

What is the Traditional Orthodox Church?

Early History of the Orthodox Church

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The true Orthodox Church is the direct descendent of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church founded by Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ through His Apostles. It can be traced back to its founders, the Apostles, by its delineated list of bishops (apostolic succession) and has preserved the fullness of the faith and the practices of the Church (*orthodoxy* and *orthopraxis*).

By the grace of the Holy Spirit poured out upon the Apostles at Pentecost in A.D. 30, the Church through its apostles and later its bishops, spread from Jerusalem throughout the Middle East, Northern Africa, and Southern Europe casting out the darkness of the paganism (worship of demons and creatures) of the Roman Empire with the light of knowledge of, the faith in, and worship of the one True God in Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Its power to change individual lives and transform society led it from a small persecuted Jewish sect (the “*Nazarene*” sect) to eventually become the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century A.D.

Challenged and attacked by paganism, spiritualism, and various heresies, the Church articulated its faith in Seven Ecumenical Councils (called by the Roman Emperor) as well as many local councils through illuminated bishops over many centuries--the faith never changing, but requiring more exact expression to counter its numerous and ever present adversaries. Because of this, the traditional Orthodox Church has often been referred to as the “Church of the Seven Councils.”

For nearly a millennium, Orthodox “Roman” Christendom remained undivided. The bishops of the five large patriarchal metropolitan areas of the empire -- Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem -- as well as the hundreds of

bishops of smaller towns throughout the empire, maintained a unity of faith, practice, and tradition, only possible by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, which we call the Orthodox faith.

The Rise of the “Frankish” Roman Catholic Church

However, beginning in the 9th century a new adversary arose in the person of the Charlemagne, King of the Carolingian Franks. The Franks considered themselves to be the elite, both militarily and spiritually, by virtue of their victories over their neighbors. Philosophically, they were fond of metaphysics and speculation and believed their rational approach to Christianity superior to the empirical revelatory Christianity of the undivided Orthodox Roman Church. After all, if they ruled supreme in northwestern Europe--their God and their theology must be superior to those they conquered, including the local Romans.

Jealous of and not wanting his Roman subjects to have a divided loyalty with the Emperor of the Romans in Constantinople, in one of the most masterful acts of propaganda in history, Charlemagne called himself “Emperor and Augustus” who “governs the Roman Empire.” At the same time he called the true Roman Emperor in Constantinople the “Emperor of the Greeks” (“Greek” essentially meaning pagan), so that his was the only true “Christian” empire and his “Roman” church the only true church. Placing his Frankish nobility in the church as bishops with the power of the sword, and relying on the theology of his Frankish leaders, he and his subsequent followers infiltrated and eventually took over the Patriarchal throne of Rome. This was the beginning what we today call the Roman Catholic Church (but whom the moslems still call the “*Frankish*” church).

These usurping Franks introduced various “innovations” in doctrine and practice (i.e., heresies), e.g., adding to the Nicene Creed the “*filioque*”, introducing the use of unleavened bread in the Liturgy, claiming supremacy of the Pope of Rome over the other Bishops once they controlled that throne, promoting a rational scholastic metaphysical neoplatonic theology based almost entirely on Augustine’s writings and Alcuin’s teachings propagated under Charlemagne in his Palace School in Aachen. These and other innovations with an ever increasing superiority in

numbers of Frankish bishops resulted in the Frankish capture of the papacy and the eventual Great Schism of the heretical Frankish Roman Catholic Church from the historical and true Orthodox Roman Church of the Eastern Roman Empire in 1054. It was not a question of West vs. East, Latin vs. Greek, but rather of Frank vs. Roman, Neopagan Frankish Christian vs. Orthodox Christian.

