

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

A CHRONICLE OF THE FAITHFULNESS OF CHRIST
AND HIS PEOPLE IN THE MIDST OF TRIBULATION



“IF THE WORLD HATES YOU,
YOU KNOW THAT IT HATED ME
BEFORE IT HATED YOU.”

— JOHN 15:18 —

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The Lighthouse in the Storm and the Legacy of St. Tikhon

St. Tikhon's Decree No. 362: The Magna Carta of Canonical Resistance

"If the Higher Ecclesiastical Authority ... for whatever reason his governmental activity ceases, the diocesan bishop immediately enters into the full government of his diocese... and organizes ecclesial life on the basis of the Holy Canons."

- Decree No. 362 (1920)

Decree of the Holy Patriarch, the Holy Ecclesiastical Synod and the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church.

November 7 / 20, 1920 -No 362

With the blessing of His Holiness the Patriarch, the Holy Synod and the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council,

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in joint session, have considered the necessity of giving instructions to the diocesan bishops in the event that relations with the Higher Ecclesiastical Authority are interrupted, or that the activity of the latter is suspended, and have resolved:

By means of a circular sent to all diocesan bishops for its execution, to give the following directives:

1. In the event that the Higher Ecclesiastical Synod and the Supreme Ecclesiastical Council, for any reason, cease their ecclesiastical governmental activity, the diocesan bishop shall, for all matters, have immediate recourse to the superior bishopric which is most accessible to him or to the bishop of the nearest diocese who is in a position to contact him.

2. If a diocese, because of changes in state boundaries or because of war or persecution, finds itself deprived of all communication with the Higher Ecclesiastical Authority, or if the Higher Ecclesiastical Authority itself ceases to function:

The diocesan bishop immediately enters into the full government of his diocese.

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He shall have the right and duty to decide autonomously all matters for which the Canons require the authority of a Synod of Bishops, applying the general rules of ecclesiastical legislation and taking extraordinary measures according to local circumstances.

3. In the case indicated in Article 2, if the diocese is deprived of its bishop (due to death, detention or impossibility of exercising), the diocesan council or, failing that, the clergy and laity of the diocese, shall immediately elect as provisional administrator a vicar bishop or, in his absence, the most respected and experienced priest of the diocese, who will assume the management with the rights of a diocesan bishop.

4. In the event that the bishop or provisional administrator is unable to re-establish contact with the Higher Ecclesiastical Authority, but is in a position to communicate with neighbouring dioceses, they are to organize a Temporary Regional Ecclesiastical Council with the bishops of those dioceses.

5. The decisions of the Temporary Regional Ecclesiastical Council, taken by the majority of the

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participating bishops, shall have ecclesial legal force for all the dioceses represented in it, until the restoration of the Central Higher Ecclesiastical Authority.

6. If the situation described in Article 2 acquires a prolonged or permanent character, the Temporary Regional Ecclesiastical Council shall be empowered to:

Divide or reorganize existing dioceses according to local needs.

To elect and consecrate new vicar or diocesan bishops to replace vacant sees.

To create new episcopal chairs without the need to wait for the sanction of the central authority.

7. All measures provisionally adopted autonomously by the diocesan bishop or by the Temporary Regional Ecclesiastical Council must be submitted to the Central Higher Ecclesiastical Authority for ratification at the time when it is re-established and can freely exercise its functions.

8. If in a given region it is not possible to convoke a Temporary Regional Ecclesiastical Council because

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of persecution, extreme isolation, or insurmountable distances, the diocesan bishop shall maintain the fullness of canonical power independently within the limits of his territory until circumstances change.

9. In the event of the death or incapacity of the bishop in a completely isolated diocese where there is no possibility of convoking other bishops, the presbyteral administrator elected by the diocese shall maintain sacramental and administrative order, and shall have recourse to the nearest dioceses as soon as circumstances permit to request the consecration of a new bishop.

10. All the provisions taken pursuant to the present Decree are of a strictly provisional and extraordinary character, intended solely and exclusively to preserve the continuity of the apostolic succession, the purity of the Faith and the sacramental order of the Holy Orthodox Church in times of calamity.

I. Historical Context: The Omen of Collapse

In the autumn of 1920, the Russian Church was on the verge of mass martyrdom. The Bolshevik Revolution sought not only the physical elimination of the clergy, but the total dismantling of ecclesial

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structures. Aware that the Soviet power would try to capture or dissolve the central administration in order to control or manipulate the episcopate, Patriarch Tikhon (today canonized as Holy Confessor) drafted, in conjunction with the Synod Holy, an emergency resolution that would forever change contemporary ecclesiological history.

