



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

June 25, 2020

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy
Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhood, Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools, Directors and Participants of all Youth Organizations, and all devout Orthodox Christians of the Communities of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved,

It is with thanksgiving to God that His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy and Sacred Synod, who met from June 23-25 at the Patriarchal Orthodox Center in Chambésy, Geneva, Switzerland, discussed the most important and significant issue concerning the manner with which the Sacrament of Sacraments, Holy Communion, is offered to the faithful. The decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod also considered the responses of the other Autocephalous Churches as requested by His All-Holiness. The official Communiqué which is attached in Greek and English in paragraph 2 states the following:

“As to the mode of distributing the ineffable Mysteries to the faithful, the Church, respecting Holy Tradition that is interwoven inextricably with the daily ecclesiastical practice and kenotic experience, and as the guardian and vigilant watchman of those traditions handed down from the Holy Father, finds no need for a change of this mode, especially under pressure from external factors.”

Therefore, the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod is clear insofar as there is to be **no change to the traditional practice** of offering/receiving Holy Communion as it has been for centuries. In addition, paragraph 3 of the Communiqué states:

“At the same time, the Mother Church, mindful of the special needs of Her children in the Diaspora, urges the Chief Shepherds who

serve in the Diaspora that with a pastoral sensitivity, responsibility, and consciousness, to temporarily make, by economia, accommodations to problematic situations that arise from local laws of the State for the greater spiritual benefit of the Christian people, always in coordination with the Sacred Center at the Phanar.”

We, in the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey, have been abiding and conforming to the local, state, and federal laws and we will continue to do so. Thankfully, **no restrictions have been placed by any of the states** which comprise our beloved Metropolis pertaining to the distribution or reception of the Holy Eucharist.

We thank His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew for his Patriarchal and Archpastoral decision. Let us also continue to pray and entreat the Lord our God that He may bestow upon us His grace especially during these unsure times as the devout faithful and our country have both directly and indirectly endured the devastating effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic. Praying that our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ continues to guard and protect each of you, I remain

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Metropolitan Evangelos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'M'.

† E V A N G E L O S
Metropolitan of New Jersey



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

Τῆ 26ῃ Ἰουνίου 2020

Πρὸς τὸν εὐλαβέστατον Ἱερόν Κληρὸν,
Τοὺς Ἐντιμοτάτους Ἀρχοντας τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου,
Τοὺς Προέδρους καὶ τὰ Μέλη τῶν Ἐκκλησιαστικῶν Συμβουλιῶν,
Τὰς Προέδρους καὶ τὰ Μέλη τῶν Φιλοπτώχων Ἀδελφοτήτων,
Τοὺς διδάσκοντας καὶ διδασκομένους τῶν Κατηχητικῶν καὶ Ἑλληνικῶν Σχολείων,
Τὰς Ὁργανώσεις τῆς Νεολαίας καὶ ἅπαν τὸ Χριστεπώνυμον πλήρωμα τῶν εὐσεβῶν
Ὁρθοδόξων Χριστιανῶν τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μητροπόλεως Νέας Ἱερσέης.

Ἀγαπητοί μου ἀδελφοί,

Μέ τὴν Χάρη τοῦ Παναγίου Θεοῦ, συνεδρίασε ἡ Ἁγία καὶ Ἱερά Σύνοδος τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου, ὑπὸ τὴν Σεπτὴ Προεδρία τοῦ Παναγιωτάτου Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριάρχου κ.κ. Βαρθολομαίου, ἀπὸ τὶς 23 ἕως τὶς 25 Ἰουνίου σὺν Σαμπεζύ τῆς Ἑλβετίας, ὅπου συνεζήτησε περὶ τοῦ σπουδαίου ζητήματος τοῦ τρόπου μεταδόσεως στοὺς πιστοὺς τοῦ Μυστηρίου τῶν Μυστηρίων, τῆς Θείας Κοινωνίας. Ἡ Ἁγία καὶ Ἱερά Σύνοδος ἔλαβε ὑπ' ὄψιν τὴν γνώμη καὶ τὶς ἀπαντήσεις τῶν λοιπῶν Ἀυτοκεφάλων Ἐκκλησιῶν, ὅπως εἶχε ζητηθεῖ ἀπὸ τὸν Παναγιώτατο. Ἡ ἐπίσημη ἀπόφασις, πού ἐπισυνάπτουμε στὴν Ἑλληνικὴ καὶ Ἀγγλικὴ, ἀναφέρει στὴν 2^η παράγραφο:

