

DECLARATION AND CLARIFICATION

Yesterday there circulated an official comment by the Orthodox Church of Albania, according to which my modesty is said to have “recited the Symbol of Faith with the filioque.”

Inasmuch as these accusations this time touch upon the integrity of my Orthodox *phronema* and do not merely concern my personal journey, I feel the need and obligation to respond both explicitly and categorically in order to prevent any potential scandal among the people of God as a result of the above comment.

I sincerely wonder: Does my oversight in reciting parts of the English version of the text of the Hierarchal Confession, caused by my emotional intensity and great personal anxiety at that sacred moment, perhaps constitute proof of my “deficient” Orthodoxy? Heaven forbid!

Therefore, in order to placate even the most sensitive conscience that might have been influenced by the aforementioned prejudicial comment, I declare to everyone everywhere that I believe absolutely and unwaveringly everything proper that I signed with my own hand in the attached text of my Hierarchal Confession.

Please pray that “the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the Prophets” may guide the steps of my hierarchal journey in all and for all.

Shepherd
of Philomelion²³

July 27, 2023

Διευκρινιστική Δήλωση

Κυκλοφόρησε χθές επίσημο σχόλιο τῆς Ὁρθόδοξης Ἐκκλησίας τῆς Ἀλβανίας, σύμφωνα μέ τό ὅποιο ἡ ταπεινότης μου φέρεται νά «ἀπήγγειλε τό Σύμβολο τῆς Πίστεως μέ τό filioque».

Ἐπειδή οἱ αἰτιάσεις αὐτή τή φορά ἄπτονται τῆς ἀκεραιότητος τοῦ Ὁρθόδοξου φρονήματός μου καί δέν ἀφοροῦν ἀπλῶς στήν προσωπική μου πορεία, αἰσθάνομαι τήν ἀνάγκη καί τήν ὑποχρέωση ρητῶς καί κατηγορηματικῶς νά ἀπαντήσω, ὥστε νά προλάβω τόν διά τοῦ ὡς ἄνω σχολίου πιθανό σκανδαλισμό τοῦ λαοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Ἐκφράζω τήν ἀπορία: Ἄραγε ἡ, λογῶ συναισθηματικῆς φόρτισης καί πολλῆς φυσικῆς ἀγωνίας μου γιά τά τελούμενα, παροραματική ἀνάγνωση σημείων τῆς ἀγγλικῆς ἐκδοχῆς τοῦ κειμένου τῆς Ἀρχιερατικῆς Ὁμολογίας κατ' ἐκείνη τήν ἱερή ὥρα, ἀποτελεῖ τάχα ἀπόδειξη διά τό «ἐλλιπές» τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας μου; Μή γένοιτο!

Πρός ἀνάπαυση, λοιπόν, καί τῆς πλέον εὐαίσθητης συνείδησης ἡ ὅποια καί τυχόν νά ἐπηρεάσθηκε ἀπό τήν προκατειλημμένη ὡς ἄνω ἀναφορά, δηλώνω πρὸς πᾶσα κατεύθυνση ὅτι πιστεύω ἀκεραίως καί ἀμετακινήτως ὅλα ὅσα, οἰκεία χειρὶ, ὑπέγραψα στό ἐπισυναπτόμενο κείμενο τῆς Ἀρχιερατικῆς μου Ὁμολογίας.

Νά εὐχεσθε, ὥστε «τό Πνεῦμα τό Ἅγιον, τό κύριον, τό ζωοποιόν, τό ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, τό σύν Πατρὶ καί Υἱῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καί συνδοξαζόμενον, τό λαλήσαν διά τῶν προφητῶν» νά ὀδηγῇ τά βήματα τῆς ἀρχιερατικῆς μου πορείας κατὰ πάντα καί διά πάντα.

Stefanos
of Philomelion 23.
27. July, 2023

I, + Theophanis, by the mercy of God, candidate of the once renowned Holy Diocese of Philomelion, duly declare, by signing with my own hand, that:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made man; who for us, too, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, suffered, and was buried; the third day he rose according to the Scriptures, ascended into heaven, and is seated on the right hand of the Father; he shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father; who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come. Amen.

In addition, I accept and consent to the Seven Holy and Ecumenical Synods, which were gathered to protect the true doctrines of the Church; I vow to embrace and to keep the Canons and the Holy Regulations ordained by them, which were formulated by the Holy Fathers at various times and locations, and I accept all those they accept, and refute all those they refute. I also vow to keep Peace in the Church and in no way to think against this Peace for all my life, following in everything and subject to my All Holy Lord and Master, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew; I promise in fear of God and with mind pleasing to God to preserve myself clean from all evil thought, as far as I am able. Furthermore I swear to preserve the rights of the Apostolic, Patriarchal and Ecumenical Throne inviolate and unaltered, till my final breath.

I, + Theophanis, by the mercy of God, candidate of the once renowned Holy Diocese of Philomelion, humbly submit this, my Confession of Faith, signed by my own hand.