Drifting further from its origins over the next few centuries, continuing to introduce innovations, the decadent Frankish Roman Catholic Church found itself attacked by reformers from within. The most successful of these, Martin Luther, triggered the Protestant Reformation, by complaining to his Frankish bishop Albert of Mainz, protesting the sale of indulgences and by affixing his “*Ninty-five Theses*” on the door of the church in Wittenberg in A.D. 1517 in an attempt to correct the doctrine and practice of a church now far from its orthodox roots. Although the protestant reformers who formulated their Confession of Faith at Augsburg in A. D. 1530 had extensive correspondence with the Patriarch in Constantinople over it, they were unwilling to listen to the counsel given by the Patriarch. The gap between Eastern Christian and Western Frank was too great to bridge--Augustinian neoplatonism, rationalism, “*sola scriptura*,” and “salvation by faith alone” versus the traditional illuminated patristic faith of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. The ever speculative Frankish theological elitism and rationalism of the West seduced them into thinking that their “Christianity” was better, more “progressive,” more “evolved” than that of their Eastern counterparts. This was their spiritual inheritance from Charlemagne and his Alcuin school of theology. Later in the 16th century, Rome introduced their “improved” Gregorian calendar in favor the traditional Church (Julian) calendar. Rome had certainly not been orthodox in belief for over 5 centuries, but now even their critical reformers were drifting further apart in their evolving currents of rationalism and heresy

Meanwhile, czarist Russia, baptized in the faith in A.D. 988, blossomed over the following centuries to become a leading bastion of Orthodox Christianity. This was even more pronounced after the fall of Constantinople and what was left of the Eastern Roman Empire to the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet in A.D. 1453. The Middle East, Greece, and the Balkans also fell under the Ottomans. Nonetheless, even in Islamic captivity, these conquered nations preserved the fullness of faith of the One

Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church pure and unchanged, although isolated, suppressed, and frequently persecuted.

World Orthodoxy In Modern Times

Tragically, the unity of the Orthodox world was rent asunder in the mid- to late nineteenth and early twentieth century by the influence of powerful, destructive, and innovative ideas advocated by European and Russian liberal revolutionary thinkers, a great many of them Jewish intellectuals in Russia and Masonic ecumenistic oriented leaders in Greece. In the latter, two were instrumental in the overthrow of the traditional Orthodox Church, those being the the dynamic secular statesman Eleftherios Venizelos and his nephew Meletios Metaxakis: a singularly self-promoting member of the hierarchy of the Greek Orthodox Church--a true wolf in sheeps' clothing.

In Russia the abdication of the humble pious Orthodox Christian Tzar Nicholas II led to the establishment of a weak Provisional Government which was easily taken over by the bolsheviks who unleashed a torrent of blood under Lenin. The Tsar, God's anointed ruler, and his pious Orthodox family were unceremoniously but ritualistically murdered during their captivity in Yekaterinberg--strange Jewish Kabbalistic symbols being left on the walls of that basement room deciphered as: "Here was wounded in the heart the head of the Church, the people and the state," or "Here, by order of the secret powers, the Tsar was offered as a sacrifice for the destruction of the state. Let all peoples be informed of this." How meaningful now, in Christlike fashion, appear the last words of the Tsar before his murders and his Lord, "Forgive them, for they know know what they do." [Note: See V. Moss, *Zion in Babylon*, Bk. 2, p. 36 and Wikipedia on Tsar Nicholas II's biography.]

The bolsheviks rapidly nationalized Church properties, schools, printing houses, forbade Church weddings, funerals, and birth registrations, closed monasteries and seminaries, etc. They implemented the new calendar on February 1, 1918 shifting it to February 14. The Church absolutely rejected the new calendar. The intent was to rid the nation of backward religious thinking and replace it with scientific thinking. The communists repeatedly tried to seduce the Russian Orthodox Church

to bend to the will of an atheistic immoral government. Bishop Tikhon of Moscow and the true Orthodox refused to bow to the state. He was martyred in 1925. Loyal clergy, monks, nuns, and laymen were consequently murdered or persecuted through deportation and internment in horrific concentration camps throughout Russia and Siberia. Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novogorod conspired deviously to gain the Patriarchal Throne and later bowed the Russian Church absolutely to the Russian State in 1927, causing the greatest and most destructive schism in the Orthodox Church since the loss of the Papacy in the 11th century. This compromised church has been called the Sergianist Church. [Note: The current Moscow Patriarchal Orthodox Church of Russia is a descendant of the Sergianist Church.] Even more so than before, members of the true Russian Church went underground, fled the country, joined with other Orthodox Churches including the Russian Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR), or perished/survived in the concentration camps of the Gulag.

