

## Consequences of the *Filioque* Heresy

Huntsville, Alabama, March 2024

Most venerable Fathers, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I will begin with a recent significant historical event which took place 130 years ago. On June 20, 1894, the Pope of Rome, Leo XIII, on the occasion of his episcopal jubilee, published an Encyclical, addressed to the leaders and peoples of the world, by which he also invited our Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ to unite with the Papal throne.

The Eastern Patriarchs replied to the Papal Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII with their corresponding Encyclical of 1895. I find this Encyclical of 1895 most significant for various reasons. One important reason is that it is the last patristic reply of Constantinople to the Roman See exposing all the papal falsehoods, being totally bereft of the rosy-hued ecumenistic drivel of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It uses the same rigorism as that of the Metropolitans Seraphim of Piraeus,

Neophytos of Morphou, and Athanasios of Limassol, who often call the pope a heretic. Be careful, however, because you may notice in the words of these faithful hierarchs the same rigorism as that of Fr.Theodore Zisis, Fr. John Whiteford, Fr.Peter Heers, and other Orthodox traditionalists.

Prior to the Age of the infection of the Neo-cosmocratic ecumenistic agenda, these Patristic Orthodox fathers of the 1895 Encyclical were truthfully loving!!! I believe, this Encyclical needs to be read by every truth-loving Christian. It is available on the website **orthodoxinfo.com**.

I will quote a few excerpts of these Orthodox hierarchs who begin their reply by likening the novel teachings of the post-schism Popes with the tares of the devil, the sower of all evil heretical seedlings...and I quote,

***“...in these last times (1054 and beyond) the evil one has rent from the Orthodox Church of Christ even whole nations in the West, having inflated the bishops of Rome with thoughts of excessive arrogance, which***

***has given birth to various lawless and anti-evangelical innovations... the Popes of Rome from time to time, pursuing absolutely and without examination modes of union according to their own fancy, strive by every means to reduce to their own falsehoods the catholic Church of Christ, which throughout the world walks unshaken in the orthodoxy of faith transmitted to her by the Fathers.”***

These blessed fathers are very overt with their ecclesiology...There is but One church of Christ...and what breaks off becomes a broken branch that ultimately withers... Christ cannot possibly have two or many churches.

In this monumental apologetic work of 25 paragraphs our Patriarchs begin to school their flock on the falsehoods of the Popes...and I continue to quote,

***“Leo XIII is by no means ignorant that during the tenth century, or at the beginning of the eleventh, the anti-evangelical and lawless addition of the Filioque, was with difficulty inserted officially into the Holy Creed at***

***Rome also, and that consequently the Roman Church, in insisting on her innovations, and not coming back to the dogma of the Ecumenical Councils, renders herself fully responsible before the one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Christ.”***

In paragraph 18 they write, ***“The Papal Church, in the expiring years of the nineteenth century has widened the existing gulf by officially proclaiming, to the astonishment of the Christian world, that the Bishop of Rome is even infallible. The Orthodox Eastern and Catholic Church of Christ, with the exception of the Son and Word of God, who was ineffably made man, knows no one infallible upon earth. Even the Apostle Peter himself, whose successor the Pope thinks himself to be, thrice denied the Lord, and was twice rebuked by the Apostle Paul, as not walking uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel.”***

And in paragraph 19... ***With these and such facts in view, the peoples of the West, becoming gradually civilized by the diffusion of letters, began to protest***

***against these papal innovations, and to demand (as was done in the fifteenth century at the Councils of Constance and Basle) the return to the ecclesiastical constitution of the first centuries.”***

During the **Council of Constance**, (1414–18), the 16<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Council of the Roman Papal Church, the German bishops were attempting to bring back the conciliar system of church governance and to overrule the monarchy of the Pope. Please pay close attention to the very surprising 8<sup>th</sup> canon of that synod:

***“Every Pope, at the behest of the 8<sup>th</sup> Canon of the Synod of Constance, is obliged to make this confession of faith during his enthronement ceremony, as presented in the Liber Diurnus: “With my mouth and my heart I promise to uphold without the slightest change, all that was legislated and commanded in the Eight Ecumenical Synods; the first of Nicea, the second of Constantinople, the third of Ephesus, the fourth of Chalcedon, the fifth and the sixth of Constantinople, the seventh of Nicea, and the***

***eighth of Constantinople. I promise to uphold all of them equal in authority and honor, carefully following all that has been instituted by them and condemning all that was condemned.***” I discovered this precious gem in this wonderful little book we translated and published around 2011, titled, My Exodus from Roman Catholicism, written by the ex-Franciscan monk Paul De Ballester.