«Ὡς πρὸς τὸν τρόπον μεταδόσεως τῶν ἀχράντων Μυστηρίων εἰς τοὺς πιστοὺς, ἡ Ἐκκλησία, σεβομένη τὴν Ἱεράν Παράδοσιν, τὴν συνυφασμένην ἀρρήκτως μέ τὴν καθ' ἡμέραν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν πρακτικὴν καὶ κενωτικὴν ἐμπειρίαν, διακρατεῖ τὰ ἀπὸ αἰῶνων καὶ μέχρι σήμερον ἰσχύοντα, ὡς φύλαξ καὶ φρουρὸς ἀνύστακτος τῶν παραδοθέντων ὑπὸ τῶν Ἁγίων Πατέρων, καὶ οὐδεμίαν ἀνάγκην εὐρίσκει δι' ἀλλαγὴν τοῦ τρόπου τούτου καὶ μάλιστα ὑπὸ τὴν πίεσιν ἐξωγενῶν παραγόντων.»

Ὡς ἐκ τούτου, ἡ ἀπόφασις τῆς Ἁγίας καὶ Ἱερᾶς Συνόδου εἶναι ξεκάθαρη ὡς πρὸς τὸ γεγονός ὅτι δέν ὑπάρχει οὐδεμία ἀλλαγὴ στὸν παραδοσιακὸν τρόπον μεταδόσεως καὶ μεταλήψεως τῆς Θείας Κοινωνίας, ὅπως γίνεται ἐπὶ πολλοὺς αἰῶνες.

Ἐπιπλέον, στὴν 3^η παράγραφο τῆς Ἀποφάσεως γίνεται σαφές ὅτι:

«Συγχρόνως, ἡ Μήτηρ Ἐκκλησία, μεριμνῶσα διὰ τὰς ἰδιαιτέρας ἀνάγκας τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ Διασπορᾷ, προτρέπει τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ

διακονοῦντας Ποιμενάρχας ὅπως, ἐν τῇ ποιμαντικῇ αὐτῶν εὐαισθησίᾳ, εὐθύνη καὶ συνέσει, οἰκονομοῦν προσωρινῶς τὰ ἀνακύψαντα ἐκ τῶν τοπικῶν νόμων τῆς Πολιτείας προβλήματα, πάντοτε ἐν συντονισμῶ μέ τό ἐν Φαναρίῳ Ἱερόν Κέντρον, διά τήν μείζονα πνευματικῆν ὠφέλειαν τοῦ χριστωνύμου λαοῦ.»

Ἡ Ἱερά Μητρόπολις Νέας Ἱερσέης ἐξαρχῆς καί μέ ἀπόλυτη συνέπεια ἀκολουθεῖ καί συμμορφώνεται μέ τούς τοπικούς, Πολιτειακούς καί Ὁμοσπονδιακούς Νόμους καί τίς ὁδηγίες, καί θά συνεχίση νά τό πράττει μέ ἀκρίβεια. Εἶναι εὐχάριστο τό γεγονός ὅτι δέν ἔχει ἐπιβληθεῖ κανένας περιορισμός ἢ ἀλλαγὴ στόν τρόπο μεταδόσεως τῆς Θείας Κοινωνίας σέ καμία Πολιτεία ἐντός τῆς πνευματικῆς δικαιοδοσίας τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς Ἱεραῖς Μητροπόλεως.