In Greece the very ambitious Meletios Metaxakis was elected Metropolitan of Kition in Cyprus in 1910. He quickly initiated a series of successful talks with representatives of the Episcopal Church of America in New York for expanding mutual relations. Meanwhile back in Greece, Meletios' uncle Eleftherios Venizelos, a similarly ambitious revolutionary of Cretan origin was enlisted in 1909 by the Military League to aid their stalled military *coup d'etat*. Venizelos' proposals for changes in the government were accepted by King George I, leading to elections in 1910. A parliament was seated, whose largest party were the Independents. Venizelos became their leader and formed his own Liberal Party who in a subsequent election the same year took control of the parliament by a large margin. He began to modernize the country through a variety of political and educational changes including the writing of a new constitution.

Over the next two years 3 years there ensued two Balkan Wars which doubled the size of Greece at the expense of all of its neighbors. Greece remained neutral at the beginning of World War I. By 1915 Venizelos came into conflict with King Constantine I and ended up resigning twice, although reelected after the first resignation. The parliament was dissolved after the Venizelos' second resignation, which he considered unconstitutional and consequently returned to Crete.

Venizelos continued to disagree with the royalists on national policy for the war.

After a disastrous invasion of Bulgaria into Greek Macedonia causing a major displacement of Greeks from there, army officers loyal to Venizelos staged a *coup d'état* in Thessalonica on August 30, 1916. A triumvirate composed of Venizelos, Admiral Pavlos Kountouriotis, and General Panagiotis Danglis formed a provisional government in Thessalonica. On October 9 they assumed command of the National Defense of the North and the recently acquired lands from the Balkan wars, where Venizelos had strong support and courted additional support from the Church in the north, while the royalists controlled the south. On December 2 France and Britain recognized Venizelos' government as the lawful ruling body, causing greater animosity between him and the royalists in Athens.

On December 7, 1916 Venizelos' government declared war on the Central Powers. The royalists in retaliation issued a warrant for his arrest and forced the Archbishop of Athens to anathematize him--perhaps a very critical event in the events that follow in regard to the Orthodox Church. In turn the allies established a naval blockade of southern Greece causing extreme hardship on the people under the King's control. Venizelos returned to Athens in May 1917 having essentially unified all of Greece under him. He deployed all of the military against the Central Powers. In June of 1917 Britain and France, as *protecting powers*, having promised to set up a constitutional government pressured King Constantine to resign and leave the country. The King resigned on June 15 and left the country. Many royalists also left for exile in Italy and France.

Another key figure in these years was Andreas Michalakopoulos, a senior member of the Liberal Party and close friend of Venizelos for over 20 years. In November 1916 he was the Minister for the Economy and in a long letter to Venizelos expounded the necessity of radical reform of the Greek Orthodox Church, considering it one of the major, if not the major impediment to the modernization and westernization of Greece. The letter dated November 10/23, 1916 stated that for the good of the country, to accomplish the radical reform he had in mind, he would need a hierarch with the same revolutionary vision to implement his ideas. His choice--the Hierarch from Cyprus, meaning Meletios Metaxakis. The Church

