

8/20/08

COMMUNIQUÉ

Joint Dialogue Commission Meets to Continue Discussion on Unity

The Joint Dialogue Commission of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America and the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas met at St. George Cathedral in Southfield, Michigan on Tuesday, August 12, 2008. With the blessing of the Hierarchs, and as directed by their respective Congresses, the Commission met to continue its work on the proposal to establish a Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate in North America. Three major topics were discussed: (1) the deliberation and decisions of the respective Congresses; (2) reactions to certain public statements made following the Congresses; and (3) the refinement of the Proposal text.

Following the direction of the Congresses, the Commission made further refinements to the text of the Proposal. This, along with the findings of various working committees appointed by our Hierarchs, will form the basis for expanding discussion on the practical aspects of unity.

The Commission members noted that both Congresses took an historic step by approving the proposal as a basis for continued dialogue. The Commission regrets the hasty pronouncements of various officials and the media immediately after our Congresses. These misrepresented our Congresses' decisions as being final decisions on unity. Both sides recognize that a difficult road remains ahead in addressing the concerns, past and present, regarding such a unity. The Commission members insist that the process of discussion and possible union is in the competence of our two eparchies alone. Recent speculation and public commentary by individuals outside of our eparchies have only complicated the delicate nature of this process and threatened its ultimate success. The Commission members urge that patience and discretion be exercised as this process takes its course.

Lastly, the Commission members would like to emphasize that the healing of the decades-long division within the Romanian Orthodox community in North America should be seen as part of the greater task of Orthodox unity. In our first meeting in 1993 the Commission said: "We are cognizant of the fact that the reconciliation and normalization of relations between our respective dioceses is part of the larger process of bringing the various Orthodox jurisdictions together in the great work of an administratively united Orthodox Church on the American continent." The Commission would ask that our continuing efforts be understood within this larger context.

The Commission will meet again after discussing its work with the respective Hierarchs.

Fr. Nicholas Apostola
Fr. Ioan Ioniță
Fr. Ion Gherman
Fr. George Chișcă
Fr. George Săndulescu

Fr. Laurence Lazar
Fr. Romey Rosco
Fr. Remus Grama
Fr. Cătălin Mitescu
Fr. Ian Pac-Urar

*Southfield, Michigan
12 August 2008*