin of the regenerate and the head of the Church.” (lxvii)

Unlike the Donatists, however, Wycliffe rejected even the outward form of the Church, making of it something entirely internal and invisible. It seems that over two centuries of human innovations and abuses had eroded Wycliffe’s faith that the visible church of his day was truly infallible and holy. Unfortunately, instead of seeking to renew communion with the True Church in the East which had preserved the apostolic faith untainted (which is actually what the church of Bohemia tried to do in the 15th century

before the fall of Constantinople), Wycliffe preferred to believe that as long as one adhered to Scripture, one was spiritually a member of Christ's Body.

Wycliffe's radical new doctrine of an invisible church was eagerly embraced by the Protestant Reformers, who made it a cornerstone of their theology. In his 1520 treatise *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, Martin Luther wrote that the Roman church had perverted the Gospel through its many innovations, imprisoning the faithful in falsehood:

"It was not the Church that appointed these things, but the **tyrants of the churches**, without the consent of the Church, which is the people of God...Hence we see how angry God is with us, in that he has permitted **godless teachers** to conceal the words of this testament from us, and thereby, as much as in them lay, to **extinguish faith**. And the inevitable result of this extinguishing of faith is even now plainly to be seen—namely, the most godless superstition of works...By them we have been carried away out of our own land, as in a Babylonian captivity, and despoiled of all our precious possessions...There are so many orders, so many rites, so many sects, so many vows, exertions and works, in which Christians are engaged, that **they lose sight of their baptism**. This swarm of locusts, cankerworms and caterpillars—not one of them is able to remember that he is baptised or what blessings his baptism brought him." (lxviii)

In his *Commentary on Galatians* (1535), Luther writes further:

"Therefore we rightly confess in our Creed that we believe in the Holy Church. **For it is invisible, dwelling in the Spirit**, in a place to which no one can attain; wherefore its holiness cannot be seen. For thus God hides it and **covers it over with weaknesses, sins, errors**, and various forms of the cross, that it may nowhere be manifest to observation." (lxix)

Notice how Luther posits a distinction between the "tyrants of the churches," i.e. the clergy, who taught error, and the Church proper, i.e. the simple faithful, who were led astray. According to the understanding of the Orthodox Church, this distinction is completely unacceptable. Both clergy and laymen are members of the Body of Christ, and there can never be any separation between the Church and the Truth. If the church preaches error, it means that it is not the spotless bride and pillar of truth founded by Christ, but a heretical conventicle. There can be no outward heresy and inward truth. If Luther truly believed that the Roman church had strayed from the apostolic doctrine, it was his duty to find the True Church—which the Lord promised would never disappear from the Earth—and unite himself to it. Merely separating from falsehood is not enough; one must graft oneself onto the True Vine to have eternal life. For as Christ says:

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. **If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered**; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (lxx)

Luther's doctrine was adopted by the Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli who taught that there exists an "invisible church" made up of "all those across the world who believe" and a "visible church" made up of "all those across the world who are called by the name of Christ." (lxxi) According to Zwingli's scheme, individual Christians could exist in different churches, provided they followed the Gospel. One of the fullest expositions of the doctrine of the invisible church is found in the 1646 *Westminster Confession* of the English Puritans:

"The Catholic or universal Church which is invisible consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. This Catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible, and particular Churches which are members thereof **are more or less pure according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught**, and embraced ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them. **The purest Churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error** and some have so degenerated as to become no Churches of Christ but synagogues of Satan; nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth to worship God according to his will." (lxxii)

At the beginning of this section we set out to discover the origin of the heresy of ecumenism, namely the idea that all churches possess the truth. Our conclusion is that the root of this heresy appeared in the late Middle Ages when John Wycliffe posited an "invisible church" in protest against the innovations and corruptions of the Western church. This doctrine was then adopted and expanded by Martin Luther in the 16th century to justify his separation from Rome, and was subsequently popularized across Europe by Zwingli and the other Reformers. The doctrine of the invisible church laid the foundations of ecumenism because it directly undermined the doctrine of apostolicity. The Church was reduced from a concrete historical body possessing authoritative truth to a vague idea that was subject to the private judgment of each individual.

6- The Modern Ecumenical Movement



While ecumenistic tendencies were present in Protestantism throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, as we saw above, it was only in the early decades of the 19th century that ecumenism truly emerged as an organized movement. The impetus for this transformation came from the United States, in which countless Protestant sects coexisted as in no other country. In the early 19th century, the United States was swept by the so-called “Second Great Awakening,” a spiritual movement inspired by Pietism which stressed individual conversion and ecstatic religious experience. The Great Awakening was pan-denominational, in that it influenced all the major branches of American Protestantism. It was also utopian in character: those inspired by the movement believed that the Second Coming was fast approaching and that Christ would soon institute his heavenly kingdom on earth and usher in a golden age (this belief, known as “millenarianism,” was condemned in the early church as heretical for reasons that will be outlined below).

The practical effect of the Great Awakening was that it infused Protestantism with a missionary zeal to evangelize all of society. The existing divisions among Protestants were seen as an impediment to this goal. Consequently, many began to propose that the Protestant groups overlook their dogmatic differences and unite in their common mission. For example, in 1839, the American Lutheran pastor Simon Schmucker suggested that all Protestants could unite on the basis of the Apostles’ Creed and a so-called “United Protestant Confession” which would summarize all the doctrines that the Protestants held in common. (lxxiii) Under Schmucker’s plan, each denomination would still be able to retain its former creed and organizational structure, but there would be full ecclesiastical and ministerial communion between them. (lxxiv) Schmucker’s vision was partly realized in 1846 with the foundation of the “Evangelical Alliance,” a pan-Protestant organization that included denominations from across

America, England, and the Continent. The purpose of the Alliance was “cultivating brotherly love” between its members and coordinating their pursuit of common projects. (lxxv). In addition, every year, members of the Evangelical Alliance would join in a “week of common prayer” which further reinforced their sense of belonging to the same body. (lxxvi)

In 1844, the English businessman George Williams founded the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in London, a philanthropic organization offering social ministry and recreational activities to urban youths. The purpose of the YMCA, as stated in its founding charter, was “the extension of [Christ’s] kingdom amongst young men.” (lxxvii) From its very beginning, the YMCA was ecumenistic in spirit. In fact, when the organization was first founded, it is reported that George Williams remarked: “Here we are, an Episcopalian, a Methodist, a Baptist, and a Congregationalist—four believers but a single faith in Christ. Forward together!” (lxxviii) No less than fifty of the delegates present at the first international conference of the YMCA in 1855 had participated in the international conference of the Evangelical Alliance that had taken place one year earlier. (lxxix) Henri Dunant, the head of YMCA in Geneva and later founder of Red Cross said that the purpose of the YMCA was “to spread abroad that ecumenical spirit which transcends nationalities, languages, denominations, ecclesiastical problems, ranks, and occupations: to realize in a word, and as far as possible, that article in the Creed which we all of us adhere to: ‘I believe in the Communion of Saints and in the Holy Catholic Church.’” (lxxx) The motto on the crest of the YMCA is a verse from the Gospel of John: “that they all may be one.” (John 17:21)

As the 19th century wore on, certain rationalist Protestant theologians began to attack basic Christian tenets such as the Virgin Birth. In response, conservative preachers in America gradually coalesced into the so-called “evangelical” or “fundamentalist” movement. The Evangelicals were the direct inheritors of the Second Great Awakening: they were interdenominational in scope, focused on individual conversion, and they harboured millenarian expectations. (lxxxix) In order to coordinate their efforts, Evangelicals began organizing Bible conferences at which preachers from various backgrounds would lecture on religious topics.

The first of these conferences was held in Niagara Falls in 1878, and proved to be a resounding success. One of the individuals in attendance was the famous American preacher and leader of the Chicago chapter of the YMCA, Dwight L. Moody. Moody was so inspired by the Niagara Conference that he organized similar Bible conferences back home. These events succeeded in attracting a large attendance from young people, many of whom were fellow members of the YMCA. Moody’s personal conversion experience and impassioned rhetoric inflamed the youth with a desire to become missionaries abroad. (lxxxii) As a result, in 1895, the Student Christian Movement (SCM) was founded. Many of the leaders of the ecumenical movement in the 20th century, such as John R. Mott, Joseph H. Oldham, and Willem A. Visser ’t Hooft began their careers as members of the SCM.

Like the YMCA and the Evangelical Alliance which had preceded it, the SCM was a union based on mission, not dogma. As John R. Mott, one of the SCM’s founding members and its first president, stated, “the Student Christian Movement is interdenominational, in that while it unites persons of different religious denominations

in a single organization for certain definite aims and activities, it recognizes their allegiance to any of the various Christian bodies into which the Body of Christ is divided.” (lxxxiii) Here we clearly see the heretical idea that the Church is “divided” into distinct branches.

7- The Student Christian Movement and Utopianism

The SCM was also millenarian and utopian in inspiration. Its goal was not simply to convert people to the Gospel, but to redeem the entire fallen order. To quote Mott again: “The missionary enterprise...must ever be looked upon as but a means to the mighty and inspiring object of enthroning Christ in individual life, in family life, in national life, in international relations, in every relationship of mankind.” (lxxxiv) Joseph Oldham, the SCM’s first general secretary, expands on this theme. “What we envisage,” he writes, “is poles removed from the concentration of interest on the saving of individual souls.” The ultimate goal is “social transformation.” (lxxxv) “The Christian is called to fulfill God’s will not in some remote and future world but here and now in relation to the reality which encompasses, challenges and resists us. Faith in God is real only as it confronts the particulars of history.” (lxxxvi) To accomplish this mission, Oldham believed that the church must become “fully alive to its responsibilities in the social and political fields” (lxxxvii) and that theology must be completely reoriented to the “problems of today” (lxxxviii) and the “actualities of daily life.” (lxxxix)

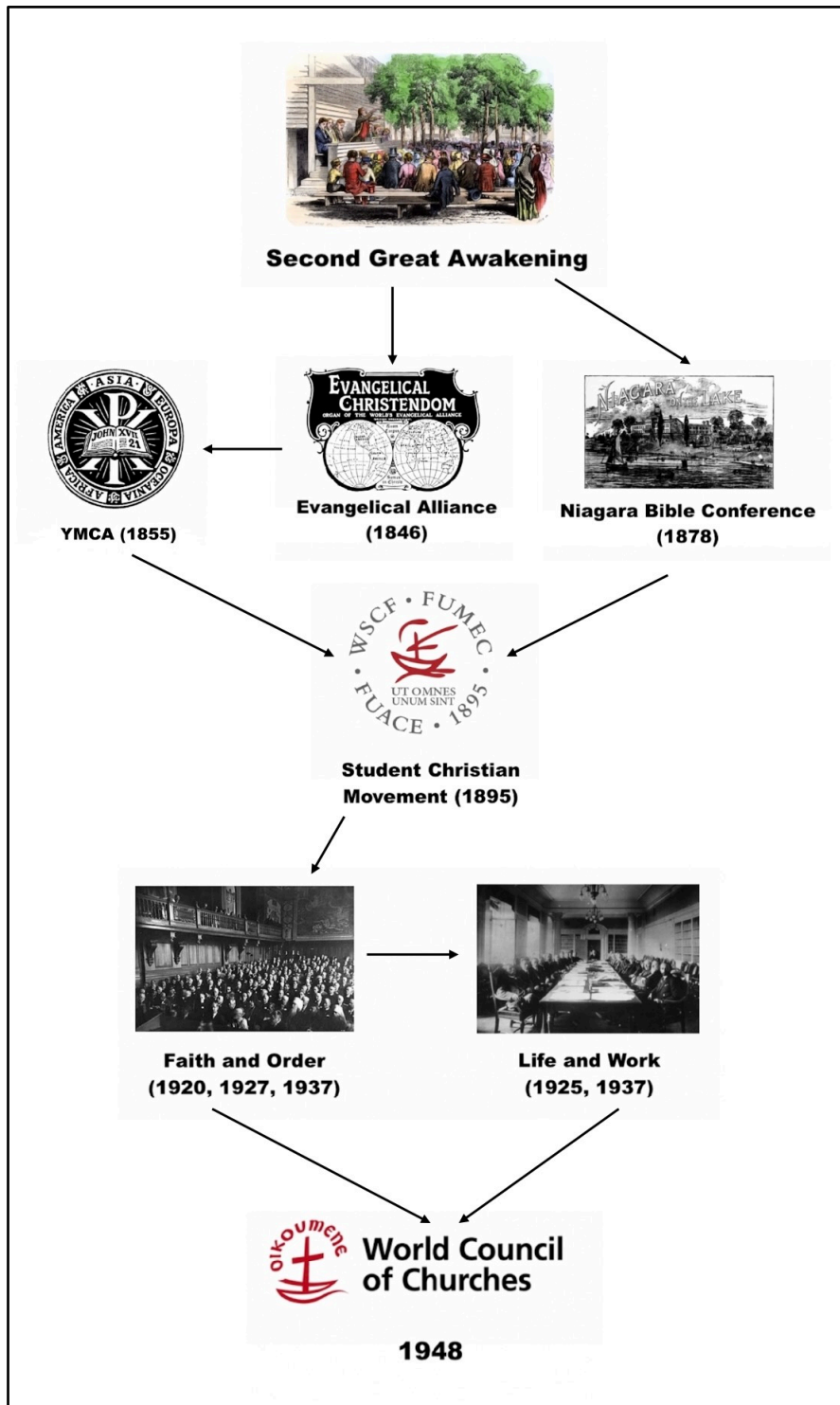
Here we must pause to explain why this kind of social action and utopianism is heretical in the eyes of the Orthodox Church. Christ taught that his kingdom “is not of this world” (xc) and that Christians ought to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” (xci) Christ did not come to the earth as a worldly emperor to bring peace, prosperity, and justice; instead, he followed the path of exile, poverty, and suffering: “I came not to bring peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother-in-law. Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For all these things do the Gentiles seek. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” (xcii)