fasts would need to be abolished since proper nourishment was more important to build up a good, strong, working race, i.e., to bring profit to the country. Modernization of the Church Liturgies with more expository preaching and much shorter services were recommended to benefit the people in a social, moral, and patriotic way. Re-education of the priests in special schools to increase the people's love of country, fulfill their political duties, as well as promoting sobriety, etc., was deemed essential. He recommended abolishing the celebration of the feast days of the Saints which he considered an excuse for idleness, promoting a more active life activity in place of the quiet holiness nurtured by the Church. He wanted to abolish the monasteries which he considered the source of all corruption, giving their lands to the peasants. This was just the beginning part of his revolutionary ideas. Anticipating protests and active resistance he recommended purging any resisters so that no one would be capable of provoking trouble against the state. Just imagine then what was in store for the Orthodox Church of Greece and what must have been going through Venizelos' mind just 2 weeks later on December 7, 1916, thinking back on this letter from his close friend and political ally when he was suddenly excommunicated and anathematized by Metropolitan Evmenios, Archbishop of Athens, the leader of the traditional Greek Orthodox Church. So when Venizelos assumed the office of prime minister of the entire state in June 1917, one of his first orders of business was to call a meeting of the 12-member ecclesiastical court composed of bishops well disposed toward himself, in order to try the bishops who had participated in the excommunication.

Metropolitan Theoklitos of Athens and Arsenios of Larisa were uncanonically dethroned, other bishops punished, and Venizelos' nephew Meletios Metaxakis recalled from America and enthroned as Archbishop of Athens. [editor: Paschalis M. Kitromilides, *Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship*, Edinburgh University Press Ltd, Edinburgh, 2008, p. 367.]

Returning to that relative from Cyprus, Meletios Metaxakis, in 1918 he was in America setting up the structure that would become the Greek Archdiocese of America in 1921. This founding of a purely Greek ethnocentric diocese in the wake of the vacuum caused by the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, fostered the disintegration of the Orthodox Church in American along ethnic lines each

requesting support from their various national Churches.

Upon his return to Greece as the new Archbishop of Athens with the support of his uncle the Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos and Andreas Michalakopoulos, Minister of Military Affairs, Meletios began commemorating Venizelos instead of the King at the Liturgy causing a schism between the Royalists and the Venizelists, including St. Nektarios of Pentapolis [on Aegina] and Metropolitan Germanus of Demetrias [one of the future leaders of the Traditional Old Calendar Orthodox Church]. Not content with this schism alone, he began implementing his benefactors' ideas starting with changing the traditional Julian Church calendar to the Roman Catholic Gregorian calendar to facilitate the drawing closer to the West. However, Metropolitan Germanus opposed this, instead proposing that all the Orthodox churches would have to agree to a calendar change, one better than the Julian or Gregorian. Meletios' zeal was slowed. Moreover, his tenure was very short lived--but only for the moment! Why? Because Venizelos was voted out of office in 1920 at the height of the Greek advance into Turkey, and Meletios, who wanted to transform the Greek Church into the image of the Anglican Church against the wishes of the Greek people, was ousted as Archbishop of Athens going into exile.

Returning to America in 1921 Meletios participated in Anglican services contrary to the canons of the Orthodox Church. He also promulgated the idea that the Orthodox in America should be under the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople and facilitated the schism of the Greek Archdiocese in America from the Church of Greece into an autonomous entity, again bringing more disunity into the Orthodox world. Once the Greeks had their own diocese, the rest of the nationalities, who were previously united under Russian authority, followed suit, creating many overlapping geographical dioceses on ethnic grounds. Being summoned before the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece on November 21, 1921, he was officially deposed for a series of infractions against canon law and for causing schism. Nevertheless, 4 days later, on November 25, 1921 he was uncanonically elected Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople through intrigue and bribery and enthroned in January 1922. Immediately he resumed implementing the Venizelos-Michalakopoulos agenda. Then without prior notification of the other Orthodox

Patriarchates he unilaterally and uncanonically recognized the validity of the Anglican hierarchial succession, a ruling disputed even by the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1922 when Greece attempted to reconquer Turkey, her forces fell victim to the withdrawal of logistic support by the Western powers (who feared an orthodox empire united with newly communist Russia) and ran out of steam in the center of the country. The Turkish general Mustafa Kemal Attaturk counterattacked and drove the Greek forces all the way back to the Mediterranean, resulting in a massive exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey.

