
Eastern Churches Journal

Incorporating *Chrysostom*

A Journal of Eastern Christendom

Autumn 1995 Volume 2 Number 2

Page 233 through page 237

Reply from Patriarch Bartolomew to Patriarch Alexis

July 11, 1995, Prot. No. 937

"Your Beatitude and Most Holy ALEXIY, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, our Modesty's most beloved and dear brother in Christ God and concelebrant, embracing Your venerable Beatitude fraternally in the Lord, we greet You exuberantly.

We received Your Beloved and distinguished Beatitude's lengthy letter dated May 18, 1995, Protocol 1308, and read it with due care.....The tone of this letter and its contentsstirred in all of us here..... not only astonishment, but also very deep bitterness and even disappointment.

..... in the most official terms and in the language of evangelical sincerity, we are obliged to present the views of the Holy Great Church of Christ in Constantinople on this matter with the hope that in the future we will not need to readdress such troubling concerns.

.....Fifth, of course to a certain extent we can comprehend the fears Your Beatitude and your Holy Synod have as to the consequences which the settlement of the Ukrainians in the Diaspora could eventually have had on the general situation in Ukraine, if proper care had not been taken.

In this regard we would like to assure you that the induction of the Ukrainian communities into the canonical order of the Orthodox Church by receiving them under the omophorion of the Ecumenical Patriarch will, we

believe, finally prove to be beneficial for the relationship between the Most Holy Church of Russia and the faithful in Ukraine.

This is so because on the one hand those received were obligated to formally declare that they will not seek autocephaly of the Ukrainian Church, or even a part of it, through known methods employed by the "autocephalists" who operate in every way possible.

On the other hand, it is no longer possible for them to cooperate or to commune with schismatic Ukrainian groups which are out of communion with the Orthodox Church without bearing harm to themselves, provided the canonical principle "one who receives communion with another who is out of communion finds oneself also out of communion" is still valid for them."

Signed... Your venerable Beatitude's Beloved brother in Christ,

+BARTHOLOMEW, of Constantinople

++++
++++