Decree No. 362 was promulgated on November 7/20, 1920. Their goal was clear: **to decentralize the governance of the Church to ensure the survival of the Faith if the administrative center fell or became corrupt.**

II. Text and Analysis of Decree No. 362 (Key Points)

The fundamental provisions of this historic decree are analyzed below:

Autonomy in the event of Communications Interruption (Points 2 and 3):

If the decisions of the Higher Ecclesiastical Authority do not reach a diocese, or if the Patriarchate itself is unable to exercise its function, the diocesan bishop immediately assumes the fullness of executive, legislative and judicial power within his territory.

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Formation of Autonomous Ecclesial Regions (Points 7 and 8):

If several dioceses are isolated, their bishops have a duty to unite to form a Temporary Local Synod. This provisional Synod has the full authority to consecrate new bishops, create new dioceses and maintain sacramental and canonical life without the need to resort to the intervened center.

Perpetuation of Succession in Extreme Isolation (Point 9):

In the event that a bishop is completely cut off and without the possibility of meeting with other prelates, he is given the faculty to consecrate bishops in order to avoid the extinction of the apostolic succession in his region.

III. Ecclesiological Implications: The Legitimacy of OCD/TOC

Decree No. 362 sharply dismantles the accusations of "illegitimacy" that the official Patriarchates often hurl against the jurisdictions of the True Orthodox Church. Its theological and juridical implications are profound:

Canonicity Does Not Depend on a Building or a Secretariat: St. Tikhon made it clear that the Church

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does not die if its administrative center falls. Canonicity travels with the bishop and the people who maintain the Faith, not with the building of the Patriarchate or with the approval of the civil rulers.

Foundation of the Catachumbal Church and the Diaspora: When in 1927 Metropolitan Sergius capitulated to the Soviet regime (giving rise to Sergianism), the confessor bishops who refused to submit to the atheist state legitimately applied Decree No. 362 to organize themselves in the catacombs of Russia. Similarly, the Russian Church Abroad (ROCOR) based its entire canonical existence on this decree.

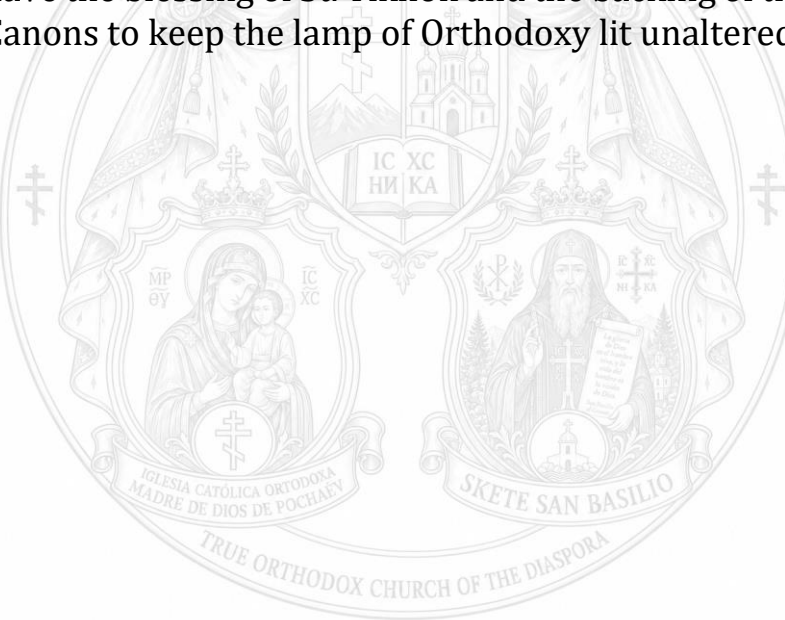
Validity of the Resistant Hierarchy: The OCD and RTOC communities that derive from this line of fidelity possess perfect canonical legitimacy. Its existence is not an act of schismatic rebellion, but the strict application of the norm dictated by the Holy Patriarch Confessor for times of persecution and apostasy.

IV. Conclusion: Divine Providence in the Canonical Norm

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Decree No. 362 was a work inspired by the Holy Spirit. St. Tikhon not only protected the Church of his day, but provided future generations with the legal framework to resist apostasy from ecumenism and subordination to worldly powers.

Thanks to this decree, the True Orthodox Church has an unshakable canonical foundation: when the top is corrupted or bows to error, the faithful and pastors have the blessing of St. Tikhon and the backing of the Canons to keep the lamp of Orthodoxy lit unaltered.



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True Canonicity and the Illusion of Structure

Dear friends, I write these lines with the purpose of reflecting, in the light of Holy Tradition, on the painful juridical and spiritual situation that the True Orthodox Church (commonly known by its acronym TOC or RTOC) is going through. It is a flagrant fact that official ecclesiastical structures use the term "canonicity" as a weapon of exclusion and persecution. However, when we analyze the foundations of Orthodox canon law, it becomes evident that the actions of these great official structures contradict the spirit and letter of the Holy Canons.