According to Orthodox teaching, the world in its present condition is the dominion of devils. Only after the final judgment will it be remade and there will be “a new heaven and a new earth.” (xciii) Until that time, man is “born unto toil” (xciv) and life is a “vale of tears.” (xcv) For all these reasons, striving to create a perfect earthly order through our own efforts is a dangerous delusion. Those who wish to make heaven a reality in the “here and now,” to use Oldham’s expression, prove only that they do not really believe in the resurrection and the future life. They are practising a counterfeit Christianity in which any notion of the divine and the heavenly is perverted and redirected towards the world. The “Christianity” of the utopians is really just socialism with a religious veneer; it is an anti-Christianity that has succumbed to the first temptation of Satan.

Of course, rejecting the world does not mean that it is undesirable that the institutions and laws of our society be informed by the Gospel; rather, it means that a Christian society is not an end in itself, but a by-product of the virtuous lifestyle of its members.

To offer an illustration: the early Christian martyrs were not “social reformers” who set out to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Roman Empire, but simple Christians who wished to testify to the truth of God. Their goal was the salvation of souls, not the salvation of society. That the Roman Empire as a whole eventually became Christian was a miraculous gift of God in reward for their extraordinary faith. But the Church would have been no less holy had Rome by and large remained pagan.

8- The World Council of Churches



In 1910, the SCM held its first World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, which attracted many delegates from the Anglican and Episcopalian churches. In the wake of this Conference, the American Episcopalian bishop Charles Brent conceived of the idea of creating an interdenominational Christian body which would study the similarities between the various churches in an effort to draw them closer together. This organization, which came to be called the "Faith and Order Commission," was officially inaugurated in 1920 in Geneva and held two major world conferences in 1927 and in 1937. The Faith and Order Commission was attended by delegates from almost all the major Christian denominations except for the Roman Catholics.

One of the participants of the 1920 conference was the Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala Nathan Soderblom. Inspired by the Faith and Order group, which focused on dogmatics, Soderblom thought there should be an equivalent commission to facilitate the churches' cooperation on social issues, and he set about to create it. As Soderblom remarked, "doctrine separates, but service unites." (xcvi) This group came to be called the "Life and Work Commission" and met in 1925 and in 1937. It also received near-universal participation from the various denominations. Following the Second World War, the two commissions were officially joined to form the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948. The WCC's foundational charter, the "Toronto Statement," was adopted in 1950. We will cite some extracts from the central documents approved by these commissions to illustrate their heretical theology.

From the "Message" published by the First Conference of Life and Work in Stockholm in 1925:

"In the name of the Son of Man, the Carpenter of Nazareth, we send this message to the workers of the world...We share their aspirations after a **just and fraternal social order**, through which the opportunity shall be assured for the development, according to God's design, of the full manhood of every man...**Only as we become inwardly one shall we attain real unity of mind and spirit**. The nearer we draw to the Crucified, the nearer we come to one another, **in however varied colours the Light of the World may be reflected in our faith**." (xcvii)

From the document entitled "The Nature of the Church" approved at the First World Conference of Faith and Order at Lausanne in 1927:

"As to the extent and manner in which **the Church thus described finds expression in the existing Churches**, we differ...Whatever our views on these points, we are convinced that it is the will of Christ that **the one life of the one body should be manifest to the world**. To commend the Gospel to doubting, sinful and bewildered men, a united witness is necessary. We therefore urge most earnestly that all Christians, in fulfilment of our Saviour's prayer that His disciples may be one, reconsecrate themselves to God, that by the help of His Spirit **the body of Christ may be built up**, its members united in faith and love, and existing obstacles to **the manifestation of their unity** in Christ may be removed; that the world may believe that the Father has sent Him." (xcviii)

From the “Report of the Section on Church, Community, and State in Relation to the Economic Order” presented at the Second World Conference of Life and Work at Oxford in 1937:

“Any social arrangement which outrages the dignity of man by treating some men as ends and others as means, any institution which obscures the common humanity of men by emphasizing the external accidents of birth or wealth or social position, **is ipso facto anti-Christian**...It should further be affirmed that individual property rights must never be maintained or exercised without regard to their social consequences or without regard to the contribution which the community makes in the production of all wealth...**Christians have a particular responsibility to make whatever contribution they can toward the transformation, and if necessary the thorough reconstruction, of the present economic and political system**, through their membership in political parties, trade unions, employers’ organizations and other groups.” (xcix)

From the “Affirmation of Union in Allegiance to our Lord Jesus Christ” adopted at the Second World Conference of Faith and Order at Edinburgh in 1937:

“We are one in faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God...**This unity does not consist in the agreement of our minds or the consent of our wills**. It is founded in Jesus Christ Himself, Who lived, died, and rose again to bring us to the Father, and Who through the Holy Spirit dwells in His Church...Our unity is of heart and spirit. **We are divided in the outward forms of our life in Christ, because we understand differently His will for His Church**. We believe, however, that a deeper understanding will lead us towards a united apprehension of the truth as it is in Jesus. We humbly acknowledge that our divisions are contrary to the will of Christ, and we pray God in His mercy to shorten the days of our separation and to guide us by His Spirit into fulness of unity.” (c)

From the “Toronto Statement” of 1950:

“The member churches recognize that the membership of the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own church body...All the Christian churches...hold that there is no complete identity between the membership of the Church Universal and the membership of their own church. **They recognize that there are church members ‘extra muros,’ [beyond the walls] that these belong ‘aliquo modo’ [in some way] to the Church, or even that there is an ‘ecclesia extra ecclesiam’ [church outside the church].**” (ci)

Based on these statements, we can see that the World Council of Churches possesses a definite theology: that the Church is divided among all the denominations; that even though these denominations hold different dogmas, they are spiritually one; that difference in dogma is not an obstacle to communion and is even a source of richness; that the purpose of the ecumenical movement is the manifestation of the spiritual unity which already exists among the churches; and that the churches’ mission in the world is to remake the social order and advocate for social justice. Since

its foundation, the WCC has continually made further statements reinforcing this line of thought.

From the WCC's 4th General Assembly held in Uppsala, Sweden in 1968:

“Oneness in the same Body through the same Spirit is manifested in the proclamation of the Gospel, in Baptism, and in the celebration of the Eucharist, but this very oneness is defaced by our sinful divisions...**Catholicity reaches its completion** when what God has already begun in history is finally disclosed and fulfilled...Diversity may be a perversion of catholicity but often it is a genuine expression of the apostolic vocation of the Church. This is illustrated by the New Testament, where **through a wide range of doctrinal and liturgical forms**, relevant to differing situations, the one unchanging apostolic heritage finds expression...**We urge that all Christian churches should work towards a mutual recognition of the one baptism...We urge that every church should examine the reasons for its present disciplines about participation in holy communion**, remembering Christ's prayer for unity and his command to be reconciled.”

From the WCC's 5th General Assembly held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1975:

“All people have the right freely to determine their political status and freely to pursue their economic, cultural, and social development. These rights are often violated by foreign governments and power systems, and through internal oppression and discrimination. **The churches should condemn such violations and take active part in efforts to ensure national sovereignty and self-determination** for people who are deprived of them...A thorough examination needs to be made of the biblical and theological assumptions concerning the community of women and men in church and society...We urge member churches to provide factual information, gained from the oppressed groups themselves, so that Christians can learn the extent of their involvement in structures that perpetuate racial injustice and have recourse to specific proposals for responsible ecumenical action.”

From the text “Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry” (BEM) adopted by the WCC's Faith and Order Commission at Lima, Peru in 1982:

“Baptism is an unrepeatable act. **Any practice which might be interpreted as ‘re-baptism’ must be avoided**...As the churches come to fuller mutual understanding and acceptance of one another and enter into closer relationships in witness and service, they will want **to refrain from any practice which might call into question the sacramental integrity of other churches**...Churches which have preserved the episcopal succession are asked **to recognize both the apostolic content of the ordained ministry which exists in churches which have not maintained such succession** and also the existence in these churches of a ministry of episkopé in various forms...Some churches ordain both men and women, others ordain only men. Differences on this issue raise

obstacles to the mutual recognition of ministries. **But those obstacles must not be regarded as substantive hindrance for further efforts towards mutual recognition.**” (civ)

From the WCC’s 7th General Assembly held at Canberra, Australia in 1991:

“We, as people who experience the freedom of the Spirit, **are called to break down the barriers which make people un-free.** This Spirit of freedom lays upon us the task which Jesus himself accepted as a consequence of the Spirit coming upon him. We, as people who have received the gift of freedom and who have received this calling to be free, **cannot cease to struggle for the release of those who are captive to sin and to unjust social and economic systems.** We cannot cease to address physical ill-health or spiritual blindness in our world. **We are called to be in solidarity with the oppressed in their struggle for liberation.**”
(cv)

From the WCC’s 9th General Assembly at Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2006:

“**Each church is the Church catholic,** and not simply a part of it. Each church is the Church catholic, but not the whole of it. Each church **fulfils its catholicity** when it is in communion with the other churches... **Apart from one another we are impoverished**...Our common belonging to Christ through baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit enables and calls churches to walk together, **even when they are in disagreement**...In God’s grace, baptism manifests **the reality that we belong to one another,** even though some churches are not yet able to recognise others as Church in the full sense of the word.” (cvi)

9- Roman Catholic Ecumenism



Although the Roman Catholic Church was never a member of the World Council of Churches in the 20th century, it independently moved in an identical theological direction. In fact, during the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church officially adopted many positions that were even more extreme than what was being proposed by the WCC, such as the possibility that pagans, Muslims, and Jews could be saved. It also fully embraced the same utopian social theology.

From the decree entitled "Lumen Gentium" adopted on November 21, 1964:

"The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. **In the first place amongst these there are the Muslims...Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church**, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience." (cvii)

From the decree entitled "Nostra aetate" adopted on October 28, 1965:

"The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions [Hinduism and Buddhism]. **She regards with sincere reverence** those ways of conduct and of life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often **reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men...The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems...** Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet...Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom...**God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers...** Although the Church is the new people of God, **the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God**, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures." (cviii)

From the decree entitled "Apostolicam actuositatem" adopted on November 10, 1965:

"Christ's redemptive work, while essentially concerned with the salvation of men, includes also the renewal of the whole temporal order. Hence the mission of the Church is not only to bring the message and grace of Christ to men but also **to penetrate and perfect the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel...** God's plan for the world is that men should work together **to renew and constantly perfect the temporal order...** The whole Church must work vigorously in order that men may become capable of rectifying the distortion of the temporal order and directing it to God through Christ...**Everywhere and in all things they must seek the justice of God's kingdom.**" (cix)

Since the 1960s, the Popes have frequently joined in prayer with other Christian groups and members of other religions, teaching that we all worship a common God.

As an example, one can refer to the following video published by Pope Francis on January 6, 2016 on the occasion of World Religion Day:



In 2019, Pope Francis signed the “Document on Human Fraternity” with the Grand Imam Ahmed Al-Tayeb in Abu Dhabi to promote peaceful coexistence and inter-faith dialogue between Christians and Muslims. Following this agreement, the United Arab Emirates undertook the construction of the “Abrahamic Family House,” a religious complex housing a mosque, church, and synagogue meant to represent the harmony between the three religions.