Unfortunately, these Orthodox decrees of the Council of Constance were never enacted due to the prevailing monarchical power of papist dogmas.

According to the Elder of the Athonite Monastery of Grigoriou and theologian, George Kapsanis of blessed memory, ***“It is very likely that the depreciation and subordination of the Holy Spirit through the heresy of the Filioque has left a serious void in the western church – a void that cannot be replaced by [anyone] other than the infallible person of the Pope. If The Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son it becomes deficient in hypostatic attributes compared***

***to the other two persons; then this apparent deficiency needs to be corrected by the anthropocentric theology of the papacy. The infallible attribute of the Holy Spirit that leads the Church to all the truth is tragically transferred to an 'infallible' man."***

A heresy is the evil weed planted by the devil in the parable of the tares...[cf. *Matthew ch. 13*]; and in the parable of the sower, the good seed was choked by the weeds and thorns which grow exceedingly faster than the good seed of the heavenly sower....The bad yeast of the *Filioque* heresy provides ample explanation for the infiltration of the western church with a plethora of false philosophical and fully anthropocentric claims, with the measure of all things being the European man, according to Saint Justin [Popović], who justifiably wrote, "Humanity has experienced 3 great falls: The fall of Adam, the fall of Judas, and the fall of the Pope."

The Theanthropocentric and Christocentric character of the Church has been replaced by the papocentric authority of the successor of Peter.

Equally, the great theologian of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Vladimir Lossky posits that the philosophical and rational arguments of the papist theologians secularize the mystery of the Holy Trinity to such a degree that the God of the *Filioque* is not the God of Revelation, but rather the God of the intellect – the God of Voltaire, Descartes, Leibniz and the de-Christianized deists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The ex-Franciscan Monk, Paul de Ballester agonized for many years in Spain over these ludicrous claims and falsehoods. And I quote from *My Exodus from Roman Catholicism*: (The full text is available on our website [www.saintnicodemos.com](http://www.saintnicodemos.com)).

***“Thus, the presence of the Holy Spirit to lead the Church "into all truth" is unnecessary, as are the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition, because now there is a "god" on earth with the authority to***



***invalidate, or even declare as deluded, the teachings of the God of Heaven. Based on this claim of infallibility, the Pope is the absolute Rule of Faith. He can promulgate, even without the consent of the Church, as many new dogmas as he wishes, to which the faithful must strictly adhere and blindly obey if they want to avoid the tortures of hell after death. It depends solely on the will and pleasure of his Holiness, wrote Cardinal Baronius, for what he wishes must be deemed 'Holy and sacred by the entire Church, and his pastoral epistles must be considered, and believed, and obeyed as 'Canonical Scriptures.'***

***And Cardinal Bellarmine, a Saint of the Roman Church, adds in his notorious Theologia:***

***“If one day the Pope fell into the error of imposing sins while prohibiting virtues, the Church would be obliged to believe that sins are indeed beneficial and virtues are bad. Alternatively, she would be committing a sin against her conscience.”***

***Cardinal Zabarella is even more preposterous on this matter:***

***“If God and the Pope convene at a certain Synod, [...] the pope can do [there] almost anything God can do, [...] and the pope does whatever he wishes, even violations; therefore, he is something more and higher than God.”***

Now you may hear some of your Catholic friends say, “Well, we certainly don’t take these claims seriously...” Unfortunately, these papal claims of absolute authority, primacy, and infallibility chain the open-minded theologians of the west with 13 papal ecumenical synods. If removed, they would make the tower of Papism crumble at once.

The experience of sound Orthodox theologians, like Archimandrite George Kapsanis, assures us that the Vatican will never compromise the dogma of Papal Primacy and absolute authority, regardless of their

Jesuitical diplomacy and double-tongued proclamations...

Vatican II made no changes in this matter...Both recent popes Benedict Ratzinger and his predecessor, despite their flattery towards Orthodoxy, did not move an iota from the prevailing dogma of primacy.

Pope Benedict released a document on July 10, 2007, claiming that “the Orthodox Churches are indeed churches” because they have Apostolic succession and that they enjoy “many elements of sanctification and of the truth; but they lack something because they do not recognize the primacy of the pope – **a defect**, or **a wound** that harmed them...”

This is the greatest deception in the history of Western Christianity! This **blessed defect** of Orthodoxy is explained beautifully by the Holy Spirit in 2 Corinthians 12:9: “My power is made perfect in weakness. My grace is sufficient for you!!!”