I. The Weapon of Nomenclature: Canonicity Reduced to Bureaucracy

In contemporary ecclesiastical discourse, the word "canonical" has undergone a dangerous transmutation. What in the Fathers of the Church was an instrument of healing, pastoral order and safeguarding of the faith, has become a diplomatic

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label. The great official jurisdictions have adopted an almost state logic, "canonical" is that which boasts mutual recognition between Patriarchates, regardless of whether such structures have compromised dogmatic purity or have been subordinated to the powers of this world.

It is alarmingly easy to forget that the Canons are not civil laws intended to protect institutional apparatuses, but the canonical articulation of revealed Truth. True canonicity is not born of a diplomatic agreement or international recognition, but of uninterrupted fidelity to the Apostolic Faith. When the structure becomes an end in itself, the canon ceases to be a beacon of truth and becomes a tool of coercion.

II. The Culture of Contempt and Patriarchal Arrogance

To this ecclesiological deviation is added a pastorally devastating attitude: the open contempt with which the great official Patriarchates treat those who do not submit to their hegemony. Those who dare to point out the deviations from ecumenism, the worldliness

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of the hierarchy or the submission to geopolitical agendas, are immediately qualified with derogatory epithets: "fanatics", "schismatics" or "proud spirits" and the worst thing is that priests, who are supposed to preach love, create an army of faithful to discredit and revile those who think differently, they do the "dirty work" and act on Social Networks indiscriminately insulting and demonstrating a profound lack of knowledge and Christian Charity.

This rhetoric of contempt reveals a deep spiritual sickness within the church bureaucracy:

The displacement of pastoral dialogue by institutional condemnation, instead of responding with theological arguments grounded in Tradition, official structures resort to the disregard, defamation and social isolation of the faithful and TOC/RTOC clerics.

The confusion between ecclesial authority and worldly power: The value of a believing community is judged by the grandeur of its cathedrals, its political influence, or the number of its faithful,

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ignoring the fact that the Church of Christ has often been reduced to a "little flock" (Luke 12:32).

The abuse of paternalism and clericalism: Blind obedience to the hierarchs is demanded by the mere fact of their official investiture, claiming that infallibility resides in the episcopal chair or in the synodal structure, a concept alien to ancestral orthodox ecclesiology.

This institutional arrogance is not new. It is the same arrogance with which the committed hierarchies of the past looked at the confessors of the faith who refused to bend the knee in the face of the errors imposed from power.

III. The Parents' Criterion: Format vs. Substance

If we turn to ecclesiastical history and the teaching of the Holy Fathers, we see that the Church never defined her legitimacy by the favor of empires or by the applause of the majority. Saints such as St. Athanasius the Great, St. Maximus the Confessor or St. Mark of Ephesus suffered in their own flesh the contempt and mockery of the majority structures of their time.

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St. Athanasius was described as a disturber of the ecclesial order and repeatedly exiled by a majority hierarchy that had bowed to Arianism.

Saint Maximus the Confessor, isolated and mutilated by the imperial and patriarchal authorities of Monothelites, was branded as arrogant for not submitting to the "consensus" of the Patriarchates of his time. In the face of the accusations, he declared that, even if everyone communed with error, he would not depart from the Truth.

St. Mark of Ephesus was reviled at the Council of Florence for standing firm against almost all the Eastern bishops who signed the false union with Rome.

If we were to apply the bureaucratic and arrogant criterion that predominates today in patriarchal chancelleries to these historical periods, we would have to erroneously conclude that the True Church was with the persecutors. History shows the opposite, the canons protect those who keep Tradition, not those who flaunt the physical infrastructure violating the canonical spirit.

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IV. The Tragedy of TOC/RTOC Jurisdictions

Communities of the True Orthodox Church have had to bear the stigma of exclusion simply for refusing to compromise with the ecclesiological deviations of the 20th and 21st centuries—such as syncretistic ecumenism and sergianism.

To accuse of "lack of canonicity" or to look arrogantly at those who seclude themselves in order to preserve intact the apostolic succession and the confession of faith is an inversion of juridical and spiritual reality. He is not a schismatic who separates himself from error, but he who separates himself from the Truth.

As Canon 15 of the First and Second Councils of Constantinople (861) clearly points out, those who separate themselves from communion with their prelate because of a heresy publicly taught by the latter, are not only not guilty of schism, but are worthy of honor because of the true Orthodox, because they have not divided the Church, but they have protected the Church from false bishops.