10- Ecumenism as a Heresy

Ecumenism is a grave heresy because it blurs the distinction between truth and falsehood and treats heresies as if they were equal to the Church of God. By contrast, Orthodoxy teaches that salvation can only exist in the one true Church which holds the correct faith. The reason for this is simple: if we lack a correct understanding of who God is, it is impossible for us to enter into communion with Him. Those who embrace heresy remain imprisoned in a lie, worshipping a false idol that does not exist.



The New Testament is filled with constant calls to preserve the faith and flee from heresy: Christ told his Apostles to beware of “false prophets which come to you in sheep’s clothing.” (cx) Saint Peter says that “there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies.” (cxi) Saint Paul teaches: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” (cxii) He warns Titus: “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” (cxiii) He tells the Thessalonians: “Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.” (cxiv) He tells the Galatians: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” (cxv) Saint John, the Apostle of love, instructs us: “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.” (cxvi)

The same concern for doctrinal purity was expressed in Apostolic times. Saint Ignatius the God-Bearer writes:

“Do not err, my brethren. Those that corrupt houses shall not inherit the kingdom of God. If, then, those who do this as respects the flesh have suffered death, how much more shall this be the case with him who corrupts by wicked doctrine the faith of God, for which Jesus Christ was crucified. **He that is thus defiled shall go away into everlasting fire, and in like manner he that hearkens to him.**” (cxvii)

The holy martyr Cyprian says:

“He [the Devil] has invented heresies and schisms, whereby he might subvert the faith, might corrupt the truth, might divide the unity. Those whom he cannot keep in the darkness of the old way, he circumvents and deceives by the error of a new way. He snatches men from the Church itself; and while they seem to themselves to have already approached to the light, and to have escaped the night of the world, he pours over them again, in their unconsciousness, new darkness; so that, although they do not stand firm with the Gospel of Christ, and with the observation and law of Christ, they still call themselves Christians, and, **walking in darkness, they think that they have the light,** while the adversary is flattering and deceiving, who, according to the apostle’s word, transforms himself into an angel of light, and equips his ministers as if they were the ministers of righteousness, who maintain night instead of day, death for salvation, despair under the offer of hope, perfidy under the pretext of faith, antichrist under the name of Christ; so that, while they feign things like the truth, **they make void the truth by their subtlety.**” (cxviii)



The canons of the Church are very clear that heretics are not part of the Church of Christ and lack the grace of the Holy Spirit:

Canon 46 of the Holy Apostles: “We ordain that a bishop, or presbyter, who has admitted the baptism or sacrifice of heretics, be deposed. **For what concord has Christ with Belial, or what part has a believer with an infidel?**”

Canon 68 of the Holy Apostles: “If any bishop, presbyter, or deacon, shall receive from anyone a second ordination, let both the ordained and the ordainer be deposed; unless indeed it be proved that he had his ordination from heretics; **for those who have been baptized or ordained by such persons cannot be either of the faithful or of the clergy.**”

Canon 31 of Laodicea: “It is not lawful to make marriages with all sorts of heretics, nor to give our sons and daughters to them; but rather to take of them, **if they promise to become Christians.**”

Canon 34 of Laodicea: “No Christian shall forsake the martyrs of Christ, and turn to false martyrs, that is, to those of the heretics, or those who formerly were heretics; **for they are aliens from God.** Let those, therefore, who go after them, be anathema.”

Canon 7 of the Second Ecumenical Council: “As for **those heretics who join themselves to Orthodoxy and to the lot of the saved**...we receive when they present statements of faith and anathematize every heresy which does not hold as does the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of God; and first of all, **we anoint them with holy Chrism on their forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, and ears, and in sealing them we say: ‘The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.’**”

Canon 1 of Saint Basil: “Those who seceded from the Church **had not the grace of the Holy Spirit upon them;** for the impartation thereof ceased with the interruption of the service. For although the ones who were the first to depart had been ordained by the Fathers and with the imposition of their hands they had obtained the gracious gift of the Spirit, yet after breaking away **they became laymen, and had no authority either to baptize or to ordain anyone, nor could they impart the grace of the Spirit to others, after they themselves had forfeited it.** Wherefore [the Fathers] bade that those baptized by them should be regarded as baptized by laymen, and that when they came to join the Church they should have to be repurified by the true baptism as prescribed by the Church.”

Synodicon of Orthodoxy: “To them who persist in the heresy of denying icons...and have their ears covered towards every Divine word and spiritual teaching, as already being putrified members, and having **cut themselves off from the common body of the Church,** Anathema.”

Decree 11 of the Council of Jerusalem: “We believe to be members of the Catholic Church all the faithful, and **only the faithful who firmly hold the blameless faith received from Christ the Saviour,** as set forth by Christ Himself, and the Apostles, and the Holy Ecumenical Councils.”

The Holy Fathers categorically affirm that those who do not hold the correct faith are not part of the Church:

Saint Athanasius the Great: “Heresy is hateful to God; it is **excluded from the communion of the Church, and estranged from Heaven.**” (cxix)

Saint Gregory the Theologian: “Avoid those who think otherwise, and consider them to be **strangers both to God and to the Catholic Church.**” (cxx)

Saint John Cassian: “He then must of course be **outside the Church,** who does not hold the faith of the Church.” (cxxi)

Saint Maximus the Confessor: “God called Catholic the Church that maintains the **true and saving confession of faith in Him.**” (cxxii)

Saint Theodore the Studite: “Even if one were to give away all the money in the world, if he be in heresy, **he is no friend but an enemy of God.**” (cxxiii)

Saint Gregory Palamas: “Those who are of the Church of Christ are wholly of the truth; and **those who are not of the truth are in no way of the Church of Christ.**” (cxxiv)

These same Fathers teach us that it is the duty of every Christian to resist heresy and to separate oneself from all those who preach it:

Saint Athanasius: “If the bishop or priest, who are the eyes of the Church, conduct themselves wickedly and scandalize the people, **it is necessary to reject them.** For it is better to gather in a house of prayer without them, than to be cast in the gehenna of fire with them as with Annas and Caiaphas.” (cxxv)

The same: “**We must flee from the communion of those whose opinions we reject.** If any pretend that he confesses the right faith, but is seen to commune with those others, exhort him to abstain from such communion, and if he promise to do so, treat him as a brother; but if he contentiously persist, **avoid him.**” (cxxvi)

Saint Basil: “It is necessary for those hearers who are learned in the Scriptures to examine what the teachers say, accepting those things that agree with the Scriptures and rejecting those that are foreign, and **to turn away vehemently from those who persist in such teachings.**” (cxxvii)

Saint Gregory the Theologian: “**For better is a laudable war than a peace which severs a man from God:** and therefore it is that the Spirit arms the gentle warrior, as one who is able to wage war in a good cause.” (cxxviii)

Saint John Chrysostom: “**If you see the cause of religion suffering anywhere, do not prize concord above truth, but make a noble stand even to death**...in nowise betraying the truth.” (cxxix)

The same: “He [Saint Paul] does not extol friendship merely, nor love merely, but such as comes of knowledge... ‘Not for my own sake,’ says he, ‘do I say this, but that you may be sincere,’ that is, **that you receive no false doctrine under the pretence of love.**” (cxxx)

Saint Theodore the Studite: “**We have a commandment from God not to keep silent in times when the faith is in danger.** Speak, He says, and hold not thy peace... Therefore, when it is a matter of faith, one should not say: ‘Who am I? A priest? In nowise. A governor? Neither. A soldier? How? A farmer? Neither that. I am a pauper, seeking only my daily food. This matter is not my responsibility or concern.’ Woe! The stones will cry out, and you are silent and untroubled?” (cxxxi)

The same: “Some have been shipwrecked completely with regard to the faith; but others, even if they were not drowned in their thoughts, nevertheless, since they commune with heresy, **they are destroyed together with them.**” (cxxxii)

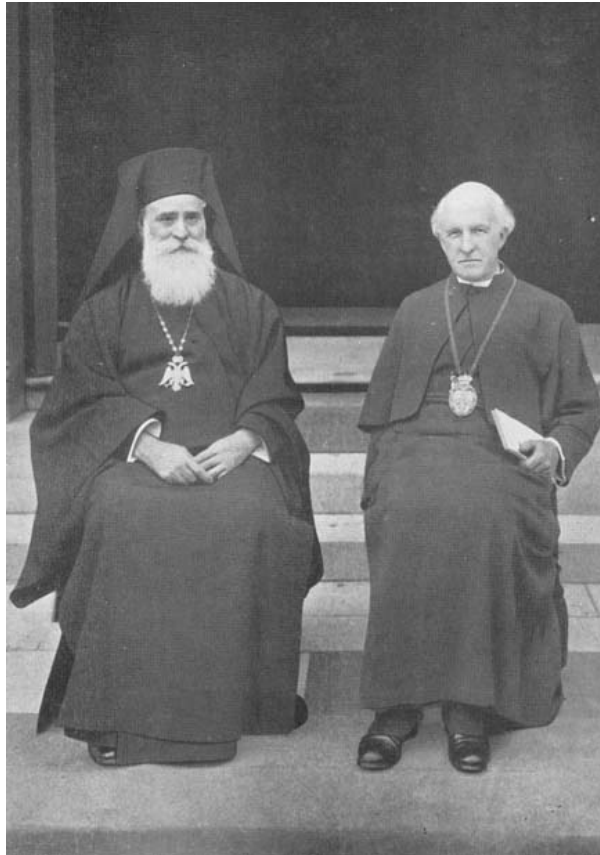
Canon 15 of the First-Second Council: “But as for those persons who, on account of some heresy condemned by the holy Councils or Fathers, **withdraw themselves from communion with their president,** who, that is to say, is preaching the heresy publicly, and teaching it openly in church, such persons not only are not subject to any canonical penalty...but, on the contrary, they shall be deemed worthy to enjoy the honour befitting Orthodox Christians. **For they have defied, not bishops, but pseudo-bishops and pseudo-teachers;** and they have not sundered the union of the Church with any schism, but, on the contrary, have been sedulous to rescue the Church from schisms and divisions.” (cxxxiii)

St. Mark of Ephesus: “All the teachers of the Church, all the Councils, and all the divine Scriptures bid us **flee from the heterodox and separate ourselves from their communion.**” (cxxxiv)

Although ecumenism does not directly attack the doctrines of Christianity like the heresies of old did, its indifference to the truth is just as destructive. We are reminded of Christ’s judgment of the Church of Laodicea in the Book of Revelation: “I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” (cxxxv)

11- Orthodox Ecumenism

a. The Early Decades



Patriarch Meletius Metaxakis with Anglican Archbishop William Lang

The earliest ecumenical sentiments in the Orthodox world were expressed in 1902 by Patriarch Joachim III of Constantinople. In an encyclical he sent to all the autocephalous Orthodox churches in June of that year, Joachim proposed that since “men are being guided in paths of evangelical love and peace,” the Orthodox churches should try and find “points of encounter and contact” with the heterodox and even “turn a blind eye to certain irregularities until the completion in due course of the whole task.” (cxxxvi) He also suggested that the Orthodox churches undertake a study of the calendar question to see whether it might be appropriate for them to adopt the Gregorian calendar, even though this calendar was anathematized and rejected by several Orthodox synods in the past (see the section on this website entitled [The Old Calendar](#) for more details).

After receiving a largely negative response from the churches, Joachim composed a new encyclical in May of 1904 which re-iterated his concerns: “We also need to consider the matter of those others, praying with all our soul for the unity of all, not drawing back from the difficulties nor considering the object unworthy of consideration or completely impossible...remembering that they too believe in the Holy Trinity and, boasting of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, hope to be saved by the grace of God.” (cxxxvii) In the short term, these efforts on the part of the Patriarchate did not amount

to anything, and the question of ecumenism had to wait until the end of the First World War before seriously being raised again.

There are many reasons that induced certain members of the Orthodox Church to originally join the ecumenical movement. Some clergymen hoped that by uniting in a common body, Christians from various denominations could oppose the secular currents of the day more effectively than if they did so individually. Others seemed to think that joining the movement would help reduce Protestant proselytism in the East and exert pressure upon the Roman Catholics to respect the independence of the Orthodox churches. (cxxxviii) The very fact that these individuals entertained such ideas shows just how far they had fallen from the true spirit of Orthodoxy. Can anyone imagine Saint Athanasius and Saint Cyril, or Saint Basil and Saint Gregory convening a council with Arians, Macedonians, and Apollinarians to form a “common front” against idolatry? Or who can conceive of Saint Maximus or Saint John Damascene allying with Nestorians to put pressure on the Monophysites?



