

## DECISION

Of the Investigative Committee of the Church  
of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece  
Concerning the Accusations  
Against the Brotherhood of the Sacred Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration  
in Boston of America

Resolution of 18/30 May, 1988

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-Investigators-:

Protopriest Panayiotos Panayiotopoulos, Chief Secretary of the Sacred Synod  
Archimandrite Sabbas Kambolis, Archdiocesan Deputy of Macedonia  
Protopriest Christos Constantinou, Secretary of the Ecclesiastical Administration of North  
America  
Protopriest Panayiotos Carras, Archdiocesan Deputy of Canada

Because of accusations of a moral nature made against the Reverend Archimandrite  
Panteleimon and members of the Sacred Monastery of the Transfiguration in Boston --  
accusations which were made by former members of the aforementioned community -- we, as  
the authorized investigative committee, examined all the material related to the  
above-mentioned subject.

Taking into account:

- a) the accusations,
- b) the character and the trustworthiness of the accusers,
- c) the documents submitted by members of the Sacred Monastery of the  
Transfiguration which refuted the accusations,
- d) the character and the trustworthiness of the accused,
- e) the verbal and written testimonies of the multitude of trustworthy and honorable  
clergy of our Church, who in a responsible manner and in their priestly office  
affirmed that the accusations were unfounded,

f) the personal and direct meetings with the clergy and the people of our parishes in North America during our visit to Boston in person.

After consultation, we have decreed as follows:

1) All the accusers, without exception, being themselves under condemnation because of serious transgressions, *are untrustworthy*, that is, they lack the basic prerequisites necessary for the admittance and adjudication of the accusations (according to the following sacred canons: 6th canon of the 2nd Ec. Council, 21st canon of the 4th Ec. Council, the 8th, 27th, 137th, 138th and 140th canons of Carthage, the 9th canon of Theophilus of Alexandria, the Apostolic Constitutions, and others.)

2) Before they left the monastery -- most of them secretly -- the accusers, all of them former members of the brotherhood of the Sacred Monastery of the Transfiguration, should have registered their complaints concerning any alleged transgressions to a higher ecclesiastical authority, that is, to the local bishop of the monastery, in order to begin an investigation on the spot.

3) Four of the accusers made no accusations at the time of their departure from the monastery, but only later, after the passage of years.

4) Most of the accusers -- for a period of years after their departure from the monastery -- sent letters of gratitude to the monastery, letters which praised the person of the abbot, as well as the whole brotherhood and the spiritual environment of the monastery in general, at the same time expressing the good sentiments they had of their stay at the monastery where they had made their renunciation of the world.

In this manner, they of themselves refute themselves, *there being no need for any other refutation of the accusations* which they contrived later. Their letters, written in their own handwriting, and which are found in the files of the Monastery of the Transfiguration, were given to us in order to help us carry out a better and more just investigation.

5) The accusers did not follow the canonical and lawful path of submitting their accusations exclusively to the proper authority only, but they proceeded irresponsibly to publish them, distributing them to innumerable individuals both in North America and in Greece, sowing suspicion and scandalizing a multitude of people "intending nothing else than to stain the reputation of priests" (6th Canon of the 2nd Ec. Council).

6) As mentioned above, the accusers themselves are under condemnation and subject to judgment for transgressions which they committed after their departure from the monastery (i.e., contracting a marriage illegal in the eyes of the Church, assuming the priestly dignity without a blessing, apostacy to an ecclesiastical jurisdiction which is an organic member of the WCC, accusations of serious moral transgressions under judgment, robbery of monastery goods worth thousands of dollars upon their departure from the monastery, renunciation of the monastic schema and their monastic habit, etc.)

To all the above must the following admonition of the Holy Apostles be affixed: "Such accusers must not be accepted as witnesses" (Apost. Constitutions 2, 49, 5), as well as the sacred canons of the Councils which specify that the accusations of untrustworthy accusers and witnesses must not be accepted ("therefore it seemed right to the Holy Synod of Bishops . . . not to admit accusers without examination, and neither to allow all persons whatsoever to bring accusations . . . but it is necessary to examine carefully the persons of the accusers." -- 6th canon of the 2nd Ec. Council. "Clergymen and laymen bringing charges . . . are not to be received loosely and without examination, as accusers, but their own characters shall first be investigated" 21st canon of the 4th Ec. Council. "In accusations against clergy, only those who are free of blame or condemnation shall be accepted" canon 137.)

The investigative committee, acting also on the decision of the Council of Presbyters of our Church in Greece, met on May 18/31, 1988, it being the desire of all that the above-mentioned matter be resolved for the good of our martyric Church, especially since the Ecclesiastical Administration of North America is subject to the Sacred Archdiocese of the True Orthodox Christians, under the jurisdiction of His Beatitude, Auxentius, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece.

Acting lawfully and at the request of our Archbishop, and having met and heard all the trustworthy witnesses who were legally summoned for this matter, in the fulness of its ecclesiastical conscience, the investigative committee

#### DECREES:

That all the above-mentioned clergy of the Sacred Monastery of the Transfiguration are victims of the envy of individuals outside the community, individuals bereft of Orthodox understanding, serving alien and dark interests.

They are victims of alien and dark interests because they are strict upholders of the patristic Traditions and are held worthy of respect by the citizens of the city and country where they live.

They are victims of alien and dark interests because they are the praise and glory of the true Orthodox and are the boast of Christianity.

On examining the entire course of action initiated by the so-called investigators [i.e. Russian Church Abroad], we are left with many questions, and both we, the members of the present investigating committee, and every Orthodox Christian ask how was it that they accepted such witnesses and accusers of such unstable character and turned a deaf ear to the sacred canons which, aside from those which we mentioned, specify, as the 80th canon of Carthage does: "It is not permitted to make superiors of monasteries, nor to ordain as clerics those who are received from a monastery not one's own".

Likewise, "it seemed good that if any bishop wished to advance to the clergy a monk received from a monastery not under his jurisdiction, or shall have appointed him superior of a monastery of his own, the bishop who shall have thus acted shall be separated from the communion of others and shall rest content with the communion of his own people alone, but

the monk shall continue neither as cleric nor superior."

Likewise the 4th canon of the First-Second Council, concerning those who leave their monasteries and do not return:

Both he and he who accepts him shall be defrocked, until he that left returns to the monastery from which he evilly fell away.

Finding nothing worthy of blame against the aforementioned clergy of the monastery after the examination of a multitude of witnesses, the investigating committee decrees that all the above-mentioned clergy of the brotherhood of Fr. Panteleimon, and he himself, are innocent and cleared of all the charges brought against them, and which were made by individuals unworthy of mention.

Hence, it decrees and recommends to the Venerable Presbytery and to the Episcopal Court of our Sacred Archdiocese of the True Orthodox Christians of Athens that it place the aforementioned clergy of Boston among the choir of the chosen clergy of our Church with the honors that are due to them.

In Boston, U.S.A., 16/29 June, 1988

Signed

Protopriest Panayiotos Panayiotopoulos

Archimandrite Sabbas Kambolis

Protopriest Christos Constantinou

Protopriest Panayiotos Carras