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V. Towards a Restoration of Ecclesial Conscience

It is urgent that the believing people restore their canonical conscience and free themselves from the psychological intimidation exercised by official structures. Canonicity is not a hierarchical monopoly or a passport to earthly influence. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ, the "pillar and bulwark of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15).

To those who use structures and canons as swords of arrogance to wound the faithful who seek purity of faith, Holy Tradition responds with the voice of Councils and Fathers: the canon exists to serve the Truth, not to justify the pride of ecclesial sees. The True Orthodox Church, even in its material smallness, in its humiliation and in its earthly isolation, remains fully canonical because it remains united to the living head of the Church, our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the unaltered heritage of the Saints.

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Sobornost vs. Patriarchal Absolutism: The Church as a Body and Not as a Monarchy

"Neither the Patriarchs nor the Councils were ever able to introduce innovations, because the guardian of religion is the body of the Church itself, that is, the people themselves."

- Encyclical of the Patriarchs of the East (1848)

I. The Anatomy of a Detour: Papism Without a Pope

One of the most paradoxical phenomena of contemporary official Orthodoxy is the emergence of an undeclared popery. While theologically official church structures continue to criticize Roman supremacy, in administrative practice they have adopted the same pyroballistic and pyramidal logic: the notion that truth is guaranteed solely by the investiture of office, and that obedience to structure replaces obedience to the Gospel and the Holy Canons, that in a veiled and often disguised form.

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This patriarchal absolutism strips authority of its true charismatic foundation. In Holy Tradition, a bishop does not possess the truth because he occupies a historical chair; he legitimately occupies a historical chair to the extent that he confesses intact the Apostolic Faith. When the official structure demands blind submission to its dogmatic or moral commitments under the pretext of "ecclesial unity", it is committing a profound ecclesiological aberration, it is putting the institution before the Mystical Body of Christ.

II. Sobornost: The Conciliar Catholicity of the People of God

In the face of the authoritarianism of the patriarchal chancelleries, the patristic doctrine of Sobornost – true conciliarity or communitarian catholicity – arises. Orthodoxy has never been a spiritual monarchy or a federation of bureaucracies, but the living organism of Truth, in which the Holy Spirit dwells and acts through the whole Body.

The history of the Church shows that the decisions of a Council or the directives of a Patriarchate do not

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automatically acquire validity by the hierarchy of those who dictate them alone. A council is only ecumenical if it is subsequently received by the living conscience of the believing people as faithful to Tradition.

When hierarchs give in, the Holy Spirit arouses resistance in monks, priests or laity.

The infusibility of truth does not lie in a chair or in an isolated synod, but in the fullness of the Church that preserves the "consensus of the Fathers" (Согласіе Святѣхъ Отцѣ).

To despise the communities of the True Orthodox Church for not being aligned with the administrative majority is to ignore that the laity and the resistant clergy are the true custodians of the deposit of the Faith when the hierarchical summit falters.

III. The Confessor vs. Structure: The Lesson of History

The claim of patriarchal absolutism to submit the Orthodox conscience to the threat of

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excommunication or calumny repeatedly comes up against the testimony of the Holy Confessors.

St. John Chrysostom reminds us that the altar and the episcopate are not instruments for the dominion of souls, but for the service of Truth. When St. Maximus the Confessor was questioned by the delegates of the Patriarch of Constantinople as to why he did not enter into communion with the patriarchal sees of Christendom that had accepted Monothelitism, his answer was not an appeal to rebellion, but an affirmation of conciliarity in the Truth:

"Even if the whole universe enters into communion with the Patriarch, I will not enter into communion with him if he teaches error. For St. Paul warned us that if an angel from heaven preaches to us a different gospel, let him be accursed."

St. Maximus did not wait for an official structure to grant him a seal of "canonicity" to defend the Orthodox faith. He understood perfectly well that being in communion with prelates who compromise the Faith is not ecclesial unity, but complicity in apostasy.

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IV. Conclusion: Restoring the Sense of True Conciliarity

The tragedy of official Orthodoxy in our time is that it has replaced conciliarity (Sobornost) with an ecclesial diplomacy of convenience. By closing the doors to traditionalist critical thinking and persecuting the TOC and RTOC jurisdictions, the Patriarchates do not demonstrate strength, but an immense ecclesiological fragility.

For the communities that preserve the True Orthodox Church, the test of legitimacy is not in the recognition of empires or ecumenical bodies, but in spiritual continuity with the confession of the apostles, the blood of the martyrs and the doctrine of the councils. Conciliarity (Sobornost) lives where two or three gather in His Name preserving the Faith intact, no matter how loud the condemnation of official structures.

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The Twentieth Century and the Silent Apostasy: Ecumenism and Sergianism

"There can be no compromise in the things of the Faith. The Truth is not negotiated or accommodated to the dictates of earthly kingdoms."

