



150. March 2/15, 1974. Reigning Mother of God

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Date : September 2, 2016

Dear Brother in Christ, Alexey,

Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ. I pray this has found you successfully laboring after three weeks of the fast. After the labor of fasting, what joy in the week of Pascha! (The services are also very short — how wise the Church is with our fallen nature!)

I have almost finished my “reply” to Dr. Kalomiros, and I think God has helped me to put all the Patristic material (or almost all) I have been collecting into a coherent presentation, and much more effectively than if I had gone ahead with the “sober and objective” presentation I had planned on. One of the Egyptian Elders once said to St. John Cassian (roughly!): “I’m glad you expressed this question so stupidly, because now I can clearly set forth the true doctrine.” Kalomiros has expressed “stupid evolutionism” so well (which other Greeks are afraid to do openly), that the reply to him almost writes itself. Although I know the Fathers only poorly, still their doctrine touching on “evolution” is so clear once one puts it all together, that I am simply amazed at the power “evolution” has over even educated Orthodox minds. Such is the power of this world and its fashionable ideas. I will send you a copy of my letter and Kalomiros’ letter also when I finish typing it — it is almost twice as long as Kalomiros’ letter to us and will probably be 40 printed pages!

Of course, now that I’ve done this I don’t quite know what relation this letter has to our projected book — which is absolutely necessary to get out! It may be that the book might be most effective precisely in this letter form, only somewhat revised and divided up into chapters, and with all your scientific and philosophical material entered at the appropriate places. (You will notice that I mention this material at various points of the letter without going into it, as the letter is almost entirely patristic.) Anyway, see what you think once you read the letter, and we will also see what Kalomiros replies — the letter is intended to really shake him up!

Of course, many people will be upset that the evolution question is “raised” again and not kept quiet — but we agree with Kalomiros that it should be raised and the true Patristic teaching set forth. There is something very unsound about wishing to keep “quiet” about a question which remains so confused in most Orthodox minds.

It may be that this “evolution book” may be the most controversial issue to erupt on the English-speaking Orthodox scene in many years, (but maybe not, I’m not a prophet). Therefore, and also because for maximum effectiveness it should come as a surprise and shock in the midst of our Orthodox complacency, please don’t mention my letter or the book to anyone. We haven’t mentioned them to anyone at all. Let it be our “secret” until we know better just how to attack.



And now other questions: Father Herman has written a letter today, which is going out in the same mail with this letter, to Vladika Anthony conveying your request to have the Baptism on Monday or Tuesday of Passion Week because of the fuel shortage. I don't see why that couldn't be done, as those days are not at all as busy for the priests as the last days of the week, and the Liturgy (Presanctified) is also celebrated on those days. But we'll see what Vladika says. As I recall he is quite insistent that baptisms be performed in the morning, however, so that one receives Communion right after being baptized.

About Leslie [Salas] and the Jesus Prayer, we'll try to collect our thoughts and give some suggestions before too long.

About Fr. Theodoritos' attack on Fr. Panteleimon — since Fr. Ephraim has asked you for a copy, I suppose the decent thing is to make one for him. This whole quarrel among the Greek Old Calendarists is very unfortunate; besides involving personalities, which only clouds the issues, the real issues involved and very subtle and delicate ones which require much tact and patience and love, not theological and canonical tirades. It seems to us that much can be said for both sides, and both sides have made mistakes.

Pray for us. Today I hope to finish the last and most important section of the letter to Kalomiros, concerning the nature of man — on which Kalomiros has expressed something perilously close to Augustinianism, based on a very wrong interpretation of the words of St. Seraphim of Sarov!

With love in Christ our Saviour,
Seraphim, monk

P.S. It will probably be a week before I have the letter typed.