

# EDITORIAL

## **The Holy And Great Synod – Sinodality And Co-Responsibility in the Current World**

This year Orthodoxy marked the most important event of the last decades, namely the convening and meeting of the Holy and Great Synod. This remarkable event took place on the island of Crete between June 16 and 26. Ten local Orthodox Churches participated, except the Churches of Russia, Antioch, Bulgaria and Georgia, although they were present in the last preparatory phase at the Chambésy-Geneva synaxis on January 21 - 28, 2016. The Romanian Orthodox Church delegation headed by His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel was present and active in the works of the Holy and Great Synod. This synodal event was chaired by His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew after a pre-established Regulation and in accordance with the synodic practice of Orthodoxy. In the spirit of the Orthodox Tradition, the *pleroma* of the Church was called to prayer for the good progress of the synodal works in Crete and for a catholic manifestation in full communion of faith. As His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel affirmed, Orthodoxy must be synodal both at a local and at a universal level and this is a moral duty. The synodal meeting at a Pan-Orthodox level must become a practice assumed in the context of a secularized and globalized world.

After having been previously analyzed and deepened by each Church, the topics discussed did not contain any teachings that contradict the Church's dogmatic, spiritual, liturgical and canonical tradition. In the context of a world dominated by syncretism and relativism they reaffirm and reinforce the Tradition of the Church on the one hand and on the other hand they address and express pastoral-missionary aspects in the spirit of the same Tradition of the Church. The Holy and Great Synod is not only a normality of the Orthodoxy manifestation at a synodal level but also a canonical normality regarding the life of the Church in the tumultuous and provocative context of the current world. In the decisions from Crete we

discover both akribeia and economy as they have manifested in the history of the Church. We also meet the lucidity of debating the challenges to the Church life in communion, not in division. The Synod of Crete did not formulate new dogma, but it affirmed the dogmatic truth of Orthodoxy ever and the fact that the Orthodox Church is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, Christ's Church. The texts of the Synod of Crete are open to future nuances, deepening, explanations and developments, but only in the spirit of communion and dialogue, in the context of the synodality and catholicity of the Church and the confession of the Orthodox living faith.

Although there were tensions within Orthodoxy about the way the works of the Synod of Crete took place, as well as about some expressions from the content of the texts, these decisions need to be disseminated and explained to the faithful people. So the various unauthorized and divisive impressions of certain Christians can be overcome. Dialogue, sobriety and responsible exercise of synodality are needed in the context of the present world where individualism and fragmentation are the features of post-modernity. Isolation, division and lack of dialogue can lead Orthodoxy to the dangerous area of enclavement or division, to the lack of dialogue and functional synodality at the Pan-Orthodox level. The major priority of the Holy and Great Synod was to exercise synodality and to proclaim the unity of Orthodoxy in a world of dis-unity and moral relativism.

A page of Orthodox history was written in Crete where the ecclesiological consciousness was manifested at a synodal level.

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