- St. Mark of Ephesus

I. The Roots of Contemporary Rupture

To understand the origin of the persecution and isolation suffered today by the jurisdictions of the True Orthodox Church (TOC/RTOC), it is essential to analyze the tragic events of the twentieth century. This period was not simply a time of material suffering or external persecution; it was, above all, the scene of a silent spiritual mutation within the official ecclesiastical structures.

Faced with the pressures of militant atheism and the advance of global secularism, the hierarchy of the great sees took two paths of compromise and capitulation that profoundly altered traditional

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ecclesiology, sergianism in the East and syncretistic ecumenism in the West and Middle East. Resistance to these two innovations was not a whim or an act of pride, but a sacred duty of spiritual self-preservation.

II. Sergianism: The Subjection of the Church to Earthly Power

The first great ecclesiological collapse of the twentieth century was consolidated in 1927 with the famous Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) in the Soviet Union. Under the pretext of "saving the external structures" of the Church in the face of bloody Bolshevik persecution, the ecclesiastical leadership signed an alliance of total subordination to the atheist state.

The essence of Sergianism lay not in mere tactical coexistence with hostile authority, but in something much more serious.

The theological capitulation: Declaring that the joys and triumphs of the communist regime—a regime explicitly dedicated to the extirpation of faith in Christ—were the joys and triumphs of the Church.

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The betrayal of confessors and martyrs: The sergianist hierarchy went so far as to publicly deny the existence of religious persecutions in the USSR, branding the thousands of bishops, priests and faithful imprisoned or executed in the gulags as "political criminals" and "schismatics".

The corruption of the episcopal principle: The bishop ceased to be a pastor led by the Holy Spirit to become an official appointed or approved by the secret police of the State.

The true believers – who would become members of the Catacomb Church and the Russian Church in Exile (ROCOR) – understood that "saving the structure" at the cost of the Truth and the blood of the martyrs was a diabolical illusion. The Church is not saved by betraying Christ; the Church is saved by Christ.

III. Syncretist Ecumenism: The Dilution of the One Faith

Parallel to Sergianism in the Slavic sphere, official Orthodoxy in the Mediterranean and the diaspora embraced the ecumenical movement. What began as

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a dialogue of courtesy or humanitarian assistance quickly morphed into an outright dogmatic betrayal.

Throughout the 20th century and up to the present day, official church structures have signed agreements and participated in ceremonies that directly contradict the Symbol of Faith and the Holy Canons:

The ecclesiological "Theory of the Branches": Implicitly accepting that the True Church of Christ is fragmented among the various Christian denominations, and that Orthodoxy is only a part of the fullness that needs to be "completed."

Common prayers with heterodox: Systematic violation of explicit conciliar canons (such as Apostolic Canon 45 and 65, and Canon 33 of Laodicea), which strictly forbid liturgical prayer with schismatics or heretics.

Joint Declarations of Faith: Sign documents recognizing the validity of the sacraments and apostolic succession in communities that have abandoned the dogmatic definitions of the Ecumenical Councils.

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Official ecumenism does not seek the conversion of those who are estranged to the fullness of Orthodoxy, but a relativistic coexistence in which dogma is sacrificed on the altar of diplomatism and the political correctness of the modern world.

IV. The Response of the True Orthodox Church: A Retaining Wall

In the face of this double apostasy, the position of the TOC and RTOC communities has been one of strict fidelity to Tradition. Just as the Fathers of antiquity separated themselves from the patriarchates that had fallen into Arianism, Monothelitism, or Uniatism, the True Orthodox Church cut off communion with the official sees so as not to be complicit in ecumenism or Sergianism.

The accusations of "lack of love" or "lack of fraternal spirit" that ecumenists hurl against the True Orthodox Church ignore the nature of true Christian love. Love without Truth is not love, but deceptive sentimentality. Standing firm in the purity of the Faith is not an act of hatred for the world, but the only

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authentic witness that can be offered to a dying world.

V. Conclusion: Maintaining the Flame at Night

The twentieth century left a bitter but luminous lesson, grandiose cathedrals, the protection of governments and diplomatic recognition do not guarantee the presence of the Holy Spirit. The True Orthodox Church, often forced to retreat to the catacombs, to exile or to small parishes humiliated by official contempt, remains the unaltered depository of the apostolic confession.

In the face of the silent apostasy of worldly structures, the canonical and dogmatic resistance of OCD/ROTOC is not an anachronism, but the only sure way to remain in the ark of salvation in these times of spiritual turmoil.

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The Holy Fathers vs. the Ecclesiastical Majorities: A Historical Analysis

"Do not judge the truth by the number of confessors, nor the Church by the walls of buildings, but by the purity of the Faith."