The Patriarchate of Constantinople had particular reasons of its own to make overtures to the Protestants. On March 16, 1919, the Patriarchate effectively declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire and cast in its lot with the revolutionary government of Greece, claiming that it regarded “union with the mother-country

Greece as the only firm basis for national development in the future.” (cxxxix) In May of the same year, Greek troops landed in Smyrna and began the ill-advised invasion of Anatolia. The Patriarchate therefore hoped that an alliance with the powerful Western nations would be a smart diplomatic move and ensure its survival amid the political turmoil of the war. In a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury from this period, Dorotheos of Proussa, the locum tenens of the patriarchal throne, said that “there can be only one safeguard for us; it is the dislodgement of the Sultan from Constantinople” and he begged “our sister church in England” for support. (cxl) As always happens when man places his faith in the world rather than with God, this path led to spiritual disaster.

In April of 1919, a delegation of Episcopalians arrived in Constantinople and invited the Orthodox to participate in the preparatory meeting of the Faith and Order Commission being planned for the following year in Geneva. The Patriarchate accepted, responding that it was “thus stretching forth a hand in aid to those labouring in the same field and vineyard of the Lord.” (cxli) Here, for the first time, the Patriarchate officially referred to the Protestants as fellow members of the Church. In January of 1920, the Patriarchate issued an encyclical addressed “To the Churches of Christ Wheresoever They Be” which claimed that communion between the various churches “is not prevented by the doctrinal differences existing between them” and called all Christians, irrespective of denomination, “fellow-heirs and members of the same body.” Among the proposals made by the 1920 Encyclical was “the acceptance of a uniform calendar for the simultaneous celebration of all the great Christian feasts by all the Churches.”

When the Geneva summit finally took place in August of 1920, its Orthodox delegation included the then-archimandrite Chrysostomos Papadopoulos—the infamous Archbishop of Greece who would go on to adopt the New Calendar in 1924. One of the proposals that the Orthodox delegation made at this conference was that the various churches form a pan-denominational body similar to the League of Nations. This proposal was enthusiastically received by the commission and was even hailed as the “most positive and important point of the meeting’s proceedings.” (cxlii) In other words, it was the Orthodox ecumenists who were the direct inspiration for the World Council of Churches! In August of 1922, the Patriarchate followed this decision by recognizing the validity of Anglican ordinations. (cxliii) In 1927, during the Faith and Order Commission’s first official conference in Lausanne, Bishop Germanos Strenopoulos of Thyateira (the Patriarchate’s representative in the British Isles) made the following astonishing remarks:

“After centuries of separation and dire estrangement the first attempt was once more made to mend **the torn robe of Jesus in order that the divided members of His mystic Body**, the Church, might again be bound together. To the call, sent forth from beyond the ocean, the Orthodox Church of the East, the most ancient of all, hastened with **her younger sisters of the West**, to reply... Although the Orthodox Church considers unity in faith a primary condition of reunion of the Churches, yet **it rejects that exclusive theory according to which one Church, regarding itself as the one true Church, insists that those who seek reunion with it shall enter its own realm**. Such a conception of reunion, amounting to the absorption of the

other Churches, is in every way opposed to the spirit existing in the Orthodox Church.” (cxliv)

The Orthodox ecumenists were very clear that their desired union with the Western churches was a union based on love and mission, not a union based on doctrinal agreement. The modernist Archbishop Meletios Metaxakis of Athens—who was later illegally elected Patriarch of Constantinople—claimed that “dogmatic unions that are not based on the conscience of the Church’s faithful are ephemeral unions that result only in increasing the gulph [between the churches].” (cxlv) Chrysostomos Hatzistavrou, one of the members of the Patriarchate’s Holy Synod (and future Archbishop of Greece) said in 1919: “For the benefit of the most exalted goal of union, we ought to allow some concessions in both practical matters and theoretical and dogmatic matters...Leaving therefore, each church free with regard to unessential things, we are able, despite all the observed disagreements and differences, to still agree on the essentials.” (cxlvi)

During his own enthronement speech in 1923, Chrysostomos Papadopoulos made the following remarks: “dogmatic unity, being unfortunately difficult to attain, is not a necessary precondition for this cooperation and solidarity, for the unity of Christian love is enough.” (cxlvii) Another very telling incident occurred in 1927 during the first Faith and Order Conference: following the reading of the Commission’s statement on the nature of the Church (quoted above), the Orthodox delegation said that they were unable to sign it because it contradicted their Church’s ecclesiology. Nevertheless, the delegation immediately reassured the Commission that “although divided by dogmatic differences, we are one with our brethren here in faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” (cxlviii) This idea that there can be union without agreement on the truth is precisely the essence of the heresy of ecumenism.

b. The Middle and Late 20th Century





Patriarch Athenagoras with Pope Paul VI

Significant Orthodox delegations attended all the meetings of the commissions of Faith and Order and Life and Work in the 1920s and 30s. Following the upheavals of the Second World War, the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Church of Greece were present as founding members of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948. On January 31, 1956, Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople—who had served as Metaxakis’ secretary in Athens four decades earlier—sent an encyclical to all the Orthodox churches encouraging them to participate in the ecumenical movement. The encyclical stated: “In as much as the World Council of Churches, in accordance with what is laid down in its founding charter, seeks to facilitate cooperation between the churches...to strengthen ecumenical consciousness...and to preserve, promote and advance man’s spiritual values within the general context of Christianity...its work constitutes a God-pleasing effort and expression of a noble desire on the part of the Christian world.” (cxlix) Athenagoras stressed that the goal of the Orthodox was only “cooperation of the churches on a social and practical level” and not “union through dogmatic discussions.” (cl) As such, he recommended that the Orthodox delegations refrain “as much as possible” from joint prayers with the Protestants as this “goes against the holy canons and troubles the confessional sensibilities of the Orthodox.” (cli) As history shows, these comments were highly disingenuous.

Following the advice of the Patriarchate, the Synod of the Church of Greece ratified its membership in the WCC on November 11, 1958 “by unanimous acclaim.” (clii) The Synod even suggested that there was nothing preventing other religions from “cooperating and facilitating the creation of a common front of all religions against atheism.” (cliii) As we see, the ecumenical movement now began taking on pan-religious dimensions. Indeed, in 1968, Patriarch Athenagoras famously said: “We are deceived and we sin, if we think that the Orthodox faith came down from Heaven and that all creeds are unworthy. Three hundred million people have chosen Islam in order

to reach their god, and other hundreds of millions are Protestants, Catholics, and Buddhists. The goal of every religion is to improve mankind.” (cliv)

The most significant development that occurred in this period was the beginning of ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholics. In the midst of the Second Vatican Council, the Papacy began softening its traditional rhetoric against “the separated brethren of the East.” Patriarch Athenagoras eagerly embraced this opportunity: in January of 1964, he met Pope Paul VI at the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem; on December 7, 1965, the Pope and the Patriarch mutually lifted the 1054 anathema; during his 1967 visit to Rome, Athenagoras openly prayed with the Pope and was seated next to him on the dais in Saint Peter’s Basilica. These brazen actions generated outcry throughout the Orthodox world. As a result, most of the monasteries of Mount Athos ceased commemorating the Patriarch. However, Athenagoras rejected the criticism and denied that he had violated Orthodoxy. A 1970 interview with the Greek newspaper *Ethnos* provides some insight into his mind:

“‘But we have many differences,’ they tell us. What differences? The Filioque? It existed since the seventh century, and the Churches didn’t separate. Primacy and Infallibility? What do we care about them? **Let every Church maintain its own customs.** If the Catholic Church wants it, let it keep it. But I ask you: What does infallibility mean today, when the Pope has a permanent fifteen-member council in Rome which makes the decisions? Besides, we all think we’re infallible—in our work, in our thoughts, in everything. Does your wife ask you how much salt to put in the food? Certainly not. She has her infallibility. Let the Pope have his, if he wants it. We don’t want it. Theological dialogue won’t grant it. We’re not ready, and centuries will be needed. **Only one dialogue is feasible: the dialogue of love.**” (clv)

Orthodox ecumenism intensified greatly in the 1970s and 80s under Patriarch Demetrius. In 1975, Archbishop Athenagoras of Thyateira and Great Britain, with the full blessing of the Patriarchate, published the *Thyateira Confession*. This confession boldly stated that Roman Catholics, Monophysites, and Anglicans have valid priesthoods and mysteries, that they are all part of the Church, and that in urgent circumstances Roman Catholics are permitted to commune in Orthodox churches and vice versa. (clvi) In 1980, a joint commission was established between the Vatican and fourteen Orthodox churches to work towards union. In June 1987, at Bari in Italy, Archbishop Stylianos of Australia (of the Ecumenical Patriarchate) said that the Holy Spirit presides over the mysteries performed by both Orthodox and Roman Catholics. (clvii) Later in the same year, Patriarch Demetrius concelebrated with the Pope in Rome on the 20th anniversary of the lifting of the anathemas. On March 6th, 1988, he told a Greek journalist that in urgent situations, such as when one is near death, if an Orthodox cannot find an Orthodox church he can commune at a Roman Catholic church. (clviii)

Pan-religious ecumenism also became more flagrant at this time. For example, in May of 1982, Metropolitan Parthenios of Carthage (later Patriarch of Alexandria) said that Mohammed was a “prophet” and a “man of God,” and that if he speaks against Islam or Buddhism he is “not found in agreement with God.” (clix) On October 27, 1986, at Assisi in Italy, on the occasion of the “World Day of Peace,” Patriarch Demetrius

prayed together with Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and Native Americans.



Patriarch Demetrius of Constantinople praying with members of other religions

c. Union with Roman Catholics and Monophysites

When Patriarch Bartholomew assumed the throne of Constantinople in 1991, he made it clear that he would be continuing in the footsteps of his predecessors:

“From this sacred courtyard we also greet his holiness the Pope of elder Rome...**with whom we are in communion of love**...We assure him that a most serious concern for us will be the realization of the sacred vision of our late predecessors Athenagoras and Demetrius so that the way of the Lord will be fulfilled on Earth in the reunion of all who believe in Him in the dialogue of truth. We shall do everything in our power to move in this

direction...We are convinced that **our brother in the West** will exhaust all the many possibilities at his disposal and cooperate with us towards this sacred and holy objective.” (clx)

In 1993, after years of negotiations, the joint theological commission of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches signed the “Balamand Declaration” in Lebanon which states that “the Catholic Churches and the Orthodox Churches recognize each other as Sister Churches, responsible together for maintaining the Church of God in fidelity to the divine purpose.” (clxi) The Declaration forbade proselytism and effectively recognized the sacraments of both churches as valid. In the exact words of the Declaration: “on each side it is recognized that what Christ has entrusted to His Church—profession of apostolic faith, **participation in the same sacraments**, above all the one priesthood celebrating the one sacrifice of Christ, the apostolic succession of bishops—**cannot be considered the exclusive property of one of our Churches**. In this context it is clear that rebaptism must be avoided.” (clxii) The Balamand Declaration was signed by representatives of the Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Russia, Romania, Cyprus, Poland, Albania, and Finland.

Similar "Agreed Statements" were signed in 1989 and 1990 with representatives of the Monophysite Churches. Both of these documents contain heretical teachings. In particular, they claim that Christ possesses “one united divine-human nature” (clxiii) and that his humanity is distinguished from his divinity “in thought alone.” (clxiv) This is exactly the same heresy that was preached by Severus of Antioch 1,500 years ago and anathematized by the Church. (clxv) The Second Agreed Statement also states: “In the light of our Agreed Statement on Christology as well as of the above common affirmations, we have now clearly understood that **both families have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological faith**, and the unbroken continuity of the apostolic tradition, though they have used Christological terms in different ways.” (clxvi) Thus, without the slightest repentance, on the basis of two short heretical texts, and—most importantly—without any acceptance of the Fourth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils, the Monophysites are declared Orthodox and all our teachers for the past 1,500 years are proclaimed to be in error.



Patriarch Theodore of Alexandria embracing the Coptic Patriarch Tawandros

On the basis of these agreements, the Patriarchates of Antioch and Alexandria declared full intercommunion with the Monophysites. On November 12, 1991, Patriarch Ignatios IV of Antioch issued a “Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on the Relations between the Eastern and Syrian Orthodox Churches.” The document calls the Monophysite Church a “sister church,” forbids proselytism between the Orthodox and Monophysites, allows the sharing of church facilities, and even mutual participation in the Holy Mysteries:

“Both Churches shall refrain from accepting any faithful from one Church into the membership of the other, irrespective of all motivations or reasons.