In February of 1923 Archimandrite Chrysostomos Papadopoulos, backed by Venizelos' revolutionary government officials Gonatas and Plastiras as well as Meletios IV, was uncanonically raised to Archbishop of Athens. As payback he agreed to introduce the New Calendar, the Gregorian Calendar of the West, into the Church to replace the traditional Julian Church calendar.

Ever scheming, in May of 1923, as Ecumenical Patriarch, Melitios IV convened a Pan-Orthodox Congress with an ambitious agenda to foist a variety of heretical ideas and innovations on the Church as a whole, to irrevocably change its nature and undermine its power including the New Calendar. This so-called "Pan-Orthodox" Conference in Istanbul included the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Church of Cyprus, the Church of Serbia, the Church of Greece, and the Church of Romania. Archbishop Alexander Nemolovsky of the Aleutians Islands and North America attended, but his canonical status was challenged by the Russian Church Abroad who supplied Archbishop Anastassy Gribanovsky of Kishinev and Hotinsk. The Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem refused to attend. Bulgaria was absent, Sinai was absent, so less than 50% of the Orthodox world was represented.

Meletios' prized guest was a prelate of the Anglican Church, Charles Gore, the Bishop of Oxford and a fellow Freemason, who sat at Meletios' right hand. Both Meletios and Gore gave speeches desiring the immediate union of the Orthodox and Anglican Churches, a core idea from their Masonic beliefs. Specifically the

Congress made the following decisions:

1. Correct the Julian Calendar, essentially to adopt the Gregorian Calendar, although not called that. Determine the date of celebration of the Holy Pascha on the basis of astronomical observations.

Conditions for which further discussions of the calendar, to make it more accurate, scientifically and practically.

3. Allowing the marriage of Priests and Deacons after ordination.

4. Allowing second marriages for widowed Priests and Deacons

5. Various other issues including the hair and exterior appearance of clergy, celebration of Saints' days on weekends, changes in the fasts. This particular resolution was given back to the Local Churches to make their own decisions.

Note: all these resolutions were in total contradiction to the Tradition and canonical norms of the Orthodox Church. Consequently, fearing the repercussions, no Church adopted any of these resolutions. Meletios IV decided to adopt them in Constantinople anyway. By June 1, 1923 a group of religious leaders and laymen gathered in Constantinople with the aim of deposing Meletios. On June 25, the Synod of Constantinople under Meletios circulated an announcement that he expected general approval of the resolutions of the Congress. Subsequently Meletios left Constantinople on July 1, 1923 for Greece under the pretext of illness. He was officially deposed as Patriarch of Constantinople on September 20, 1923.

The Patriarch of Alexandria declared his resolutions pointless and uncanonical, smelling of heresy and schism. The Patriarchates of Antioch and Jerusalem added their disapproval. But Meletios was not above deceit, trying to deceive the Archbishop of Finland and Patriarch Tikhon of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Patriarch of Serbia said he would agree to the calendar change if all the other

Orthodox Churches agreed, as did the Archbishop of Crete. In Dec 1923 the Romanian Orthodox Church accepted putting the new calendar into practice the following year.

Also by December 1923 the leaders of the new revolutionary government Colonel Nicholas Plastiras and Colonel Stylianos Gonatas, and the Minister of Religious Affairs A. Stratigopoulos imposed their will through Plastiras on Chrysostom Papadopoulos and the rest of the Hierarchs of the Greek Church demanding that they throw out the canons, purge the Church, and use radical measures to insure it happens, or else. Thus the New Calendar was forced upon Greece on March 1, 1924, and, after Meletios was thrown out, also by Metropolitan Gregory VII of Constantinople. So 3 Churches had adopted the calendar change by 1924. Others followed suit over time. For example, the malicious ever-meddling Meletios with the backing of English Masons put his name in the running for the Patriarchate of Alexandria, displacing the first claimant Metropolitan Nicholas of Nubia--and won. He immediately had the Gregorian calendar adopted within the sea of Alexandria causing a schism.