- St. John Chrysostom

I. The Illusion of Number and the Fallacy of the Majority

One of the most recurrent – and theologically most fragile – arguments that official ecclesiastical structures put forward against the communities of the True Orthodox Church is their small numerical scale and their isolation from the great patriarchal sees. The image of the multitudes, state recognition, and international influence are appealed to as irrefutable proof of "canonicity" and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

However, when we contrast this bureaucratic criterion with sacred history, the illusion

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immediately crumbles. Over the centuries, the Church has gone through deep crises in which the vast majority of the hierarchy, backed by the imperial power and the large urban centers, fell into serious dogmatic errors. In those moments of darkness, the True Church was not contained in the great cathedrals or patriarchal decrees, but in the confession of a few men and women who refused the commitment.

II. The Testimony of the Great Confessing Figures

The history of Orthodoxy is, to a large extent, the history of saints who resisted in solitude in the face of apostate or capitulating hierarchical structures.

1. St. Athanasius the Great and the Arian Reduction

In the fourth century, Arianism was not a small fringe sect; it was the dominant doctrine accepted by most of the bishops of the East, by several Roman emperors and ratified in multiple regional councils. St. Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria, was exiled five times for refusing to enter into communion with the Arians and semi-Arians.

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From that time comes the famous Latin expression Athanasius contra mundum ("Athanasius against the world"). If the logic of today's patriarchates had been applied in that period, Athanasius would have been condemned as a "schismatic fanatic" outside of "official canonicity." And yet the Church recognizes today that the canonicity and the Orthodox faith resided in Athanasius, not in the overwhelming majority of bishops who signed Arian formulas.

2. St. Maximus the Confessor and the Monothelite Desolation

In the seventh century, Monothelitism was adopted as the official theology of the Byzantine Empire and endorsed by the four Patriarchates of the East (Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem), as well as temporarily by the See of Rome. St. Maximus, a simple monk, flatly refused to sign the imperial edicts that compromised the two wills of Christ.

When the Patriarch's delegates reproached him for his stubbornness, they asked: "What Church are you with? With that of Constantinople, with that of

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Alexandria, with that of Antioch, with that of Rome or with that of Jerusalem? They are all united," St. Maximus replied with an ecclesiological forcefulness that reverberates to this day:

"The Catholic Church is the correct and saving confession of Faith in God. Christ the Lord called 'Catholic' the Church that maintains the true and saving confession of the faith, not a geographical or administrative structure."

Saint Maximus was mutilated and banished by the "canonical hierarchy" of his time, but it was he who preserved intact the faith of the Council of Chalcedon.

3. St. Mark of Ephesus and the False Union of Florence (1439)

In the 15th century, threatened by the Ottoman advance, the hierarchy of Constantinople sought political salvation through union with Rome. At the Council of Ferrara-Florence, practically the entire Eastern episcopate, headed by the Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople, signed the

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subordination to the Pope and the acceptance of Latin innovations.

Only one bishop refused to sign: St. Mark, Metropolitan of Ephesus. On his return to Constantinople, the faithful rejected the unionist prelates and aligned themselves with the solitary position of St. Mark. When Pope Eugene IV asked if Mark had signed the decree of union and was told that he had not, he stated bluntly: "*Then we have accomplished nothing.*" A single bishop in the Truth dismantled the apostasy of an entire official Council.

III. The agreement/consensus of the Holy Fathers (Согласіе Святыхъ Отцѣхъ) as the Only Touchstone

Why did these saints prevail over the immense institutional machinery of their day? Because his authority did not emanate from the approval of his colleagues or the approval of the State, but from his perfect fidelity to the Unanimous Consensus of the Holy Fathers (Согласіе Святыхъ Отцѣхъ).

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In Orthodox ecclesiology, Truth is not invented in every age or decided by parliamentary vote in a Synod. A conciliar or patriarchal decree is valid only if it is in perfect harmony (согласие) with the entire deposit of faith handed down from the Apostles and systematized by the Holy Fathers. When an episcopal structure breaks with this doctrinal continuity – as has happened with ecumenism and Sergianism – it automatically loses its spiritual authority, no matter how many temples and faithful it retains under its administration.