If two priests of the two Churches happen to be in a locality where there is only one Church, **they take turns in making use of its facilities.**

In localities where there is only one priest, from either Church, **he will celebrate services for the faithful of both Churches, including the Divine Liturgy, pastoral duties, and holy matrimony.**” (clxvii)

In 2001, this decision was followed by a similar statement issued by Patriarch Petros VII of Alexandria. The document, called a “Pastoral Agreement between the Coptic Orthodox and Greek Orthodox Patriarchates of Alexandria,” states:

“Since the Holy Synods of both the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa have already accepted the outcome of the official dialogue on Christology between the Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches, including the two official agreements: the first on Christology signed in June 1989 in Egypt and the second also on Christology and on **the lifting of anathemas and restoration of full communion** signed in Geneva 1990...**it was agreed to have mutual recognition of the sacrament of Baptism,** based on what St Paul wrote, ‘One Lord, one faith, one baptism’...For those mentioned reasons, the Holy Synods of both Patriarchates **have agreed to accept the sacrament of marriage which is conducted in either Church.**...Each of the two Patriarchates **shall also accept to perform all of its other sacraments** to that new family of Mixed Christian Marriage.”

d. Patriarch Bartholomew and the Council of Crete





Patriarch Bartholomew with Pope Benedict XVI

Patriarch Bartholomew's tenure has been fraught with continuous scandals. To cite a few examples of his many blasphemous comments and actions:

- On July 15, 1989, the future Patriarch called the Holy Canons “walls of shame.” (clxviii)
- On November 30, 1994, the Patriarch said that “all religions are pathways to salvation.” (clxix)
- In May 1995, during his visit to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Patriarch Bartholomew said that the liturgical texts of Holy Week should be modified to remove language that is critical of the Jews. (clxx)
- On January 13, 2002, during his meeting with the Iranian President Mohammed Khatami, the Patriarch called the Koran “equal to Holy Scripture and just as sacred.” (clxxi)
- On June 9, 2002, the Patriarch celebrated a liturgy in the Roman Catholic Basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Ravenna, during which he publicly gave communion to many non-Orthodox.
- On December 14, 2002, the Patriarch instructed the representatives of Mount Athos to work with the Greek police to expel the monks of Esphigmenou Monastery (many of whom were elderly and had lived there for most of their lives) because they refused to commemorate him.
- On July 22, 2003, the Patriarch called the Pope a “prophetic leader not only of Christians but of the whole world.” (clxxii)

- On November 30, 2006, Pope Benedict attended the liturgy at Saint George's patriarchal cathedral in Constantinople in the presence of Patriarch Bartholomew. The Pope's name was openly commemorated during the polychronion. (clxiii)
- On October 29, 2009, in Atlanta, Georgia, the Patriarch presented the CEO of Coca-Cola, Muhtar Kent, with a Koran, which he called the "Holy Koran." (clxiv)
- On May 25, 2014, the Patriarch prayed together with Pope Francis at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. In a sermon he delivered before the Tomb of Christ, the Patriarch said that it was "fear" that had kept the Orthodox and Roman Churches separated in the past, but that Paul VI and Athenagoras had "exchanged fear with love." (clxxv)
- On November 30, 2014, Pope Francis attended the liturgy at Saint George's patriarchal cathedral in Constantinople. He and Patriarch Bartholomew exchanged the kiss of peace and the Pope's name was openly commemorated during the polychronion. (clxxvi)

One can see that these are not random or isolated actions, but they form part of a coherent theology that the Patriarchate of Constantinople has been expressing for over a century. The culmination of Orthodox ecumenism came in the summer of 2016 during the Council of Kolymbari in Crete. This Council, which had been planned for many decades and was intended to be ecumenical in nature, was attended by the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and the Churches of Serbia, Romania, Cyprus, Greece, and the Patriarchate's dependencies in Poland, Albania, the Czech Lands, and Slovakia.



Patriarch Bartholomew at the Council of Crete flanked by Theodore of Alexandria (left) and Theophilus of Jerusalem (right)

The Cretan Council officially blessed the ecumenical movement and supported the churches' continued participation in the World Council of Churches. While it affirmed that the Orthodox Church was the true church, it immediately added that "the ecclesiological presuppositions of the 1950 Toronto Statement...are of paramount importance for Orthodox participation in the Council." (clxxvii) As we saw above, the Toronto Statement actually says that no church can claim exclusive right to be the Church of Christ. The Council also endorsed the work of the Commission of Faith and Order in the following words:

"The Orthodox Church wishes to support the work of the Commission on 'Faith and Order' and follows its theological contribution with particular interest to this day. **It views favorably the Commission's theological documents**, which were developed with the significant participation of Orthodox theologians and represent a praiseworthy step in the Ecumenical Movement for the rapprochement of Christians." (clxxviii)

In the text entitled "The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today's World," the Council rejected the idea of converting others to Orthodoxy, saying that "the conveyance of the Gospel's message...must be carried out not aggressively or by different forms of proselytism, but in love, humility and respect towards the identity of each person and the cultural particularity of each people." It also repeated the utopian theology common to both the WCC and the Vatican:

"The peace of Christ is the ripe fruit of the restoration of all things in Him, the revelation of the human person's dignity and majesty as an image of God, the manifestation of the **organic unity in Christ between humanity and the world, the universality of the principles of peace, freedom, and social justice**, and ultimately the blossoming of Christian love among people and nations of the world. **The reign of all these Christian principles on earth gives rise to authentic peace.** It is the peace from above, for which the Orthodox Church prays constantly in its daily petitions, asking this of the almighty God, Who hears the prayers of those that draw near to Him in faith." (clxxix)

In addition to embracing heresy, the 2016 Council also violated the basic discipline governing ecumenical councils since ancient times: the decisions of the previous ecumenical councils were not affirmed; the documents presented at the council, which had been drafted by closed-door committees many years earlier, were not really debated but simply submitted for approval; and individual bishops were denied the right to vote, which was instead given only to the presiding members of each participant church.

12- The True Orthodox Church



Since the 2016 Council, Orthodox ecumenism has continued to worsen. Discussions are now underway to have the Orthodox celebrate Easter on a common date with the Roman Catholics. As Archbishop Elpidophoros of America said in a speech at Fordham University on September 23, 2020, “celebrating Easter or Pascha together, on a common date, shouldn’t be so difficult.” (clxxx) Anyone with the slightest religious sensibility and awareness of history cannot help but be horrified at the constant betrayals of Orthodoxy one sees on an almost daily basis. To remain in communion with such “pastors” is to remain in heresy.

Even so-called “conservative” priests and bishops are not what they seem. For example, the late New Calendarist Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens (d. 2008) was hailed by many as a strict traditionalist. Although his actions were less extreme in appearance than the Patriarch’s, his words show that he fully shared the latter’s ecumenical sentiments. For example, on the occasion of Patriarch Bartholomew’s visit to Athens in September of 2005, the Archbishop offered him the following toast: “Your All-Holiness...your quite admirable concern for the preservation of the unity and stability of the holy churches of God, the movement to resume (with the unanimous consent of all the local Orthodox churches) the theological dialogue of the Orthodox with the Roman Catholic Church, and your preservation of Orthodox dogma and the truth of the Gospel inviolate and unharmed have shown that you are a worthy man capable of facing the challenges of the times.” (clxxxi)

It is part of the strange schizophrenia of ecumenism that priests and theology professors can spend years writing books and lecturing on correct Orthodox dogma and tradition, while lacking the slightest respect and zeal for their subject matter. A case in point is the well-known Russian-American priest John Meyendorff, who dedicated a large part of his career to translating and explaining the works of Saint Gregory Palamas, one of the most mystical and exalted of the Church Fathers. And

yet, this same man had no shame in rising up before the assembled members of the World Council of Churches and criticizing the Orthodox liturgy for being “frozen” and expressing but “a vague religiosity with no real connection with the Gospel.” (clxxxii) Another example is the late Bishop Kallistos Ware of England, who in his youth published a detailed study on the life and work of Eustratios Argenti of Chios, a famous 18th-century polemicist and defender of Orthodoxy against Latin innovations. Yet despite devoting so much time to studying Orthodox tradition, Ware proved to be among the most extreme of all the ecumenists, going so far as to claim that the Orthodox Church should consider female ordination and homosexual unions! (clxxxiii)

Of all the churches in the 20th century, only the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and the Old Calendarist Churches of Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria—together with countless monks from Mount Athos and the Holy Land—consistently resisted the ecumenical onslaught. Though unworthy, they alone have preserved the right to be called authentic continuators of Christ’s Church, and it is to them that we must look to for guidance in these troubled times. In June of 2014, the True Orthodox Churches published an official condemnation of ecumenism (see the section entitled [Encyclicals](#) on this website to read the document in its entirety). We will conclude this long historical exploration by citing but a few of the many forceful statements in this document:

“All those who preach or act contrary to correct confession are separated, as heretics, from the Truth of the Faith and **are excluded from communion with the Orthodox Catholic Church**, be they individual persons or communities...Every Bishop who proclaims ‘heresy publicly’ and ‘barefacedly in Church’ and who teaches ‘another Gospel than that which we have received’ or is in syncretistic communion with those of other beliefs or religions, doing so persistently and continually, **becomes a ‘false bishop and a false teacher,’** while those Bishops who commune with him, indifferent towards, tolerating, or accepting his mentality and these actual declarations of his, ‘are destroyed together with him,’ thereby **ceasing to be canonical or in communion with the Church**, since the Catholicity of the Church, Her unity, and Her genuine Apostolic Succession, which unfailingly guarantee the Bishop’s status as canonical and in communion with the Church, **are founded on, flow from, and are safeguarded by the ‘correct and salvific confession of the Faith.’**” (clxxxiv)

May God always grant unity, zeal, and enlightenment to His flock, and guide it from the many temptations of the devil to unashamedly declare His Gospel. Amen.

Notes

(i) Ephesians 4:13

(ii) John 16:13

(iii) Matthew 16:18

(iv) Matthew 28:20

(v) 1 Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 5:27

(vi) Hebrews 11:6

(vii) 2 Thessalonians 2:13

(viii) 1 Timothy 2:4

(ix) John 14:6; John 8:12; 1 John 2:23

(x) Ephesians 4:5

(xi) *Anglican Catholicity Vindicated Against Roman Innovations*, 1612 [reprinted 1875], pp. 15, 30-31.

(xii) *De Republica Ecclesiastica* (London: 1617), Book IV, Chapter 8, Section 75, p. 676D

(xiii) “Etiam si actualis et externa per sacramentum communio, imprimis propter exortas circa idipsum infelices controversias, prohibeatur; perseveret nihilominus virtualis et interna, consistens in mutua benevolentia, adfectu, et desiderio studioque removendorum impedimentorum, quae actuali et externa perfectae communioni obsistunt.” *Desiderium et studium concordiae ecclesiasticae publicae disquisitioni*, Helmstadt (1650), article 5.

(xiv) “Nous voulons que l’Église appelée catholique, et universelle soit répandue dans toutes les sectes, et qu’elle ait de vrais membres dans toutes celles de ces sociétés qui n’ont pas renversé le fondement de la religion Chrétienne, fussent elles en désunion les unes avec les autres, jusqu’à s’excommunier mutuellement. M. Nicole au contraire veut que l’Église soit renfermée dans une seule société chrétienne, séparée de toutes les autres... Or c’est là cette opinion dont je dis que c’est la plus cruelle et la plus absurde qui fut jamais avancée.” *Le vray systeme de l’église* (Dort: 1686), Chapter X, page 79.

(xv) Dale W. Brown, *Understanding Pietism*, Grand Rapids (1978), Chapter 2.

(xvi) encyclopedia.com q.v. “Latitudinarianism”

(xvii) “The nature of the kingdom, or church, of Christ: A sermon preach’d before the King, at the Royal chapel at St. James’s, on Sunday March 31, 1717.”

(xviii) *On Toleration* (1689).

(xix) Diego Lucci, "From Unitarianism to Deism: Matthew Tindal, John Toland, and the Trinitarian Controversy," *Etudes Epistémè : revue de littérature et de civilisation (XVIe - XVIIIe siècles)*, 35 (2019).

(xx) *Christianity as Old as Creation* (1730), Chapter 7.

(xxi) Jude 1:3

(xxii) Matthew 13:46

(xxiii) Matthew 16:19

(xxiv) 1 Corinthians 4:1

(xxv) Decree X, *The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem*, J.N.W.B. Robertson trans., 1899, p. 124.

(xxvi) Fourth Lateran Council, Canon V.

(xxvii) Unam Sanctam.

(xxviii) "Quod beatus Petrus Apostolus non plus auctoritatis habuit quam alii Apostoli habuerunt, nec aliorum Apostolorum fuit caput. Item quod Christus nullum caput dimisit Ecclesiae, nec aliquem suum vicarium fecit...Articulos praedictos...velut sacrae Scripturae contrarios et fidei catholicae inimicos, haereticos, seu haereticales et erroneos...sententialiter declaramus." Pope John XXII, *Licet juxta doctrinam*, October 23, 1327, in Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, articles 496, 500 (old numbering).