Nonetheless, despite protests the damage had been done. Several Churches called for an Ecumenical Synod. An inter-Orthodox commission was held in 1930 on Mount Athos in the Monastery of Vatopedi, the Serbian Patriarch's representative, the highly respected and highly educated Bishop Nicholai Velimirovich, stated that the Serbian Church would not participate if the meeting had anything in common with the Pan-Orthodox Congress at Constantinople. The Serbian Church and the Polish Church considered the Local Churches that had accepted the New Calendar to be schismatics, and refrained from communion with them. After all the new calendar was originally introduced by Pope Gregory XIII by papal decree on February 24, 1582, specifically to introduce divisions among the Orthodox. Consequently, its adoption was synodically condemned by the Orthodox Churches multiple times: 1583, 1587, 1593, 1722, 1827, 1848, 1895, and in 1904.

Thus, 3 men, Eleftherios Venizelos, Andreas Michalakopoulos, and especially Meletios Metaxakis, effectively split the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church into two: a re-engineered "new calendarist" official "Orthodox" Church with the

full power of the governmental behind them and the traditional “old calendarists” who were frequently ridiculed as ignorant, unscientific, and impeding progress. Ridicule often gave way to persecution, imprisonment, and exile of priest, laymen, as well as destruction of whole church communities and loss of their places of worship.

This New Calendar revolution was truly not a “reformation” of the traditional Orthodox Church, but a rupturing of the Body of Christ, an abandonment of the true Church. It resulted in the loss of knowing who she was and of almost everything she stood for--not just a difference of 13 days between the two calendars. The landmarks had been removed, the traditions not held fast. Both were cast aside by the innovating hierarchy of a few national Churches without the mandatory consent of the laity. Some of the subsequent results of this “New Calendar” Orthodoxy have included shortened worship services, the introduction of pews and organs, neglect of the Church fasts, kneeling in worship like the Romans, abandoning many of the Holy Canons, a loss of the idea of “holiness”, adoption of the western ideas of active service--all in the name of progress, i.e., to make the Church “more relevant” to a modern (secular) lifestyle.

The great Russian theologian and Archbishop Theophan of Poltava chose to stand with the Greek and Romanian Old Calendarists. He wrote two extended works on the calendar question. In one of them, written in 1926, he wrote:

“Question. Have the pastors of the Orthodox Church not made special judgements concerning the calendar?”

“Answer. They have, many times – with regard to the introduction of the new Roman calendar – both in private assemblies and in councils.

“A proof of this is the following. First of all, the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II, who lived at the same time as the Roman calendar reform, immediately, in 1582, together with his Synod condemned the new Roman system of chronology as being not in agreement with the Tradition of the Church. In the next year (1583), with the participation of Patriarchs Sylvester of Alexandria and Sophronius VI of Jerusalem, he convened a Church Council. This Council recognised the Gregorian

calendar to be not in agreement with the canons of the Universal Church and with the decree of the First Ecumenical Council on the method of calculating the day of Holy Pascha.

“Through the labours of this Council there appeared: a Conciliar tome, which denounced the wrongness and unacceptability for the Orthodox Church of the Roman calendar, and a canonical conciliar Decree – the Sigillion of November 20, 1583. In this Sigillion all three of the above-mentioned Patriarchs with their Synods called on the Orthodox firmly and unbendingly, even to the shedding of their blood, to hold the Orthodox Menaion and Julian Paschalion, threatening the transgressors of this with anathema, cutting them off from the Church of Christ and the gathering of the faithful...

“In the course of the following three centuries: the 17th, 18th and 19th, a whole series of Ecumenical Patriarchs decisively expressed themselves against the Gregorian calendar and, evaluating it in the spirit of the conciliar decree of Patriarch Jeremiah II, counseled the Orthodox to avoid it...

“Question. Is the introduction of the new calendar important or of little importance?