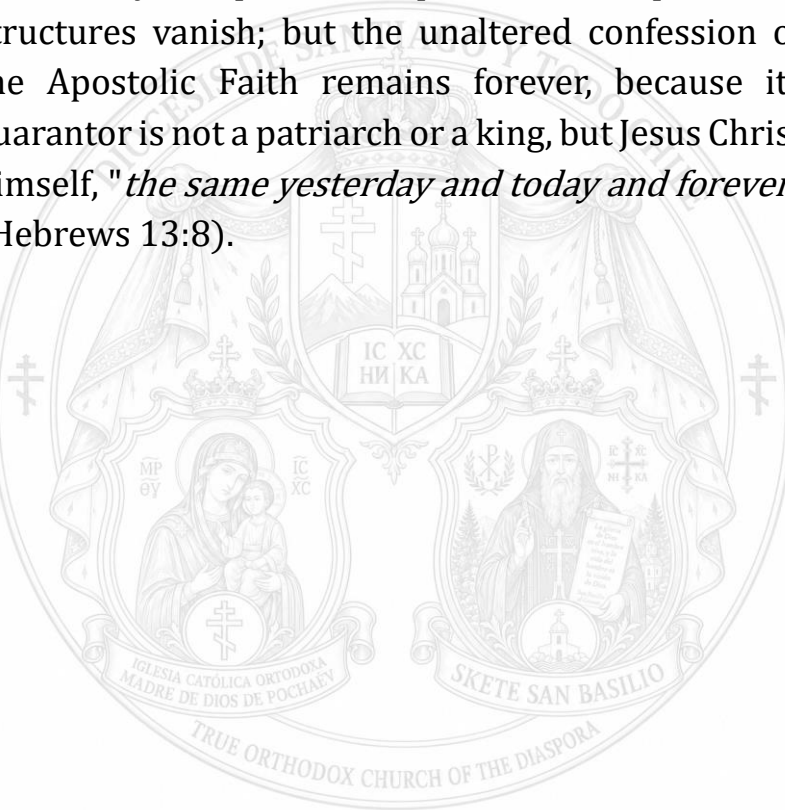
IV. The Actuality of the Resistance

Looking at the current isolation of the communities of the True Orthodox Church (TOC/RTOC), we do not see a new or anomalous phenomenon, but the repetition of the historical pattern revealed in the lives of the Confessors. True canonicity is not measured by the number of signatures on a diplomatic treaty or by the recognition of the empires of this century.

To remain in the True Orthodox Church means to accept with humility the weight of earthly

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marginalization in exchange for remaining united to the agreement/consensus of the Holy Fathers (Согласіе Святыхъ Отцевъ). Ecclesiastical majorities pass away, empires collapse and compromised structures vanish; but the unaltered confession of the Apostolic Faith remains forever, because its guarantor is not a patriarch or a king, but Jesus Christ himself, "*the same yesterday and today and forever*" (Hebrews 13:8).



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Unchanged Faith as the Only Safe Haven

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Do not be carried away by diverse and strange doctrines."

- Hebrews 13:8-9

I. Synthesis of a Path of Fidelity

Throughout these pages we have examined the painful reality that the Church is going through in our time. We have denounced the fallacy of a "canonicity reduced to bureaucracy and diplomatic recognition"; we have unmasked the patriarchal absolutism that seeks to suffocate the true bribery or conciliarity of the believing people; and we have analyzed the tragic capitulations of the twentieth century – Sergianism and syncretistic ecumenism – that fractured the ecclesial conscience.

Faced with this scenario of institutional confusion and contempt, sacred history and canon law –

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embodied with masterful clarity in Canon 15 of the First-Second Council – have offered us an unalterable light. The examples of St. Athanasius, St. Maximus the Confessor, and St. Mark of Ephesus remind us that the Church of Christ has never been defined by the grandeur of physical structures, the applause of majorities, or the favor of earthly empires, but by the faithful custody of the Согласіе Святыхъ Отцевъ (the Consensus of the Holy Fathers).

II. The Mirage of the Structure and Reality of the Mystical Body

For the communities of the True Orthodox Church (TOC/RTOC), the isolation and contempt to which they are subjected by the official chancelleries should not be a cause for discouragement or bitterness. Salvation history demonstrates that the "*little flock*" (Luke 12:32) has often been the instrument chosen by Divine Providence to preserve the flame of Truth in times of widespread apostasy.

The great cathedrals, the geopolitical influences and the ecumenical alliances of the so-called "official Orthodoxy" are a striking shell, but spiritually flimsy

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if they have emptied their interiors of dogmatic purity. The Church is not a human corporation that must adapt to the times in order to survive; it is the Mystical Body of Christ, a divine-human organism whose life flows only through unblemished union with its divine Head.

III. An Exhortation to Firmness and Spiritual Charity

To the clerics, monks and laity who courageously bear witness to the True Orthodox Church in these times of trial, Holy Tradition addresses a twofold exhortation:

Remaining in Confessional Orthodoxy without Pharisaical Rigorism

The defense of the unaltered Faith must never become an excuse for personal pride, hatred or sectarianism. Canonical resistance is an act of love hurt by the Church, not a reason for vainglory. Our position must be clothed with the humility of martyrs and the compassion of confessors.