(xxix) "Sententia igitur Papae et sententia Dei una sententia est." Augustinus Triumphus, *Summa de potestate ecclesiastica*, Quaestio VI, art. 1; "Papa non homo simpliciter sed quasi deus in terris est." Alvarus Pelagius, *De Planctu Ecclesiae*, Book 1, Cap. 68.

(xxx) encyclopedia.com q.v. "Conciliarism (History of)"

(xxxi) *Augsburg and Constantinople: The Correspondence Between Patriarch Jeremiah II and the Tübingen Theologians*, trans. George Mastrantonis, Hellenic College (1981), p. 56 [87].

(xxxii) "The first requisite on the part of the penitent is the will to atone, and this is done by contrition; the second is that he submit to the judgment of the priest standing in God's place, and this is done in confession; and the third is that he atone according to the decision of God's minister, and this is done in satisfaction." Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Pars III, Question 90, Article 2.

(xxxiii) “If the debt of punishment is not paid in full after the stain of sin has been washed away by contrition...and if justice demands that sin be set in order by due punishment, it follows that one who after contrition for his fault and after being absolved, dies before making due satisfaction, is punished after this life.” Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Appendix II (On Purgatory), Article 1.

(xxxiv) “Indulgences hold good both in the Church’s court and in the judgment of God, for the remission of the punishment which remains after contrition, absolution, and confession, whether this punishment be enjoined or not. The reason why they so avail is the oneness of the mystical body in which many have performed works of satisfaction exceeding the requirements of their debts; in which, too, many have patiently borne unjust tribulations whereby a multitude of punishments would have been paid, had they been incurred. So great is the quantity of such merits that it exceeds the entire debt of punishment due to those who are living at this moment...These merits, then, are the common property of the whole Church. Now those things which are the common property of a number are distributed to the various individuals according to the judgment of him who rules them all. Hence, just as one man would obtain the remission of his punishment if another were to satisfy for him, so would he too if another’s satisfactions be applied to him by one who has the power to do so.” Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Supplement, Question 25, Article 1.

(xxxv) “Since the power of granting indulgences was conferred by Christ on the Church, and she has even in the earliest times made use of that power divinely given to her, the holy council teaches and commands that the use of indulgences, most salutary to the Christian people and approved by the authority of the holy councils, is to be retained in the Church, and it condemns with anathema those who assert that they are useless or deny that there is in the Church the power of granting them.” Council of Trent, Session 25, 3-4 December 1563.

(xxxvi) Ephesians 2:8-9

(xxxvii) *Mystagogical Catecheses*, 5.9-10

(xxxviii) *Homily 41 on First Corinthians*, Section 8.

(xxxix) *First Homily on the Purgatorial Fire*, Sections 1-2

(xl) Peter Lombard, *Sentences*, Book I, Distinction 34, Chapter 1

(xli) *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book I, Chapter 21

(xlii) *Summa Theologica*, Pars I, Question 39, Article 1: “Thence it follows that in God essence is not really distinct from person; and yet that the persons are really distinguished from each other. For person, as above stated, signifies relation as subsisting in the divine nature. But relation as referred to the essence does not differ therefrom really, but only in our way of thinking; while as referred to an opposite relation, it has a real distinction by virtue of that opposition. Thus there are one essence and three persons.”

(xliii) *Triads in Defense of the Holy Hesychasts*, III.ii.12

(xlv) Vincent L. Strand, "The Ontology of Grace of Alexander of Hales and John of La Rochelle," in *The Summa Halensis: Doctrines and Debates*, De Gruyter (2020), p. 171.

(xlv) 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 8:17; John 10:34

(xlvi) Vincent L. Strand, op. cit. p. 178.

(xlvii) *Summa Theologica*, Pars I, Question 15, Article 1

(xlviii) *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book I, Chapter 45

(xlix) *Summa Theologica*, Pars I, Question 13, Article 2

(l) 1 Timothy 6:16

(li) Hugh of Saint Victor, *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, Lib. I, Pars 10, Cap. 2, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, Medieval Academy of America (1951).

(lii) 1 Corinthians 2:4-5

(liii) 2 Peter 1:16

(liv) Peter Damian, *De divina omnipotentia*, Chapter 5, Patrologia Latina 145, col. 603.

(lv) *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, ed. Jean Leclercq and Henri Rochais, Volume 8, Epistles no. 338, 189.

(lvi) *On Consideration*, Book V, Chapter 14, p. 169, trans. George Lewis, Oxford: Clarendon Press (1908); *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, Sermon 36.3

(lvii) *De sacramentis christianae fidei*, op. cit. Lib. I, Pars 3, Cap. 30

(lviii) Ibid. Lib. I, Pars 10, Cap. 2.

(lix) *Tractatus de ecclesia*, ed. Johann Loserth, London (1886), Chapter 4, pp. 87-88; Chapter 5, p. 96.

(lx) Ibid. Chapter 23, pp. 558-559, 583.

(lxi) *De veritate sacrae scripturae*, ed. Rudolf Buddensieg, Volume 1, London (1905), Chapter 3, p. 54.

(lxii) "Et sicut dixi superius, oportet, omnem hominem esse theologum, habentem primo affectum rectum, et tunc veritas illabitur indeceptibiliter se ostendens. Et ita, sicut omnia flumina currunt ad mare, sic omnis autoritas creata inicitur auctoritati prime, ut si queritur, unde tenet talis forma silogistica, unde est illa maxima particularis vera, vel unde sequitur sensus vel aliud signum, testis vel ratio humana, dicit michi hoc, ergo verum...Unde videtur michi, quod omnis alia evidenciam, que non reducitur ad hic

principium, fallit, ideo tropica evidencia respectu conclusionis vocatur, cum qua stat simul deceptio de eadem." *De veritate sacrae scripturae*, op. cit. Chapter 15, p. 378.

(Ixiii) "Sicut enim in lege veteri Judeis declinantibus a cultu insensibilium invaluerunt signa generacionis adultere, sic in nova lege torpente affectione celestium oportet traditiones humanas et ritus ceremoniarum sensibilium dimissa religione et affectione insensibilium prevalere." *Tractatus de ecclesia*, op. cit. Chapter 19, p. 466.

(Ixiv) *Tractatus de ecclesia*, op. cit. Chapter 4, p. 75; Chapter 5, p. 102.

(Ixv) Ibid. Chapter 4, p. 89.

(Ixvi) "Sed modo nullus sensus hominis sed pure intellectus per fidem percipit corpus Christi." *De eucharistia tractatus maior*, ed. Johann Loserth, London (1892), Chapter 1, p. 19.

(Ixvii) *Against Petilian*, Book I, Chapter 7.

(Ixviii) *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, Sections 2.11, 2.62, and 3.32.

(Ixix) *Luther's Works* (Philadelphia-St. Louis), Volume 27, p. 84.

(Ixx) John 15:4-6

(Ixxi) "De ista [invisibilis] ecclesia sunt quotquot per universum orbem credunt...Visibilis autem ecclesia est...quotquot per universum orbem Christo nomen dederunt." *Expositio fidei christianae* (1536), p. 19.

(Ixxii) *Westminster Confession* (1646), Section 25.

(Ixxiii) *Fraternal Appeal to the American Churches, with a Plan for Catholic Union, on Apostolic Principles*, New York (1839), p. 107.

(Ixxiv) Ibid. p. 117.

(Ixxv) *A History of The Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948*, Vol. 1. ed. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill. Philadelphia (1967), p. 320.

(Ixxvi) Ibid. p. 321.

(Ixxvii) Ibid. pp. 327-328.

(Ixxviii) Ibid. p. 327.

(Ixxix) Harold H. Rowdon, "Edinburgh 1910, Evangelicals and the Ecumenical Movement," *Vox Evangelica* 5 (1967), p. 60.

(Ixxx) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, op. cit. p. 327.

(lxxxix) *American Evangelicalism*, ed. Darren Dochuk et al. University of Notre Dame Press (2014), p. 235.

(lxxxvii) Gary David Stratton, "Northfield Conference" in *The Encyclopedia of Christianity in the United States*, Rowman and Littlefield (2016).

(lxxxviii) *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, op. cit. p. 342.

(lxxxiv) John R. Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in this Generation*, New York (1905), p. 16.

(lxxxv) W.A. Visser 't Hooft and J.H. Oldham, *The Church and Its Function in Society*, Willett, Clark & Company (1937), p. 186.

(lxxxvi) Ibid. p. 174.

(lxxxvii) Ibid. p. 183.

(lxxxviii) Ibid. p. 152.

(lxxxix) Ibid. p. 180.

(xc) John 18:36

(xci) Mark 12:17

(xcii) Matthew 10:34-35; 6:31,33; 5:39

(xciii) Revelation 21:3

(xciv) Job 5:7

(xcv) Psalm 83:7

(xcvi) *The Church and Its Function in Society*, op. cit. p. 78.

(xcvii) "Message," Sections 12 and 14. In: *Documents On Christian Unity: A Selection From The First And Second Series, 1920-30*, ed. G.K.A. Bell, Oxford (1955), pp. 270-271.

(xcviii) *Faith and Order: Proceedings of the World Conference, Lausanne, August 3-21, 1927*, pp. 464-465.

(xcix) *The Oxford Conference (Official Report)*, ed. J.H. Oldham. Willett, Clark & Company, 1937, pp. 89, 101, 111.

(c) *Report of the Second World Conference on Faith and Order. (Edinburgh, August 3-18), 1937*, p. 50.

(ci) "Toronto Statement," Article IV.3.

(cii) *Official report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches. (Uppsala, July 4th-20th, 1968)*, “The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church,” Section I: 5, 6, 12; “Worship” 30, 32.

(ciii) *Breaking Barriers: Nairobi 1975. The Official Report of the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, “Structures of Injustice and Struggles for Liberation,” Sections 22-23, 42, 86.

(civ) Baptism, Section 13; Ministry, Sections 53a and 54.

(cv) *Signs of the Spirit: Official Report of the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, “Spirit of Truth—Set Us Free!” Section 1.

(cvi) *God, in Your Grace: Official Report of the Ninth Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, “Called to Be One Church,” Sections 6, 7, 9.

(cvii) *Lumen Gentium*, Section 16.

(cviii) *Nostra aetate*, Sections 2-4.

(cix) *Apostolicam actuositatem*, Sections 5 and 7.

(cx) Matthew 7:5

(cxi) 2 Peter 2:1

(cxii) 2 Corinthians 6:14

(cxiii) Titus 3:10-11

(cxiv) 2 Thessalonians 2:15

(cxv) Galatians 1:8

(cxvi) 2 John 1:10

(cxvii) “Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, ἀδελφοί μου. Οἱ οἰκοφθόροι βασιλείαν Θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν. Εἰ οὖν οἱ κατὰ σάρκα ταῦτα πράσσοντες ἀπέθανον, πόσω μᾶλλον, ἂν τις πίστιν Θεοῦ ἐν κακῇ διδασκαλίᾳ φθείρῃ, ὑπὲρ ἧς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐσταυρῶθη; Ὁ τοιοῦτος, ῥυπαρὸς γενόμενος, εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον χωρήσει, ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ ἀκούων αὐτοῦ.” *Epistle to the Ephesians*, Section 16, *Patrologia Graeca* 5, col. 657A-B.

(cxviii) *On the Unity of the Church*, Section 3.

(cxix) “θεομίσητός ἐστιν ἡ αἵρεσις,” *First Epistle to the Monks* (Letter 52), Section 3, *Patrologia Graeca* 25, col. 693C; “ἀκοινωνητός ἐστι τῆς Ἐκκλησίας καὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἄλλοτρία.” *To Serapion*, Section 4, *Patrologia Graeca* 25, col. 689A.

(cxix) “Τοὺς δὲ ἑτέρως ἔχοντας ἀποστρέφου, καὶ ἀλλοτρίους ἡγοῦ καὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τῆς καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας.” *Second Letter Against Apollinarius*, *Patrologia Graeca* 37, col. 196A.

(cxixi) “Ergo extra Ecclesiam sit necesse est, qui fidem Ecclesiae non tenet.” *On the Incarnation*, Book 3, Chapter 14, *Patrologia Latina* 50, col 70A.

(cxixii) “Καθολικὴν Ἐκκλησίαν, τὴν ὀρθὴν καὶ σωτήριον τῆς εἰς αὐτὸν πίστεως ὁμολογίαν...Θεὸς ἀπεφῆνατο.” *Πρὸς Ἀναστάσιον μονάζοντα*, *Patrologia Graeca* 90, col. 132A.

