

PATRIARCHAL AND SYNODICAL TOMOS

Concerning the Grant to the Most Holy Church of Greece of the privilege of canonical sovereign jurisdiction for the spiritual protection and supervision of all Greek Orthodox Churches in the Diaspora in Europe, America, and other countries, excepting only the Greek Orthodox Church of Venice.

JOACHIM
BY THE MERCY OF GOD ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE
NEW ROME AND ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH

Protocol Number 2388

The God-bearing Fathers and Teachers of the Church, who spoke of godly things, illumined by one and the same Holy Spirit, by their faith and by their teaching, as many-lighted stars, they made bright the noetic firmament of the Church. By their ordinances and canons, they have wisely established order in ecclesiastical affairs, composing all things proper and expedient upon the foundation of the Apostles, our Lord Jesus Christ himself being the chief the cornerstone. Therefore, whatever the blessed Fathers have decreed and lawfully laid down for us concerning the order and governance of ecclesiastical affairs, these we embrace and respect, and we are determined to stand forever stand fast in them unshaken and immovable, observing the definitions of the Fathers and being guided by them, using them as a rule and a sure and certain norm. We look to these for the spiritual protection of local parishioners. Even so, it is not by chance, but according to the order and harmony that was set down by the Fathers, we proceed to reconcile the coming things, the link of harmony and unity properly and opportunely, wherever there is need, expanding or adjusting according to needs, but not in any place causing rupture or break. For we do not annul the pure and traditional laws with modernistic additions, but by harmoniously arranging arising needs toward the canonical order, we remedy and reach agreement, keeping and advancing the bond of harmony and unity to the future. What do we do now, through the present Patriarchal and Synodal Tomos, is concerning those outside the established boundaries of the individual autocephalous ecclesiastical regions scattered in Europe and America and in other countries with Greek Orthodox Churches, which until now, are unstable and undefined in respect to a singular order of a canonical spiritual authority. For, as well as other things, the aforementioned Churches themselves from the beginning regulated and ordered themselves and zealously cherished their piety, their order in worship, and their spiritual unity in foreign lands, and they unfailingly preserved and preserved them, but through the way of their own origination and constitution, as from whose principle they are declared ecclesiastical or political, not according to a system, nor by at the same time having a constitution, but automatically, as they say, and from a completely private initiative, and from residents and immigrants of various origins, they originate and are formed, for many of these reasons they manifested the anomaly and instability as far as the unity of their canonical dependence is concerned. For they, being independent and self-governing in their internal affairs, they recognize as their own ecclesiastical head our Most Holy, Apostolic, and Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne, to whom they always refer, commemorating the name of the Patriarch in all their services, and from whom they receive the Holy Chrism and their priests. However, after the establishment of the God-protected Kingdom of Greece, they have

