

Ecumenical Patriarchate Acts on Mode of Distribution of Holy Communion



NEW YORK – Today, June 25, 2020, The Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate released the summation of their work at the Meeting of the Holy Synod in Chambésy, Geneva at Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This included consideration of the responses of the Local Autocephalous Churches to the May 17, 2020 Letter of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on the issue of Holy Communion and its manner of distribution.

Commenting on the decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Archbishop said:

“Once again, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, under the exemplary leadership of His All-Holiness Bartholomew, has demonstrated authentic conciliar Orthodox primacy in Her fraternal consultation with the Local Autocephalous Churches. The pastoral wisdom and sensitivity that can be applied by *economia* in the Diaspora further manifests the love and concern of the Mother Church of Constantinople for all Her spiritual children throughout the world. We are grateful for the wise and prudent counsel of the First Throne of Orthodoxy.”

In the Communiqué, the Holy and Sacred Synod affirms that the “Mystery of the Divine Eucharist is non-negotiable,” and “the Church remains steadfast and immovable in its teaching towards the essence of the Mystery of Holy Communion.”

The Communiqué further 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.”

Amidst the continuing or even rising increase of COVID 19 spread in the USA, in its wisdom, the Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate has offered the liberty to the priests to address this emergency situation by temporarily distributing Holy Communion using multiple spoons that are dedicated for only that purpose and belonging to the local parish, an accommodation mindful of the special needs of the faithful in the Diaspora and with “pastoral sensitivity, responsibility, and consciousness”.

This is not only consistent with the wisdom of the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but it underscores what His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros has affirmed since the beginning of the crisis: “It is not the way we receive, it is the Communion itself that saves us and gives us eternal life.”

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