Εἴμεθα λοιπόν εὐγνώμονες πρός τόν Παναγιώτατο Οἰκουμενικό Πατριάρχη κ.κ. Βαρθολομαῖο γι' αὐτήν τήν σπουδαία ἀπόφαση. Ἄς συνεχίσουμε ἀγαπητοί μου νά προσευχόμαστε καί νά ἱκετεύουμε τόν Πανάγιο Τριαδικό Θεό νά μᾶς παρέχη τήν Χάρη Του, ἰδιαίτερα κατ' αὐτές τίς δύσκολες καί ἀβέβαιες στιγμές, ὅπου τὰ καταστρεπτικά ἀποτελέσματα τῆς πανδημίας τοῦ κορονοϊοῦ ἔχουν ἐπηρεάσει τούς πιστούς μας ἀλλά καί ὀλόκληρη τήν Χώρα μας. Εὐχόμενος ὅπως ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός προστατεύη καί διαφυλάττει ὅλους ἐσᾶς, διατελῶ

Μετά πατρικῆς ἀγάπης καί διαπύρων εὐχῶν,

Ο ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΗΣ



+ Ὁ Νέας Ἱερσέης ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Communiqué of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy and Sacred Synod

ΟΙΚΟΥΜΕΝΙΚΟΝ ΠΑΤΡΙΑΡΧΕΙΟΝ

Ανακοινωθέν

Μεταξύ 23-25 τ.μ. Ιουνίου (2020) συνήλθεν ἐν τῷ ἐν Σαμπεζύ Γενεύης Ὁρθοδόξῳ Κέντρῳ τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου ἡ Ἁγία καί Ἱερά Σύνοδος αὐτοῦ εἰς τήν τακτικήν αὐτῆς συνεδρίαν τοῦ τρέχοντος μηνός. Τήν πρώτην ἡμέραν παρέστησαν καί συνειργάσθησαν μέ τούς συνοδικούς παρέδρους καί οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν λοιπῶν ἐν Εὐρώπῃ Ἱεραρχῶν τοῦ Θρόνου.

Κατά τήν σύσκεψιν ταύτην ἀνεγνώσθησαν καί συνεζητήθησαν καί ὅσα ἐλήφθησαν μέχρι σήμερον Γράμματα τῶν Μακ. Ὁρθοδόξων Προκαθημένων, ἀπαντητικά εἰς τό πρὸς αὐτούς Γράμμα τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριάρχου τῆς 17ης Μαΐου τ.ἔ., διὰ τό θέμα τοῦ τρόπου μεταδόσεως τῆς Θείας Κοινωνίας, τό ἀνακῦψαν μετὰ τήν ἐμφάνισιν τῆς πανδημίας τοῦ κορωνοϊοῦ, διεπιστώθη δέ μέ ἱκανοποίησιν ὅτι ἡ γνώμη αὐτῶν συμπίπτει πρὸς ἐκείνην τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου. Αὕτη συνίσταται εἰς τά ἑξῆς:

α) Τό Μυστήριον τῆς Θείας Εὐχαριστίας εἶναι ἀδιαπραγμάτευτον, διότι πιστεύομεν ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ μεταδίδεται εἰς τούς πιστούς αὐτό τοῦτο τό Σῶμα καί τό Αἷμα τοῦ Σωτῆρος Χριστοῦ «εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν καί εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον» καί εἶναι ἀδύνατον διὰ τοῦ Μυστηρίου τούτου τῶν Μυστηρίων νά μεταδοθῆ εἰς τούς μεταλαμβάνοντας ὅποιαδήποτε νόσος. Δι' αὐτό καί ἡ Ἐκκλησία παραμένει σταθερά καί ἀμετακίνητος εἰς τήν διδασκαλίαν αὐτῆς ὡς πρὸς τήν οὐσίαν τοῦ Μυστηρίου τῆς Θείας Εὐχαριστίας.