The Papist church has replaced the uncreated Grace of the Holy Spirit by the created monarchical authority of a man...Let's be reminded of the most profound hymn of Pentecost, chanted during Vespers...

***“The Holy Spirit provides all things, He gushes forth prophecies, He perfects the priesthood, He has shown forth the fishermen as theologians, He binds together the entire institution of the Church...”***

The infallible man of Rome has arrogantly enthroned himself in the place of Christ and of the Holy Spirit and falsely claims that he alone has the power to keep the unity of the Church. As Orthodox we decry and mourn this spiritual suicide of the Roman Pontiffs. This power and unifying force of the pope has nothing to do with the uncreated energy of the Holy Spirit, but rather with the human arrogance of an autocrat. This is nothing short of the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, according to Elder George Kapsanis.

This may seem an exaggeration to some, but I will illustrate this empirically in the journey of the Church.

The Orthodox Church through the centuries faced dozens of infiltrating weeds that threatened Her existence: Nicolaitanism, Gnosticism, Arianism, Nestorianism, Monophysitism, Monothelitism, Monoenergism, Iconoclasm, Barlaamism and we are back to the Nicolaitanism, of the Rainbow Agenda – what was the motto of the Nicolaitans of Revelation? “Everything goes” with the human body, sexually...and Christ said, “I hate the works of the Nicolaitans...” let this be an answer to some contextual rainbow theologians who claim that Christ never spoke against homosexuality. “If the light in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”

The bad yeast of heretical and demon-inspired heresiarchs never subdued the good yeast of the Church ...Indeed, the gates of hades did not overcome it. The Apostolic synodical system is the very principle

that enables the flow of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church...the very principle we encounter in the first Apostolic Synod in the Acts of the Apostles [cf. Acts Ch. 15] ... The presiding hierarch was James the Brother of God, the first Bishop of Jerusalem, and not the often fallible Apostle Peter.

Latin Christianity replaced the synodical principle of church governance as expressed with the words, “It seems good to the Holy Spirit, and to us”, with the monarchical absolute authority of a man – the Pontiff of Rome. This papist arrogance has inactivated the free flow of Divine Grace in the post-schism western Christianity of 1054 and beyond. This may explain the inability of the western church to find its path to its Orthodoxy, sanctification and *theosis*.

The destructive yeast of the *Filioque* led Latin Christianity into the humanist and rational trajectory of papal primacy, infallibility, and the doctrine of created Grace, along with the practice of using unleavened

bread for communion... It stands to reason, thus they lost the Orthodox good yeast, so how can they have leavened Eucharistic bread?

After the Credal insertion of the *Filioque*, the Latins lost the distinction between the Uncreated Essence and Uncreated Grace of God. The importance of God's Uncreated Grace is so vital to Orthodoxy that the Orthodox Fathers placed the celebration of this doctrine immediately after the doctrine of the Incarnation on the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

As Orthodox Iconography is predicated upon God's Incarnation, likewise the deification or *theosis* of man is predicated upon the participation by man in God's Uncreated Grace. Both mysteries are so profound that the Orthodox Church gives them primary importance during the first two Sundays of Great Lent.

Saint Gregory Palamas, who expounded upon this ever-existing doctrine of the Church, castigated the

heretical philosopher Barlaam with these words: “Philosopher, you are teaching a God without Energies, and thus a God that does not exist!” This is precisely why St. Gregory Palamas has provoked the menace and hatred of the Latins through the centuries.

The created Grace of Barlaamism cannot make man God by Grace, so the classic teaching of Saint Athanasios that God became man so that man might become God by Grace, ultimately comes to naught. The created Grace of the Latin mysteries or sacraments cannot unite us with God because there can be no relationship between created and uncreated.

If Grace is created and it does not come from God, but from the Papal monarch of Rome, then the purpose of the Christian life cannot be the attainment to the likeness of God or *theosis*, but the adherence to a set of ethical values, and not the acquisition of the Holy Spirit, therefore, but the improvement of life here on earth.



The Roman Catholic Church then cannot be a workshop of Saints, but only a religious power that influences society through Jesuit universities and colonialism. The Latin mysteries thus cannot be the presence of God on earth as such, but only some specially created blessings to be turned on and off by the church hierarchy in order to benefit the people and justify them juridically at best.

Asceticism becomes a mere physical exercise, as the western Christian cannot and does not have experience of the Uncreated Grace of God, and thus does not bear the necessary presuppositions to behold the Uncreated Light. Many of the western monks practice eastern meditation and yoga since they have lost the distinction between Divine Energy and human energy. Without Communion with the Uncreated Grace of God man becomes inconsolable; his theology becomes philosophical, intellectual, and scholastic.