“Answer. Very important, especially in connection with the Paschalion, and it is an extreme disorder and ecclesiastical schism, which draws people away from communion and unity with the whole Church of Christ, deprives them of the grace of the Holy Spirit, shakes the dogma of the unity of the Church, and, like Arius, tears the seamless robe of Christ, that is, everywhere divides the Orthodox, depriving them of oneness of mind; breaks the bond with Ecclesiastical Holy Tradition and makes them fall under conciliar condemnation for despising Tradition...

“Question. How must the Orthodox relate to the new calendarist schismatics, according to the canons?

“Answer. They must have no communion in prayer with them, even before their

conciliar condemnation...

“Question. What punishment is fitting, according to the Church canons, for those who pray with the new calendarist schismatics?”

“Answer. The same condemnation with them...” (Vladimir Moss, **A Life of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava**)

Because of the doctrinal and canonical apostasy of the new calendarists, the old calendarists preferred to call themselves “Genuine Orthodox Christians” (GOC), “True Orthodox Christians” (TOC), or “Resisters.” Over the ensuing years conservative monks on Mt. Athos supported the movement resulting in the founding of Traditionalist Churches and Old Calendar monasteries.

“On August 8, 1934 the True Orthodox Christians declared the official church to be schismatic. For, as Nicetas Anagnostopoulos wrote, the Greek Church had “infringed on the dogma of the spiritual unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, for which the Divine Founder had prayed, because it separated itself in the simultaneous celebration of the feasts and observance of the fasts from the other Orthodox Churches and the Orthodox world, 8/10ths of which follows the Old Calendar (the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Holy Mountain, Russia, Serbia and others).”

“In Divine worship it has divided the pious Greek people into two worshipping camps, and has divided families and introduced the simultaneous feasts of Orthodox and heretics (Catholics, Protestants and others) as well as confusion and disorder into the divine Orthodox Worship handed down by the Fathers.

“It has transferred the immovable religious feasts and the great fasts, handed down from ages past, of Christmas, the Mother of God and the Holy Apostles, reducing the fast of the Apostles until it disappears when it coincides with the feast of All Saints; and has removed the readings from the Gospel and Apostle from the Sunday cycle.

“From this it becomes evident that the Calendar is not an astronomical question, as the innovators of the Church of Greece claim in their defense, but quite clearly a religious question, given that it is indissolubly bound up with the worshipping, and in general with the religious life of the Orthodox Christian.

“Through the calendar innovation the new calendarist Church has transgressed, not only the perennial Ecclesiastical Tradition of the Patristic and Orthodox Calendar, and not only the above-mentioned Apostolic command [II Thessalonians 2.15; Galatians 1.8-9] and the decision of the Seventh Ecumenical Council concerning the anathematisation of those who violate the Sacred Tradition [“If anyone violates any ecclesiastical tradition, written or unwritten, let him be anathema”], but also the decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Patriarchal Councils of the years 1583, 1587 and 1593 under the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II and of 1848 under the Ecumenical Patriarch Anthimus, which condemned and anathematized the Gregorian calendar.

“It has also transgressed the Sacred Canons which order the keeping and observance of the Sacred Traditions, which are: a) the Third of the Council of Carthage, b) the Twenty-First of the Council of Gangra, and c) the Ninety-First and Ninety-Second of St. Basil the Great, as well as the Forty-Seventh canon of the Council of Laodicea, which forbids the concelebration with heretics, which is what the Latins and the Protestants are, and the First of the Seventh Ecumenical Council concerning the steadfast observance of the complete array of the divine Canons.” [Vladimir Moss, **New Zion in Babylon**, Bk III, p. 99-100].

Meletios Metaxakis himself did not escape divine retribution. “In 1935, on the death of Patriarch Damian of Jerusalem, he tried to acquire that see, too, but failed. It is said that he then went out of his mind, and six days later, grinding his teeth and wringing his hands, he died, groaning: ‘Alas, I have divided the Church, I have destroyed Orthodoxy.’ He lied to the end; for he destroyed only himself, while the True Church will prevail over the gates of hell...

