



His Eminence Teofan,
The Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bukovina

Welcome Address at the International Theological Conference “Panorthodox Unity and Synoldality”, Iași, 9-12 January 2019

Abstract

In his Welcome Address at the International Theological Conference “Panorthodox Unity and Synoldality”, Iași, 9-12 January 2019, His Eminence Teofan, the Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bukovina, underlines the link between theology and spirituality. A contemporary theology is on the one hand oriented to Christ as “the model, the prime and ultimate basis for the knowledge of God and of the creation”, on the other hand contextual, i.e. an “answer to the particular needs of the time”. Real theological wisdom is spiritual wisdom, the knowledge of the will of Christ (Colossians 1: 9-10).



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Metropolitan of Moldavia
and Bukovina

Keywords

Pan-Orthodox Unity and Conciliarity, knowledge of God, Pentecost, spiritual wisdom, Theophany

Your Eminences, Your Graces,
Beloved Brother Priests,
Distinguished guests from the Orthodox theological world,
Dear brothers and sisters,

Starting today, and for the next few days, a Conference of several hundred Orthodox theologians from many countries of the world will take place in Iași, on the topic of “Pan-Orthodox Unity and Conciliarity”.

By opening the meeting with prayer in the Cathedral we confess that all theological acts are grounded and perfected in prayer. What is more, during the entire week, the theological debate will be joined by the Divine Liturgy and the morning prayers, so that it may be nurtured by “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the love of God the Father, and by the communion of the Holy Spirit”.

This meeting has been planned to take place during the week following the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the new calendar, or the Nativity of Our Lord, according to the old calendar. In the ancient times, these feasts were celebrated together, on the same day, both meaning to proclaim the Blessed Theophany, the Manifestation of God to the world. We trust that the theological meeting in Iași will be inspired from the same living Water – Christ, the God-Man, the model, the prime and ultimate basis for the knowledge of God and of the creation.

All the Orthodox Christians, and especially the teachers and doctors of the Church are called to embrace the spirit of

Theophany, as well as that of Pentecost. True theology is that coming from on High, which theologians receive, live and confess in a language specific to, and in answer to the particular needs of their time. "The gospel preached by me," says the Holy Apostle Paul, "is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human being, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12). To allow of lesser notions, brought about by human fancy, is to take the theological interpretation in a perilous place, with dire consequences for the life of the Church and of the world. Purging the mind of the "wisdom of this age" (1 Corinthians 2:6) and its filling with "words taught by the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:13), as says the Holy Apostle Paul, enables the theologian to resonate in harmony with the authentic confession. "For no prophecy ever came through human will," says the Holy Apostle Peter, "but rather human beings moved by the Holy Spirit spoke under the influence of God" (2 Peter 1:21).

We offer unremitting prayer to God so He may bestow upon you the Spirit of the Holy Prophets, of the Holy Apostles and of the Holy Fathers both of ancient times and of today, in view of the work that awaits you here in Iași and also for the duration of your entire life. May you receive from God the strength to confess "in accord with the divinely-inspired theologies of the saints and the pious mind of the Church" (The Synodicon of Orthodoxy). May Saints Parascheva of Iași and Paisius Velichkovsky of Neamț walk with you and, through their prayers, connect your theological reasoning with those who have seen the "glory of God" (cf. John 17:24; 2 Peter 1:16).

May God give you strength to help the life of the Churches you belong to, by means of your theological experience, by working in various institutions and, especially, by living your life in Christ under the protection of the Holy Spirit and for the glory of God the Father.

"Be strengthened with power in the inner self" (Ephesians 3:16) and "be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians

3:19). “Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18), being filled “with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding” (Colossians 1:9-10).

Christ is in our midst!

He is and ever shall be!

† **Teofan**

The Metropolitan of Moldavia and Bukovina