

## ANNOUNCEMENT

After a long time of total silence and inactivity, the long-awaited process of uniting the divided parts of the Church Abroad has finally begun. Inspired by Bishop Dionisiy's decision, the Diocese of Western Europe along with its Ruling Bishop, Bishop Iriney, has joined the Church headed by Metropolitan Agafangel. The decision was made at a meeting in Odessa on June 15\16, which also included Metropolitan Agafangel, Synod Secretary Bishop Georgiy of Bolgrad and Belgorod-Dnestrovsk, and Bishop Dionisiy of Novgorod and Tver, and was approved by all the other bishops.

We fervently believe this union of the fragments that has begun will result in a broad movement towards unification. Even in its initial phase, our union **already** presents a threat to the disloyal New York Synod. What other conclusion can be made, when at the very same time, they issue an absurd decision, three years after signing the disgraceful Act, that makes no canonical sense, to censure in one swipe ten clerics in South America, who, in contrast to them, did not betray the Mother-Church which bore them. As Francois de La Rochefoucauld said, "Hypocrisy is a tribute that vice pays to virtue."

We have already pointed out that the time for pleasant smiles in the Patriarchate has passed and that Kirill Gundyayev reveals his usual countenance and steely fist more often. Our flip-flopping betrayers were clearly incapable of completing the assigned task; to deliver the entire Church Abroad into the Red clutches. That is why our scattered condition, unable to agree on anything, suited them so much. That is why the looming possibility of a breakout of union frightens them so much, and why, in the hope of scaring those weaker, they quickly impose pseudo-disciplinary sanctions.

May all those who desire to see a restored Church Abroad again understand the

vital necessity of ceasing all baseless rancor among ourselves, the true Émigrés. We know that each of us can, to the delight of those in the Patriarchate, point out the faults of his neighbor, but is it not more important to look to the future and act in a constructive manner?

Let us remember during the Civil War, when the White leaders called upon the people to band together for the sake of their desecrated homeland and join the ranks of the Volunteer army to rebuff the Bolsheviks. There were many who commiserated with the White heroes and look up on them sympathetically, but the bulk of the people maintained a wait-and-see attitude. And they ended up waiting a long time. Other “ultra-monarchists” refused to take part in the White movement, for the reason that some of the generals did not act honorably toward the Tsar. The outcome of pretensions of exclusivity and bad policies are well known. Is it worth it to step on the same rake over and over again?

In conclusion, whether the Church Abroad *exists or does not exist* today depends on each one of us. I. A. Ilyin once wrote, “The White effort was not begun by us, nor will it end because of us.” Let us also state with conviction, **the White Church was not begun by us, nor will it end because of us.**

**Protodeacon German Ivanov-Trinadtsatiy**

**Secretary of the Western Europe Diocese**