(cxixiii) “Οὐδ’ ἂν τὰ ὅλα χρήματα τοῦ κόσμου παρέξει τις καὶ κοινωνῶν εἴη τῇ αἵρέσει, φίλος Θεοῦ οὐ καθίσταται, ἀλλ’ ἐχθρός.” *Epistle 22 (To Thalelaeus)*, *Patrologia Graeca* 99, col. 1205A.

(cxixiv) “Καὶ γὰρ οἱ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἐκκλησίας ὅλοι τῆς ἀληθείας εἰσὶ, καὶ οἱ μὴ τῆς ἀληθείας ὄντες, καθάπαξ οὐδὲ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἐκκλησίας εἰσὶ.” *Λόγος Ἀντιρόρητικὸς Α’ Πρὸς Ἀκίνδυνον*, Παναγιώτου Χρήστου (ed.), Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα, Volume 5 (1987), pp. 136-137.

(cxixv) “Ἐὰν ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἢ ὁ πρεσβύτερος οἱ ὄντες ὀφθαλμοὶ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, κακῶς ἀναστρέφονται καὶ σκανδαλίζωσι τὸν λαόν, χρὴ αὐτοὺς ἐκβάλλεσθαι. Συμφέρον γὰρ ἄνευ αὐτῶν συναθροίζεσθαι εἰς εὐκτήριον οἶκον, ἢ μετ’ αὐτοὺς ἐμβληθῆναι ὡς μετὰ Ἄννα καὶ Καϊάφα εἰς τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρός.” *Fragments*, *Patrologia Graeca* 25, col. 1257C.

(cxixvi) “Ὡν τὸ φρόνημα ἀποστρεφόμεθα, τούτους ἀπὸ τῆς κοινωνίας προσήκει φεύγειν. Εἰ δὲ τις προσποιεῖται ὁμολογεῖν μὲν ὀρθὴν πίστιν, φαίνεται δὲ κοινωνῶν ἐκείνοις, τὸν τοιοῦτον προτρέψασθε ἀπέχεσθαι τῆς τοιοῦτης συνηθείας· καὶ ἐὰν μὲν ἐπαγγέλληται, ἔχετε τὸν τοιοῦτον ὡς ἀδελφόν· ἐὰν δὲ φιλονίκως ἐπιμένῃ τὸν τοιοῦτον παραιτήσθε.” *Second Epistle to the Monks (Letter 53)*, *Patrologia Graeca* 26, col. 1188B.

(cxixvii) “Ὅτι δεῖ τῶν ἀκροατῶν τοὺς πεπαιδευμένους τὰς Γραφάς, δοκιμάζειν τὰ παρὰ τῶν διδασκάλων λεγόμενα· καὶ τὰ μὲν σύμφωνα ταῖς Γραφαῖς δέχεσθαι, τὰ δὲ ἀλλότρια ἀποβάλλειν· καὶ τοὺς τούτοις δόγμασιν ἐπιμένοντας ἀποστρέφεσθαι σφοδρότερον.” *Moralia*, Rule 72, *Patrologia Graeca* 31, col. 845D-848A.

(cxixviii) “Κρείπτων γὰρ ἐπαινετὸς πόλεμος εἰρήνης χωριζούσης Θεοῦ· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὸν πραῖν μαχητὴν ὀπλίζει τὸ Πνεῦμα, ὡς καλῶς πολεμεῖν δυνάμενον.” *Oration 2*, Section 82, *Patrologia Graeca* 35, col. 488C.

(cxixix) “Εἴ που τὴν εὐσέβειαν παραβλαπτομένην ἴδοις, μὴ προτίμα τὴν ὁμόνοιαν τῆς ἀληθείας, ἀλλ’ ἴστασο γενναίως ἕως θανάτου... τὴν ἀλήθειαν μηδαμοῦ προδιδούς.” *Homily 22 on Romans*, Section 2, *Patrologia Graeca* 60, col. 611.

(cxxx) “Οὐχ ἀπλῶς τὴν φιλίαν θαυμάζει, οὐδὲ ἀπλῶς τὴν ἀγάπην, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐξ ἐπιγνώσεως... Οὐ δι’ ἐμέ, φησί, ταῦτα λέγω, ἀλλ’ ἵνα ἦτε ὑμεῖς εἰλικρινεῖς· τουτέστιν, ἵνα μηδὲν νόθον δόγμα τῷ τῆς ἀγάπης προσχήματι παραδέχησθε.” *Homily 2 on Philippians*, Section 1, *Patrologia Graeca* 62, col. 190-1.

(cxhxi) “Ἐντολή γὰρ Κυρίου μὴ σιωπᾶν ἐν καιρῷ κινδυνευούσης πίστεως. Λάλει γὰρ, φησί, καὶ μὴ σιώπα...Ὡσπερ ὅτε περὶ πίστεως ὁ λόγος, οὐκ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ἐγὼ τίς εἰμι; Ἱερεὺς; ἀλλ’ οὐδαμοῦ. Ἄρχων; καὶ οὐδ’ οὕτως. Στρατιώτης; Καὶ ποῦ; Γεωργός; καὶ οὐδ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτο. Πένης, μόνον τὴν ἐφήμερον τροφὴν ποριζόμενος. Οὐδεὶς μοι λόγος καὶ φροντίς περὶ τοῦ προκειμένου. Οὐά, οἱ λίθοι κράξουσι, καὶ σὺ σιωπηλὸς καὶ ἄφροντις;” *Letter 81* (To Pantoleon Logothetes), *Patrologia Graeca* 99, col. 1321A-B.

(cxhxi) “Οἱ μὲν τέλεον περὶ τὴν πίστιν ἐναυάγησαν. Οἱ δέ, εἰ καὶ τοῖς λογισμοῖς οὐ κατεποντίσθησαν, ὅμως τῇ κοινωνίᾳ τῆς αἰρέσεως συνόλλυνται.” *Letter 12* (To Pope Paschal), *Patrologia Graeca* 99, col. 1164A.

(cxhxiii) “Οἱ γὰρ δι’ αἵρεσιν τινα, παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων Συνόδων ἢ Πατέρων κατεγνωσμένην, τῆς πρὸς τὸν πρόεδρον κοινωνίας ἑαυτοὺς διαστέλλοντες, ἐκείνου τὴν αἵρεσιν δηλονότι δημοσίᾳ κηρύττοντος καὶ γυμνῇ τῇ κεφαλῇ ἐπ’ ἐκκλησίας διδάσκοντος, οἱ τοιοῦτοι οὐ μόνον τῇ κανονικῇ ἐπιτιμῆσει οὐχ ὑποκείσονται...ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς πρεπούσης τιμῆς τοῖς ὀρθοδόξοις ἀξιωθήσονται. Οἱ γὰρ ἐπισκόπων, ἀλλὰ ψευδεπισκόπων καὶ ψευδοδιδασκάλων κατέγνωσαν, καὶ οὐ σχίσματι τὴν ἔνωσιν τῆς ἐκκλησίας κατέτεμον, ἀλλὰ σχισμάτων καὶ μερισμῶν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐσπούδασαν ρύσασθαι.”

(cxhxiv) “Ἄπαντες οἱ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας διδάσκαλοι, πᾶσαι αἱ Σύνοδοι καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ θεῖαι Γραφαὶ φεύγειν τοὺς ἑτερόφρονας παραινοῦσι καὶ τῆς αὐτῶν κοινωνίας διίστασθαι.” *Ὁμολογία Ὁρθῆς Πίστεως*, *Patrologia Orientalis* 15, p. 134; *Patrologia Graeca* 160, col. 101C-D.

(cxhxv) Revelation 3:15-16

(cxhxvi) “Τῆς θείας μὲν χάριτος ἐπιφοιτώσης καὶ συναιρομένης, τῶν ἀνθρώπων δ’ εἰς τρίβους εὐαγγελικῆς ἀγάπης καὶ εἰρήνης κατευθυνομένων, ἄρα σκεπτέον καὶ φροντιστέον, κατὰ τὸ ἐνὸν, πῶς ἂν εἴη δυνατὸν προλεᾶναι τὴν πρὸς τοιοῦτο τέρμα ἄγουσαν ἀνώμαλον, τό γε νῦν, ἐξευρεῖν τε σημεῖα συναντήσεως καὶ ἐπαφῆς, ἢ καὶ ἀμοιβαίων θεμιτῶν παροράσεων, μέχρι τῆς διὰ τοῦ χρόνου τοῦ ὄλου ἔργου τελειώσεως...” *Ἡ Περὶ τῶν Σχέσεων τῶν Αὐτοκεφάλων Ὁρθοδόξων Ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ Περὶ Ἄλλων Γενικῶν Ζητημάτων Πατριαρχικὴ καὶ Συνοδικὴ Ἐγκύκλιος τοῦ 1902 καὶ εἰς Αὐτὴν Ἀπαντήσεις τῶν Ἁγίων Αὐτοκεφάλων Ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ ἡ Ἀνταπάντησις τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου*, Constantinople (1904), p. 9.

(cxhxvii) “Σκοπεῖν ὀφείλομεν καὶ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ ὅλη τῇ ψυχῇ δεόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν πάντων ἐνώσεως, μὴ ἀποδυσπετεῖν πρὸς τὰς δυσχερείας, μηδὲ ἀνεπίδεκτον σκέψεως ἢ δυσέφικτον ὅλως ὑπολαμβάνειν τὸ πρᾶγμα...ἐκεῖνο ἐνθυμούμενοι, ὅτι τῇ Παναγίᾳ Τριάδι καὶ αὐτοὶ πιστεύοντες καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ σεμνυόμενοι, τῇ χάριτι τοῦ Θεοῦ σωθῆναι ἐλπίζουσιν.” *Ibid.* p. 77.

(cxhxviii) For example, see the remarks of Professor Amilkas Alivizatos on the ecumenical movement in the *Ἡμερόλογιον Τῆς Μεγάλης Ἑλλάδος*, Volume 1 (year 1922).

(cxhxix) Alexis P. Alexandris, *The Greek Minority of Istanbul and Greek-Turkish Relations 1918-1974*, Centre for Asia Minor Studies (1992), p. 54.

(cxl) G.K.A. Bell, *Randall Davidson Archbishop of Canterbury*, Volume 2 (1935), p. 1089.

(cxli) “τείνουσα οὕτω χεῖρα συναντιλήψεως τοῖς ἐργαζομένοις ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ ἀγρῷ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀμπελῶνι τοῦ Κυρίου,” Quoted in: George Tsetsis, *Οἰκουμενικὸς Θρόνος καὶ Οἰκουμένη – Ἐπίσημα Πατριαρχικὰ Κείμενα*, Katerini (1989), pp. 47-51.

(cxlii) Theokletos Stangas, *Ἐκκλησίας Ἑλλάδος Ἱστορία, ἐκ πηγῶν ἀψευδῶν (1817-1967)*, Volume 2, Athens (1970), p. 902.

(cxliii) *Documents on Christian Unity*, op. cit. pp. 36-39.

(cxliv) *Faith and Order*, op. cit. pp. 18, 20.

(cxlv) “Τὸ προηγούμενον τῆς ἐν Φλωρεντία ψευδοενώσεως μετὰ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς Ἐκκλησίας εἰς τὰς παραμονὰς τῆς πτώσεως τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως διδάσκει ἐμφανῶς ὅτι ἐνώσεις δογματικαί, μὴ βασιζόμεναι ἐπὶ τῆς συνειδήσεως τοῦ πληρώματος τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, εἶναι ἐνώσεις ἐφήμεραι μὲ ἀποτέλεσμα τὴν εὐρυσιν τοῦ χάσματος.” Newspaper *Ἄτλαντις*, March 3, 1919.

(cxlvi) “Χάριν τοῦ ὑψίστου σκοποῦ τῆς ἐνώσεως τόσον ἐν τῷ πρακτικῷ ὅσον καὶ ἐν τῷ θεωρητικῷ καὶ δογματικῷ μέρει, νὰ προβῶμεν εἰς παραχωρήσεις τινάς...Εἰς τὰ ἐπουσιώδη λοιπὸν ἀφήνοντες ἐλευθέραν ἐκάστην Ἐκκλησίαν, δυνάμεθα, παρ’ ὅλην τὴν παρατηρουμένην διαφωνίαν καὶ ἀσυμφωνίαν, νὰ συμφωνήσωμεν καὶ εἰς τὰ οὐσιώδη.” Codex 992A of the Acts of the Holy Synod, January 10, 1919. Quoted in: George Tsetsis, *Ἡ Ἐγκύκλιος τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου τοῦ 1920: Τὰ Διαμειφθέντα πρὸ τῆς Ἐξαπολύσεως Αὐτῆς* (Lecture delivered on January 12, 2021).