As Abbot Philotheus Zervakos of Paros wrote to the new calendar bishop Augustine of Florina in 1968: “Since the old calendar is a written tradition, and

since the new one is an innovation of papist and masonic origin, whoever despises the old calendar and follows the new is subject to anathema. Every excuse and justification is unjustified and ‘excuses in sins’...” [Vladimir Moss, **New Zion in Babylon**, Bk II, p. 142].

“In 1998 the True Orthodox Church of Greece under Archbishop Chrysostom II of Athens resolved to include anathemas against Meletius Metaxakis and Chrysostom Papadopoulos in the anathema against ecumenism proclaimed on the Sunday of Orthodoxy...” [Vladimir Moss, **New Zion in Babylon**, Bk II, p. 143].

The Church of the Genuine (or True) Orthodox Christians of Greece

By 1934 over 800 Old Calendar parishes had been established in Greece, often served by hieromonks (priest monks) from Mt. Athos. In 1935 eleven bishops from the New Calendar decided to return to the Traditionalist communities. Although 8 recanted under pressure, the 3 that remained, fearing more persecution, consecrated 4 additional bishops. After further persecution and 3 defections, the 4 bishops that remained, Met. Germanos of Demetria, Met. Chrysostomos of Florina, Bishop Germanos of Cyclades, and Bishop Matthew of Vresthena, formed the first Holy Synod of the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece.

The Church of the Genuine (or True) Orthodox Christians of Greece today is comprised of the faithful confessors of Christian truth who rejected the resolutions of Meletios’ so-called “Pan-Orthodox Council” of 1923 and continued to abide in the historical traditions of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church with all of its holy canons and practices. It traces its modern spiritual lineage from these 4 bishops and parishes that officially departed the heretical innovating state Church of Greece in 1935 after years of protest and resistance, suffering marginalization and persecution at the hands of the official state “New Calendar” Church of Greece and governmental authorities.

At present the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece is the largest of the old calendar Greek Orthodox Churches descended from that first Holy Synod of 1935. The Synod of Bishops of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of

Greece is currently under the Presidency of His Beatitude Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens. The Eparchial Synod of the Church of Genuine Orthodox Christians of America is under the presidency of His Eminence Demetrios, Metropolitan of America. Our ruling bishop is His Eminence Bishop Auxentios of Portland and Etna.

Today in America our Orthodox faithful come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, and may speak a variety of languages. Nonetheless, English is the main language for services and instruction, with occasional Greek or Russian. We continue to oppose those so-called “new calendar orthodox” or “World Orthodox” churches who favor a false union with non-Orthodox churches whose beliefs have been judged “schismatic” at best and “heretical” at worst for centuries by our Holy Canons and Ecumenical Councils. They propose an uncritical union of churches with differing faiths in utter disregard of the truth under the pretext of Christian love.

This greatest of all lies is designated by the traditional Orthodox Churches as the “*Pan-heresy of Ecumenism*,” in which all churches and organizations calling themselves “Christian” are said to be equal, or sister churches, each one having some “part” of the truth, no one church having all the truth. This modern revisionist ecumenist worldly view of the church is a radically different view from that of the traditional Genuine/True Orthodox Church.

The Vatican, protestant churches, and the World Orthodox churches in the World Council of Churches are actively engaged in such ecumenism. The World Orthodox have been seduced by the others to follow suit. Initially their purpose was to give witness to the protestants and Roman Catholics of the “real faith” and draw the non-orthodox back to her. But not being sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit, these World Orthodox Churches have fallen prey to spiritual delusion from the adversary. Continuing in their ecumenist mode of logical thinking, their views of salvation have now evolved to include all non-Christian religions as equal validity. Salvation in Jesus Christ is said to be just one of among many paths to “God.” Other religions such as Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Native American shamanism, etc., are just as true for them. Truth has been not only divided into

parts and cast to the ground, but is now totally relative and adaptive. This is a far cry from the message of the Apostles. It is the doctrine of demons.

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