Not Giving in to Psychological Bullying

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When official structures seek to invalidate your sacraments, slander your intention, or brand you as "schismatics," remember that the final judgment on the canonicity of a life or a community does not belong to diplomats or committed synods, but to Jesus Christ, the Just Judge.

IV. The Promise That Never Fails

The storms that shake the Church today were foreseen by the Lord himself and by the Holy Fathers. Patristic prophecies about the end times warned us that faith would become a scarce commodity and that confusion would settle even in high places.

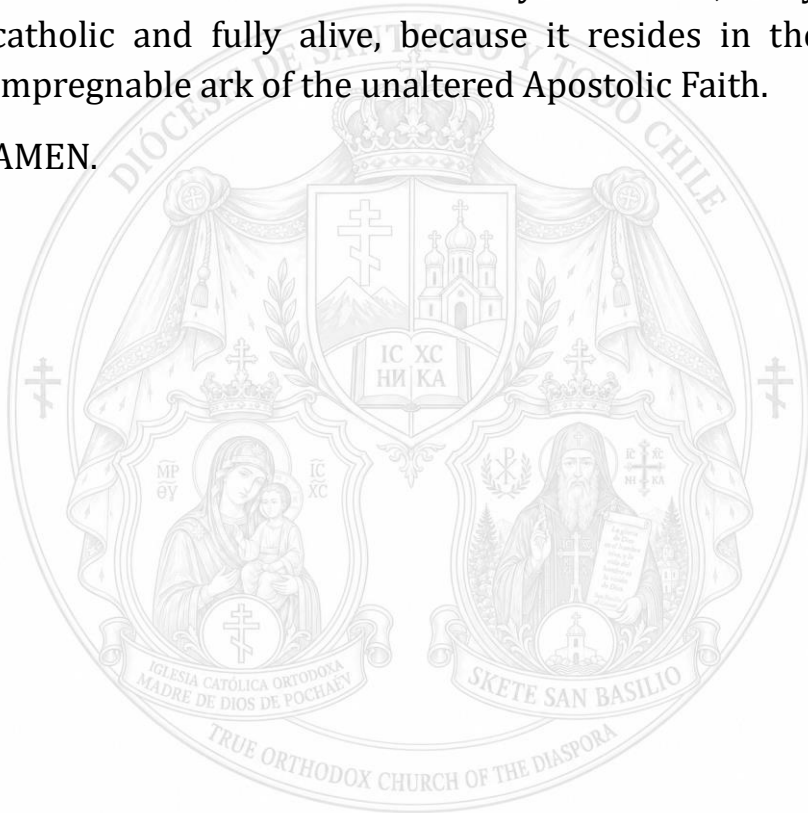
However, the last word in ecclesial history is not in error or betrayal. The victory belongs to Christ, who solemnly promised that "*the gates of hell shall not prevail against her*" (Matthew 16:18). This promise does not guarantee the impunity of patriarchal sees or the indestructibility of earthly institutions, but the invincible preservation of the True Church in those who keep her commandments and her faith intact.

Beloved, let us keep our gaze fixed on the author and finisher of faith. Let us continue to walk the narrow

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but sure path that our Fathers traced. Even in the midst of earthly humiliation, in the smallness of our temples and in the silence of our resistance, the True Orthodox Church remains fully canonical, fully catholic and fully alive, because it resides in the impregnable ark of the unaltered Apostolic Faith.

AMEN.



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About the Author



His Excellency Basilio, born in Santiago de Chile, in a papist family, was baptized and educated in the faith by his grandparents. His primary education was in American schools in Santiago, where he learned English, his secondary education was in a high school where he graduated and then entered university. He works as a solicitor in public companies for a while and realizes that this is not what God

wants for him, so

who began to work in Computer Science, managing to climb positions and become Technology Manager at Marriott Chile, at the age of 29 he decided to seek the way of God and entered the monastic life in the Benedictine Monastery of Lliu-Lliu, after studying theology, he became disillusioned with the church for what he had to live and see, he returns to work in Technology once again achieving management positions and decides to return to the path of faith and seeks to be accepted into the Holy Orthodox Church, receiving Holy Baptism with the name of Basil, he studies Orthodox Theology and is ordained as a deacon and later receives the monastic tonsure and priestly ordination, after several years he receives the Grand Scheme and is made Archimandrite.

On January 13, 2020, according to the ancient calendar, he was ordained Bishop of Santiago and all of Chile.

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On February 13, 2025, he was enthroned as Archbishop of Santiago and all of Chile.

He currently lives in solitude in the Monastery of San Basilio of which he is Abbot in Curacavi, Metropolitan Region, Chile and dedicates his life to prayer, to show the beauty of the Holy Orthodox Church and to Spiritual Direction.

