

Constantinople's lust for power is catastrophic for Orthodoxy - Met. Amfilohije of Montenegro



The actions of the Patriarchate in Constantinople in Ukraine over the past few months could have disastrous consequences for the future of all Orthodoxy, His Eminence Metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro and the Littoral said during the Sunday service in the Church of St. Nicholas in Bandić, Montenegro.

The love of power is one of the most dangerous sicknesses, Met. Amfilohije noted. It has been inherent in the Roman Catholic church for centuries and the temptation has not side-stepped the Orthodox, he said, as reports the site of the Metropolia of Montenegro.

“It exists in our days. It is seen today in the behavior of the Patriarch of Constantinople regarding Ukraine. His love of power has led to great sorrow in Ukraine, to discord that is catastrophic for the future not only of Ukraine and all the Slavic peoples, but at the same time for all of Orthodoxy,” His Eminence said.

The hierarch of the Serbian Church also noted that there is no room in the Church for ethnophyletism:

There are no Chinese, no Japanese, no Russians, no Americans, no Serbs, no Montenegrins—there is only Jesus Christ and those who are gathered around him. This is the Church of Christ. So it has been throughout the centuries, and so it will be until the end of the world. This is very important to know in our times when people have distanced themselves from the Church. Many have left the Church, but at the same time want to rule it... They think they have the right to control the Church and its life. But it's impossible.

Another Serbian hierarch, His Grace Bishop Irinej of Bačka, has taken the same stance against ethnophyletism:

In this sense, we cannot accept this approach, in which we see ourselves as Greek Orthodox, Phanariots, and that over there, there are Muscovites, Slavs, etc. No: The Church is one. There are no Hellenes, no Greeks, no Russians, no Serbs, we are all one, if we are Orthodox. If we do not understand this, we are not Orthodox enough.

Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople himself, on the other hand, has characterized the struggle over Ukraine precisely as a clash of ethnicities: “Our Slav brothers can’t stand the precedence that our Ecumenical Patriarchate has, nor, consequently, our people in worldwide Orthodoxy.”

The same approach can also be seen in a recent article from His Eminence Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos) of Nafpaktos where he quotes from Protopresbyter Stefanos Avramidis, the Secretary of the Synodical Commission on Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations of the Church of Greece, who participated in the session of the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission in 2009 that attempted to find consensus on how autocephaly should be granted in the Orthodox Church.

Of those bishops who disagreed with the position of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Fr. Stefanos writes: “These did not maintain any philhellenic position”—that is, he views their disagreement as a lack of love for Greeks.

On Sunday, Met. Amfilohije also criticized the state interference in Church life, saying, “This is absolute nonsense. It should respect the Church.”

He has addressed the Ukrainian issue before, calling for it to be resolved at a pan-Orthodox council, as have many Synods, primates, and hierarchs. Pat.

Bartholomew has ignored all of these calls.

In an interview in October, Met. Amfilohije said: "I would also add further about the decision of Constantinople: This decision is a catastrophe for the Constantinople Patriarchate and for the unity of the Orthodox Church. Therefore, we hope that in the near future, as called for by the Moscow Patriarchate and other Local Churches, which have the full right to do so, we will resolve this issue in a pan-Orthodox format."

The Serbian Orthodox Church has also formally rejected Constantinople's rehabilitation of the Ukrainian schismatics, as has the Polish Orthodox Church.

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