The Orthodox Church, after the struggles of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, declared the theological distinction between created grace and Uncreated Grace a doctrine of the Orthodox Church and exalted Saint Gregory Palamas as an illuminator and unwavering teacher of the Church.

Now I don't want to be unfair to our Roman Catholic faithful friends and neighbors who are practicing their faith to the best of their ability; God bless them! They do have sacraments and spiritual rites and piety; but their sacraments have nothing in common with the Uncreated and Sanctifying Divine Grace present in the Mysteries of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Orthodox Church!

This can be demonstrated in a most powerful and empirical way! In the last 100 years the Orthodox Church has produced over 100 Saints (not to mention the millions of New Martyrs of Russia), despite the ecumenistic overtures and compromises of clerics in high places. There are contemporary Saints who still

transform the lives of thousands of souls, Saints who witnessed the Light of Tabor, Saints with Apostolic gifts, Saints who themselves became incorrupt, fragrant and myrrh-bearing Holy relics.

Our western Christian brothers and neighbors have been cheated out of this great treasure due to the loss of Orthodoxy in the west, and of the correct experiential knowledge of the Apostolic tradition. However, the simple, sincere faithful of the west who follow the commandments and practice their simple faith will certainly not be held as accountable as their leaders.

I would like to close with a powerful incident in the life of Saint Evmenios of Crete, the spiritual son of Saint Nikephoros the Leper. Saint Evmenios was the spiritual father of the current Metropolitan of Morphou, Neophytos, whom I quote from one of his recent lectures:

“After the medicinal cure for leprosy was invented, Raoul Follereau, the French philanthropist and “Apostle to the Lepers”, was supplying this most needed medicine to the clinic of the lepers outside of Athens whose priest was Father Evmenios.”

Full of gratefulness for this, Father Evmenios in his simplicity, tried to include Mr.Follereau in the proskomide, and he shaved off a portion for him from the prosforon. At that very moment, his angel picked up that portion and set it aside. Father Evmenios stubbornly picked up the portion of the Roman Catholic Raoul and placed it back with the rest of the faithful, saying to the angel, “You know how much he helped us!” The angel responded, “I know he helped you, but the Liturgy is only for the Orthodox members of the Church. You can pray for him in your private prayers.” The angel then set aside Raul’s portion once again.

Based on everything we covered thus far, it is more than apparent that if we unite with the Pope in an

external type of false union we will forfeit the Theanthropocentrism of our Church for the anthropocentrism of Rome; we will no longer be Christ-centered but Pope-centered.

Next year, the year of our Lord 2025, marks the seventeen-hundredth anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council of Nicaea. Many of our misinformed Orthodox, and some of our ecumenist hierarchs, are enthusiastic about celebrating a common Pascha with the entire Western Christendom. In my opinion, this is likened to a married couple who were divorced for 55 some years, only to meet again at their 60-year High School reunion. Would it make any sense then for them to make plans to celebrate their 55<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary without first examining the last 55 years of their life apart before they could justify properly reconnecting again? What is there to celebrate otherwise?

We are certainly convinced that there are very many sincere Truth-loving Roman Catholic priests and

laypeople who love the Lord and the Virgin Mary and our common Saints. We owe it to them to continue to work very diligently to preserve our Orthodox Tradition unblemished, so that they can have a home to return to when God illumines them to do so.

In the interim, we would like to extend an open invitation to the faithful remnant of the Latin Church to join us from this year on, in preparing for the Lord's Pascha! Christ spelled the journey out for all his disciples through the ages in Mathew 16:24; a few days before His Holy Transfiguration: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Through the strict fasting during our Lenten Seasons and on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year we crucify our selfish will, ambitions, and desires; we carry our cross; we share in His sufferings and Crucifixion to purify the garment of our soul: so that we may behold the Unwaning Light of His Resurrection.

This is the Christian faith of the first millennium, a faith that transforms and transfigures normal everyday people into Christ-like Saints; and this is the only way to a true and meaningful Church Union- a union based upon the Orthodox Catholic Faith of the Philokalian Fathers and the Catholic confession of the German Bishops of the Council of Constance.

If our western Catholic brothers and sisters join us in the ascetical works of prayer, fasting and self denial, then who is to say that the walls of Jericho might not come crumbling down once again! Then, and only then, and only with a union based upon Love and Truth, will billions of angels and the angel of Saint Evmenios rejoice in Heaven.

After all:

What is impossible with men is possible with God!

Let's pray for a spiritually prosperous Great Lent!

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