19/11/2018

Statement by the Orthodox Bishops' Conference of Benelux



The Orthodox Bishops' Conference of Benelux posted this official statement on their website:

Brussels – On Wednesday November 14, 2018, the Orthodox Bishops' Conference of Benelux (CEOB) met for the sixteenth time at the headquarters of the Orthodox Metropolis, 71 Avenue Charbo. The meeting was chaired by His Eminence Metropolitan Athenagoras of Belgium (Ecumenical Patriarchate). Also present were Bishop Marc, representative of Metropolitan Joseph (Patriarchate of Romania) and Bishop Dositheos (Patriarchate of Georgia).

The meeting began with a prayer for the unity of the Orthodox Church.

His Eminence Metropolitan Athenagoras of Belgium presented the topic of the dialogue between the religions recognized by the Belgian State and the federal government, so that the other bishops could become aware of some important details for the life of the parishes. This is about a charter for managers of "non-

profit associations” in connection with recognized religions. The bishops were also informed of the developments concerning the Orthodox chaplains in Belgian prisons and armies.

The Institute of Orthodox Theological Studies Apostle Paul and its new curriculum was also a topic of exchange and reflection. Two new years have been added: the preparatory year and the year of the master program. The bishops committed to inform the faithful.

The bishops also discussed topics related to the life of Orthodoxy in the Netherlands. They heard important news regarding the “Orthodox Church in the Netherlands” foundation, and made the decision to proceed to a sending authority (zendende instantie) specific to the Orthodox Church and in collaboration with the Oriental Eastern Churches. They also discussed the protocol of the “Confidentiality Committee in the Netherlands” (Protocol voor de vertrouwenscommissie).

The bishops had the opportunity to exchange new information on the different Orthodox groups, and in particular on His All-Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew’s visit to the three Benelux countries planned for November 2019, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Holy Metropolis of Belgium, created in 1969. This visit will allow the members of the Orthodox Bishops’ Conference of Benelux to meet with the Patriarch. The next meeting of the Orthodox Bishops’ Conference of Benelux will take place on 4 June 2019.

The Orthodox Bishops’ Conference of Benelux was created by a decision of the 4th Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference held in Chambésy (Geneva) in June 2009.