closer ties and connection with it, because the origin of the majority of its members is from there, together with other commonalities; for this reason they began to recognize as their spiritual authority in ecclesiastical affairs the Holy Synod of the God-saved Kingdom [of Greece] and had reference to it. But some were not completely constant in this sign of spiritual dependence, but sometimes conducted their affairs to our own Patriarchal Throne, then to the Holy Synod of Greece, and sometimes to other Patriarchal Thrones mentioned. Because the spiritual dependence of the said churches was thus abnormal and indefinite, the canonical order was clearly violated, for it was abundantly manifest that neither was the Most Holy Church of Greece under our Patriarchal Throne, being sovereign in autocephaly with defined boundaries, nor was another Church or Throne able to presume, by its own authority, to canonically reach beyond the boundaries of its own region, except for our Most Holy, Apostolic, and Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne, both from the prerogative granted to It to ordain the bishops in the barbarian lands and those declared beyond defined ecclesiastical regions, as well as of Itself by the intercessions, properly justified to exercise supreme spiritual protection for said churches on foreign [soil]. Since we assert that from this anomaly the canonical order is violated, finally because of the vagueness, not insignificant consequences and many other difficulties have arisen, especially in different communities, and by this uncertainty and as has been said, “freedom,” unto the advancement of undesirable objectives, which harm unanimity, unity and the common good. Because of these things, there is need, as is reasonable, to swiftly furnish the present correction to brought upon the matter, for the restoration of canonical good order, in anticipation of any friction or conflicts, and for the good of their parishioners, whose stability in all things is not insignificant and indifferent to our maternal, ecclesiastical care for them. Whence it is finally befitting that between our Most Holy Patriarchal Throne and the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, there has been on this subject an exchange and from both sides a manifest and sincere attempt for a proper and now necessary speedy rectification of the situation with fraternal love, our Modesty, together with our most reverend and most honorable Metropolitans, who are our beloved brothers and co-celebrants in the Holy Spirit, have considered in Synod and sought the manner by which an intact canonical order around the spiritual dependence of the aforementioned churches might be preserved, and how these [Churches] might achieve the kind of lasting situation of an accomplishing and salvific ecclesiastical care and protection, by the grace and good will of the All-Holy and Perfecting Spirit, we have formed a judgment and determined the following: even as they declare for the worldly form of government the current need of the God-protected Kingdom of Greece, as relates to our Great Church of Christ, with abundant desire and fervent love, we canonically granted the autocephaly formerly to the most holy Church of this Kingdom and set it in order under its own ecclesiastical authority – the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece – thus even now through these words set forth, providing for good administration, [the Great Church] cedes to this Church [of Greece], as to a much beloved daughter and as dear to God entrusts to her the talent that is in many ways is empowering for the good of the Christ-named people, the canonical sovereignty of their spiritual protection and the right of oversight of all Greek Orthodox Churches in the diaspora, in Europe and America, and in the rest of the countries, excepting only the Greek Orthodox Church of Venice, due to its special historical ties, as before, under the canonical dependence of our Most Holy Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne, and under the political protection of His Majesty the King of the Greeks, assigning it under the following ecclesiastical terms. A) For the spiritual supervision and governance of these churches, a Hierarchy is appointed by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece, whose duty it is to regularly visit each of these churches from time to time. B) The Hierarchy appointed by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece for this spiritual supervision and

visitation of existing churches, who may be and may be received from among the Hierarchs of our Most Holy Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne, those released by It must each come to Constantinople and receive the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch, as well as the Holy Chrism for these churches. C) In all the same holy churches during the Divine Liturgy, the name of the Ecumenical Patriarch must be mentioned aloud in the diptychs according to the following order. If a Hierarch is officiating, he commemorates in the “Among the First” the Holy Synod of Greece, while the co-celebrating priests commemorate the officiating Hierarch and the deacon from outside [the Altar] announces the name of the Ecumenical Patriarch, pronouncing, “(Name) His All-Holiness and Ecumenical Patriarch, Many Years.” If there is no officiating Hierarch, the commemoration of the Holy Synod of Greece is performed by the officiating priest, and the Patriarchal “polychronion” [“Many Years”] is pronounced from outside [the Altar] by the deacon. And if there is no deacon, the memorial service and the Patriarchal “polychronion” is proclaimed from the holy Bema by the officiating priest according to the above order. D) Each parish is free as before, to choose and hire their priests from anywhere, or request them from His Eminence the Metropolitan of Athens; the canonical appointment of all these priests ought to be done by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece. For any of those invited from any ecclesiastical region invited by the parishes must, after receiving a letter of release from the relevant ecclesiastical authority, make provision with the Holy Synod of the Kingdom [of Greece] through the document of their appointment. E) All the Churches in the diaspora, as a sign of their affinity and unity with the great Church of Christ, and out of their filial affection, ought to submit and amount for Her needs, an amount to be determined by each one according to their own preference.

Thus, these things are conciliary decided and decreed by the Holy Spirit concerning the aforementioned Greek Orthodox Churches in the diaspora, for their permanent security and inviolable observance, hereby confirmed by this present Patriarchal and Synodical Tome, a copy of which has been recorded in the sacred codex of our Great Church of Christ. May the God of every grace, Who has called us to his eternal glory in Christ Jesus, always preserve unailing and unbreakable the bond of love and unity in his Holy Church, and build up, support, strengthen, and establish the said Orthodox churches in the diaspora in the faith and in his holy precepts. To Him be glory and dominion unto the ages of ages. Amen.

In the Year of Salvation 1908, March 8th, Indiction 3

† Joachim, by the mercy of God Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

† Athanasios of Cyzicus

† Philotheos of Nicomedia

† Anthimos of Pelagoneia

† Athanasios of Iconium

† Constantine of Chios

† Nicholas of Maroneia

† Gregory of Stromnitsa

† Agathangelos of Grevena

† Luke of Dryinoupolis

† Germanos of Leros and Kalymnos

† Constantine of Servia and Kozani