

1935 PASTORAL ENCYCLICAL OF THE GENUINE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF GREECE

Unjustly condemned by the schismatic synod to deposition and a five-year imprisonment in monasteries, and seized by force by the government (which has become the executory arm of the [New Calendar] Archdiocese, which by a mere word has placed itself above the divine canons, the [Church's] Charter, and the Constitution of Greece) because we had the courage and the spiritual strength to raise the glorious and venerable banner of Orthodoxy, we consider it our pastoral duty before we depart [for prison] to direct the following admonitions to you that adhere to the Orthodox festal calendar of our fathers: While faithfully following the Apostle's admonition, "Stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or by our letter," do not cease from struggling by every lawful and Christian means for the strengthening and triumph of our sacred struggle, which looks to the restoration of the patristic and Orthodox festal calendar within the Church; only this can re-establish the diminished Orthodox authority of the Greek Church and bring back the peace and unity of the Orthodox Greek people. By the judgments which the Lord knows, the majority of the hierarchy of the Greek Church, under the influence and initiative of its president, has placed the blot of schism upon what up until now had been its pure and truly Orthodox countenance, when it rejected the Orthodox festal calendar — which has been consecrated by the Seven Ecumenical Councils and ratified by the age-long practice of the Orthodox Eastern Church — and replaced it with the Papal Calendar. Of course, this schism of the Orthodox Greek people was created by the majority of the hierarchy, which forgot its sacred and national mission and the old Greek [revolutionary] slogan: "Fight for Orthodoxy and for Greek liberty," and which, without the agreement of all the Orthodox Churches, introduced the Papal festal calendar into our divine worship, thereby dividing not only the Orthodox Churches, but also the Orthodox Christians into two opposing camps. In assuming the pastorship of the Orthodox Greek populace that follows the Orthodox festal calendar of our fathers, and being conscious of the oath of faith that we took that we would keep all that we have received from the Seven Ecumenical Councils, we abjure every innovation and cannot but proclaim as schismatic the State Church, which has accepted the Papal festal calendar which has been described by Pan-Orthodox Councils as an innovation of the heretics, as a global scandal and as an arbitrary trampling underfoot of the Divine and Sacred Canons of the ecclesiastical traditions. On account of this, we counsel all who follow the Orthodox festal calendar to have no spiritual communion with the Schismatic Church and its schismatic ministers, from whom the Grace of the All-holy Spirit has departed, since they have set at naught the resolutions of the Fathers of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and all the Pan-Orthodox Councils that condemned the Gregorian festal calendar. The fact that the Schismatic Church does not have grace and the Holy Spirit is confirmed by Saint Basil the Great, who says: "Even though the schismatics have not erred in doctrines, yet because Christ is the Head of the Body of the Church according to the divine Apostle, and from Him are all the members quickened and receive spiritual increase, the [schismatics] have been torn from the consonance of the members of the Body and no longer have the grace of the Holy Spirit abiding with them. And how, indeed, can they impart to others that which they have not?" While the Schismatic Church imposes oppressive and intolerable measures in order

to violate our Orthodox conscience, we exhort you to endure all things and to preserve the Orthodox heritage intact and unstained, even as we received it from our pious Fathers, having us as luminous and fortifying examples, seeing we were not afraid — even in the waning years of our lives — to withstand with boldness and dignity the bigoted and medieval measures of our exile and imprisonment in monasteries, as it were in prisons. Esteeming this as honor and glory and joy, according to the Apostle, who enjoins us to rejoice and boast in our sufferings in behalf of Christ, we counsel you also to have endurance and persistence in these grief's, and afflictions, and evils, and outrages to which you will be subjected by a Church that is Schismatic; and ever hope in God, Who will not permit that you be tried above what you are able to endure, and Who, in His infinite and unfathomable long-suffering, will be well-pleased to enlighten those who, out of innocence, have been led astray and follow the Papal festal calendar; and in the end may He grant you the triumph of Orthodoxy and the unity of those who bear the name of Christ, the Orthodox Greek people, for whom we struggle to the glory of Christ, Whose grace and infinite mercy be with you all.

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