β) Ὡς πρὸς τόν τρόπον μεταδόσεως τῶν ἀχράντων Μυστηρίων εἰς τούς πιστούς, ἡ Ἐκκλησία, σεβομένη τήν Ἱεράν Παράδοσιν, τήν συνυφασμένην ἀρρηκτως μέ τήν καθ' ἡμέραν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν πρακτικὴν καί κενωτικὴν ἐμπειρίαν, διακρατεῖ τά ἀπό αἰώνων καί μέχρι σήμερον ἰσχύοντα, ὡς φύλαξ καί φρουρός ἀνύστακτος τῶν παραδοθέντων ὑπὸ τῶν Ἁγίων Πατέρων, καί οὐδεμίαν ἀνάγκην εὐρίσκει δι' ἀλλαγὴν τοῦ τρόπου τούτου καί μάλιστα ὑπὸ τήν πίεσιν ἐξωγενῶν παραγόντων.

Συγχρόνως, ἡ Μήτηρ Ἐκκλησία, μεριμνῶσα διὰ τὰς ἰδιαιτέρας ἀνάγκας τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ Διασπορᾷ, προτρέπει τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ διακονοῦντας Ποιμενάρχας ὅπως, ἐν τῇ ποιμαντικῇ αὐτῶν εὐαισθησίᾳ, εὐθύνη καὶ συνέσει, οἰκονομοῦν προσωρινῶς τὰ ἀνακύψαντα ἐκ τῶν τοπικῶν νόμων τῆς Πολιτείας προβλήματα, πάντοτε ἐν συντονισμῷ μὲ τὸ ἐν Φαναρίῳ Ἱερόν Κέντρον, διὰ τὴν μείζονα πνευματικὴν ὠφέλειαν τοῦ χριστωνύμου λαοῦ.

Ἐν Γενεύῃ, τῇ 25ῃ Ἰουνίου 2020

Ἐκ τῆς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς
τῆς Ἀγίας καὶ Ἱερᾶς Συνόδου

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

Communiqué

Between June 23 - 25 2020, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate was convened for its regular meeting of the current month at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva. On the first day, the chairmen of the synodal committees were engaged in their cooperative work. Many of the Hierarchs of the Throne in Europe were present as well.

During this meeting, the Official Letters of Their Beatitudes the Orthodox Primates that had been received thus far in response to the letter of the Ecumenical Patriarch to them of May 17th of this year, on the issue of the mode of distribution of Holy Communion that emerged after the appearance of the coronavirus pandemic, were read and discussed. It was satisfactorily determined that their opinion coincided with that of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This consists of the following:

a) The Mystery of the Divine Eucharist is non-negotiable, because we believe that through it it is transmitted to the faithful the Body and Blood of the Savior Christ "unto the remission of sins and life eternal" and it is impossible that through this Mystery of Mysteries any disease might be communicated to those who partake. For this reason, the Church remains steadfast and immovable in its teaching towards the essence of the Mystery of Holy Communion.

b) As to the mode of distributing the ineffable Mysteries to the faithful, the Church, respecting Holy Tradition that is interwoven inextricably with the daily ecclesiastical practice and kenotic experience, and as the guardian and vigilant watchman of those traditions handed down from the Holy Father, finds no need for a change of this mode, especially under pressure from external factors.

At the same time, the Mother Church, mindful of the special needs of Her children in the Diaspora, urges the Chief Shepherds who serve in the Diaspora that with a pastoral sensitivity, responsibility, and consciousness, to temporarily make, by *economia*, accommodations to problematic situations that arise from local laws of the State for the greater spiritual benefit of the Christian people, always in coordination with the Sacred Center at the Phanar.

In Geneva, 25, June 2020
From the Chief Secretariat
of the Holy and Holy Synod