(cxlvii) “Πρὸς ταύτην συνεργασίαν καὶ ἀλληλεγγύην δὲν εἶναι ἀναγκαῖα προϋπόθεσις ἡ δυσεπίτευκτος, δυστηχῶς, δογματικὴ ἐνωσις, διότι ἀρκεῖ ἡ ἐνωσις τῆς ἀγάπης τῆς χριστιανικῆς, ἥτις, ἄλλως τε, δύναται νὰ προλειάνῃ τὴν ὁδὸν πρὸς τὴν τελείαν ἐνωσιν, τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ ἀνταποκρινομένην.” Speech given on March 10, 1923. In: Magazine *Ἀνάπλασις*, Number 5, pp. 69-76, March 1-15, 1923.

(cxlviii) *Faith and Order*, op. cit. p. 385.

(cxlix) “Ἐφ’ ὅσον τὸ Παγκόσμιον Συμβούλιον τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν, κατὰ τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ καταστατικοῦ αὐτοῦ ὀριζόμενα, ἐπιδιώκει τὴν διευκόλυνσιν τῆς κοινῆς δράσεως τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν...τὴν ἐνίσχυσιν τῆς οἰκουμενικῆς συνειδήσεως...καὶ τὴν διάσωσιν, ἀνύψωσιν, καὶ ἐπικράτησιν τῶν πνευματικῶν ἀξιῶν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐντὸς τοῦ γενικωτάτου χριστιανικοῦ πλαισίου...τὸ δὲ ἔργον αὐτοῦ ἀποτελεῖ θεάρεστον προσπάθειαν καὶ ἐκδήλωσιν εὐγενοῦς πόθου τοῦ χριστιανικοῦ κόσμου.” Ioannis Karmiris, *The Symbolic and Dogmatic Monuments of the Orthodox Church* [in Greek], 2nd edition (1968), Vol. 2, p. 1059.

(cl) Ibid. p. 1060.

(cli) “Δέον ἵνα οἱ ὀρθόδοξοι κληρικοὶ ἀντιπρόσωποι ᾧσιν ὅσω τὸ δυνατὸν ἐφεκτικοὶ ἐν ταῖς λατρευτικαῖς μετὰ τῶν ἑτεροδόξων συνάξεσιν, ὡς ἀντικειμέναις πρὸς τοὺς ἱεροὺς

κανόνας καὶ ἀμβλυνοῦσαις τὴν ὁμολογιακὴν εὐθιξίαν τῶν Ὁρθοδόξων.” Ibid. pp. 1060-1061.

(clii) Strangas, op. cit. Volume 4, pp. 2817, 2823.

(cliii) “Οὐδεμία θρησκεία θὰ ἠρνεῖτο συνεργασίαν καὶ συνδρομὴν εἰς σύμπτουξιν κοινοῦ μετώπου πασῶν τῶν θρησκειῶν κατὰ τῆς ἀθείας.” Strangas, op. cit. Volume 5, p. 3182.

(cliv) “Ἀπατώμεθα καὶ ἀμαρτάνομεν, ἐὰν νομίζωμεν, ὅτι ἡ Ὁρθόδοξος πίστις κατῆλθεν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ὅτι τὰ ἄλλα δόγματα εἶναι ἀνάξια. Τριακόσια ἑκατομμύρια ἀνθρώπων ἐξέλεξαν τὸν Μουσουλμανισμὸν διὰ νὰ φθάσουν εἰς τὸν Θεόν των καὶ ἄλλαι ἑκατοντάδες ἑκατομμυρίων εἶναι Διαμαρτυρόμενοι, Καθολικοί, Βουδισταί. Σκοπὸς κάθε θρησκείας εἶναι νὰ βελτιώσῃ τὸν ἄνθρωπον.” Ὁρθόδοξος Τύπος, No. 24, December 1968.

(clv) Interview given by the Patriarch to the journalist Spyridon Alexiou, published on March 20, 1970.

(clvi) “Οἱ Χριστιανοὶ πιστεύουν ὅτι ἀληθινὴ χειροτονία καὶ ἱεροσύνη ἔχουν καὶ μεταδίδουν Ὁρθόδοξοι ἐπίσκοποι, Ῥωμαιοκαθολικοὶ ἐπίσκοποι, οἱ Κοπποαρμένιοι καὶ Αἰθίοπες ἐπίσκοποι, οἱ Ἀγγλικανοὶ ἐπίσκοποι...δι’ αὐτὸ καὶ τὰ μυστήρια τῶν Ἀγγλικανῶν εἶναι μυστήρια τῆς Μιᾶς Ἁγίας Καθολικῆς καὶ Ἀποστολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ὡς εἶναι καὶ τὰ μυστήρια τῶν Ῥωμαιοκαθολικῶν...Ὁρθόδοξοι Χριστιανοί, Ῥωμαιοκαθολικοί, Ἀγγλικανοί, Κοπποαρμένιοι καὶ Αἰθίοπες, Λουθηρανοὶ καὶ ἄλλοι Προτεστάνται εἶναι Χριστιανοὶ βαπτισμένοι εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος...Ὅλοι οἱ Χριστιανοὶ μὲ τὸ ἴδιον βάπτισμα ἐγίναμεν μέλη τοῦ Σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ποὺ εἶναι ἡ Ἐκκλησία... Ἐπιτρέπεται ἐξ ἐπόψεως Ῥωμαιοκαθολικῆς νὰ μεταλαμβάνουν ἐν καιρῷ ἀνάγκης οἱ Ῥωμαιοκαθολικοὶ εἰς Ὁρθοδόξους Ἐκκλησίας καὶ οἱ Ὁρθόδοξοι ἐν καιρῷ ἀνάγκης νὰ μεταλαμβάνουν εἰς Ῥωμαιοκαθολικὰς Ἐκκλησίας.” *Thyateira Confession*, London (1975), pp. 203, 159, 204, 209.

(clvii) “Τίς δύναται νὰ ἀρνηθῇ ὅτι εἰς τὰς Ῥωμαιοκαθολικὰς ἀκολουθίας εἶναι παρῶν ὁ ἴδιος Κύριος Ἰησοῦς; Καὶ τίς δύναται νὰ ἀρνηθῇ ὅτι τὸ πανσθενουργὸν Πνεῦμα εἶναι τὸ τελειοῦν ὅλας τὰς ἱεουργίας καὶ τὰ μυστήρια ἐν τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀμφοτέρων τῶν ἐδῶ ἐκπροσωπουμένων Ἐκκλησιῶν;” *Καθολικὴ*, 30/6/1987.

(clviii) “Ἐρώτησις: Ἐνας Ὁρθόδοξος πιστὸς μπορεῖ νὰ μεταλάβῃ ἂν ὑπάρχῃ ἕκτακτη ἀνάγκη, σὲ Ῥωμαιοκαθολικὴ Ἐκκλησία, σὲ περίπτωσιν ποὺ δὲν ὑπάρχει κοντὰ Ἑλληνορθόδοξῃ; Ἀπάντησις: [...] Εἰς τὴν συγκεκριμένην περίπτωσιν ποὺ ἀναφέρετε, εἶναι δυνατὴ κατ’ ἀπόλυτον οἰκονομίαν καὶ ὅπωςδῆποτε ὅπου πρόκειται περὶ μελλοθανάτων.” *Καθημερινή*, 6-3-1988; *Μακεδονία*, 6-3-1988.

(clix) “The prophet Mohammed is an apostle. He is a man of God, who worked for the Kingdom of God and created Islam, a religion to which belong one billion people...Our God is the Father of all men, even of the Muslims and Buddhists. I believe that God loves the Muslims and the Buddhists...When I speak against Islam or Buddhism, then I am not found in agreement with God....My God is the God of other men also. He is

not only God for the Orthodox. This is my position.” *Ὁρθόδοξος Τύπος*, No. 854, May 1982.

(clx) Enthronement speech, November 2, 1991. Video available online.

(clxi) “Uniatism, Method of Union in the Past, and the Present Search for Full Communion,” Section 14.

(clxii) *Ibid.* Section 13.

(clxiii) “First Agreed Statement,” Wadi El-Natroun, Egypt, 1989, Section 10: “Those among us who speak of one united divine-human nature in Christ (περὶ μιᾶς ἡνωμένης θεανθρωπίνης φύσεως ἐν Χριστῷ) do not thereby deny the continuing dynamic presence in Christ of the divine and the human (τὴν συνεχῆ παρουσίαν ἐν Χριστῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου), without change, without confusion.”

(clxiv) “Second Agreed Statement,” Chambésy, Switzerland, 1990, Section 4: “Both families agree that the natures with their proper energies and wills are united hypostatically and naturally without confusion, without change, without division and without separation, and that they are distinguished in thought alone (τῇ θεωρίᾳ μόνῃ).”

(clxv) Jean-Claude Larchet, *Personne et nature*, Paris (2011), pp. 65ff.

(clxvi) “Second Agreed Statement,” Section 9.

(clxvii) “Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on the Relations between the Eastern and Syrian Orthodox Churches,” Sections 4, 10, and 9.

(clxviii) “Τείχη τοῦ αἵσχους.” *Ἐπίσκεψις*, No. 423, pp. 6-7.

(clxix) “Ὅλες οἱ θρησκεῖες εἶναι ὁδοὶ σωτηρίας.” *Ἐπίσκεψις*, No. 494, p. 23; 523, p. 12; 603, p. 15.

(clxx) Bert Groen, “Anti-Judaism in the Present-Day Byzantine Liturgy,” *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 60 (1-4), p. 382.

(clxxi) “Ἴσο μὲ τὴν Ἁγία Γραφή καὶ ἱερὸ ὅπως αὐτή.” *Ἐπίσκεψις*, No. 606, p. 2; *Ὁρθόδοξος Τύπος*, 15/3/2002.

(clxxii) “Προφητικὸς ἀρχηγὸς ὄχι μόνο τῶν χριστιανῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου.” *Καθολικὴ* 22/7/2003; *Ἐπίσκεψις*, No. 647, pp. 2-3.

(clxxiii) Video available online.

(clxxiv) “I have a small souvenir, small and great souvenir to Defne and Muhtar. This is the Holy Koran, the sacred book of our Muslim brothers and sisters.” Video available online.

(clxxv) “Fifty years ago, two great church leaders, the late Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, cast out fear; they cast away from themselves the

fear which had prevailed for a millennium, a fear which had kept the two ancient Churches, of the West and East, at a distance from one another, sometimes even setting them up against each other. Instead, as they stood before this sacred space, they exchanged fear with love. And so here we are with His Holiness Pope Francis, as their successors, following in their footsteps and honouring their heroic initiative.”

(clxxvi) Video available online.

(clxxvii) “Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World,” Section 19.

(clxxviii) Ibid. Section 21.

(clxxix) “The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today’s World,” Section C.1.

(clxxx) Video available online.

(clxxxι) “Ἡ ὄλως ἀξιόχρεος μέριμνά Σας διὰ τὴν διαφύλαξιν τῆς ἐνότητος καὶ τῆς εὐσταθείας τῶν ἀγίων τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐκκλησιῶν, ἡ κίνησις πρὸς ἐπανέναρξιν, τῇ ὁμοθύμῳ συγκαταθέσει ὄλων τῶν ἐπὶ μέρους Ὀρθοδόξων Ἐκκλησιῶν, τοῦ θεολογικοῦ Διαλόγου μετὰ τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου καὶ τῆς Ῥωμαιοκαθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ διαφύλαξις ἀσινοῦς καὶ ἀβλαβοῦς τοῦ ὀρθοδόξου δόγματος καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ Εὐαγγελικοῦ λόγου, Σᾶς ἔχουν ἀναδείξει εἰς ἄνδρα ἀξιον καὶ ἰκανὸν ἵνα ἀντιμετωπίσει τὰς προκλήσεις τῶν καιρῶν.” *Πρόποσις ὑπὲρ τοῦ Οἴκουμενικοῦ Πατριάρχου, 21/9/2005.*

(clxxxii) *Uppsala Report 1968*, op. cit. Section V: Worship, p. 74.

(clxxxiii) “Most of us would say, no, we could not ever ordain women. Yet others would say, it is for us essentially an open question. We are not proposing to do so in the near future, but we need to reflect more deeply on it...Then again the issue that is coming up very much here at Lambeth: the possibility of blessing homosexual relationships. The Orthodox Church would answer, no, this cannot be done...But it’s quite clear in the modern world—and the Orthodox also belong to the modern world—that the whole issue of the meaning of human sexuality is going to be more and more explored...It could be argued that perhaps the Anglican Communion was guided by the Holy Spirit to lead other Christians into new paths.” Interview with Fr. George Westhaver, 9/2/2008.

(clxxxiv) “The True Orthodox Church and the Heresy of Ecumenism,” Section I.7, 10.