

The Confession of Dositheus

(Eastern Orthodox, 1672)

Dennis Bratcher, ed.

A Synod of Eastern Orthodox Churches was called in Jerusalem in 1672 to refute the position of Cyril Lucaris, Patriarch of Constantinople, who had published a Confession in which he attempted to express Orthodox beliefs in terms of the predestination beliefs of Calvinism. From a Reformation perspective, he had also challenged some of the important religious practices of the Eastern churches, such as the veneration of icons and prayers to the saints. Orthodox leaders contended that the Confession of Cyril was a forgery perpetrated by Calvinists to spread their influence among Eastern churches. They presented quotations from known writings of Cyril to show that he had not held the positions expressed in the Confession. In addition, they argued that the Confession was not an official pronouncement by an Orthodox Patriarch.

The Synod of Jerusalem of 1672 soundly rejected any further attempts at reformulation of Orthodox teachings and strengthened Orthodox beliefs against both the Protestant Reformation and Catholicism. The Synod produced its own confession, the Confession of Dositheus (Patriarch of Jerusalem), in which point by point it refuted Cyril's' eighteen points. In addition it added four catechetical style questions that defended the restriction of reading and study of Scripture to the priests, defended the role of tradition, as well as a lengthy defense of the veneration of icons and prayers to the saints.

The version here is adapted from *The Acts and Decrees of the Synod of Jerusalem*, translated and edited by J. Robertson, 1899. The original documents of the Synod contain several other chapters that outline the controversy and the basis for reaching its conclusions. The Confession below is excerpted from Chapter 6. The footnotes of the original document have been omitted, except for the biblical references in braces, which were footnotes in the original and are included here in the body of the text. Adaptations include updating archaic language and sentence structure, with some explanatory comments included in brackets and notes. -Dennis Bratcher, ed.

The Confession of Dositheus

Dositheus, by the mercy of God, Patriarch of Jerusalem, to those that ask and inquire concerning the faith and worship of the Greeks, that is of the Eastern Church, how it thinks concerning the Orthodox faith, in the common name of all Christians subject to our Apostolic Throne, and of the Orthodox worshippers that are sojourning in this holy and great city of Jerusalem (with whom the whole Catholic

Church agrees in all that concerns the faith) publishes this concise Confession, for a testimony both before God and before man, with a sincere conscience, and devoid of all dissimulation.

Decree 1

We believe in one God, true, almighty, and infinite, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the Father unbegotten; the Son begotten of the Father before the ages, and consubstantial with Him; and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father, and consubstantial with the Father and the Son. These three Persons in one essence we call the All-holy Trinity, — by all creation to be ever blessed, glorified, and adored.

Decree 2

We believe the Divine and Sacred Scriptures to be God-taught; and, therefore, we ought to believe the same without doubting; yet not otherwise than as the Catholic Church has interpreted and delivered the same. For every foul heresy accepts the Divine Scriptures, but perversely interprets the same, using metaphors, and homonymies, and sophistries of man's wisdom, confounding what ought to be distinguished, and trifling with what ought not to be trifled with. For if [we were to accept Scriptures] otherwise, each man holding every day a different sense concerning them, the Catholic Church would not by the grace of Christ continue to be the Church until this day, holding the same doctrine of faith, and always identically and steadfastly believing. But rather she would be torn into innumerable parties, and subject to heresies. Neither would the Church be holy, the pillar and ground of the truth, {1 Timothy 3:15} without spot or wrinkle; {Ephesians 5:27} but would be the Church of the malignant {Psalm 25:5} as it is obvious the church of the heretics undoubtedly is, and especially that of Calvin, who are not ashamed to learn from the Church, and then to wickedly repudiate her.

Wherefore, the witness also of the Catholic Church is, we believe, not of inferior authority to that of the Divine Scriptures. For one and the same Holy Spirit being the author of both, it is quite the same to be taught by the Scriptures and by the Catholic Church. Moreover, when any man speaks from himself he is liable to err, and to deceive, and be deceived; but the Catholic Church, as never having spoken, or speaking from herself, but from the Spirit of God — who being her teacher, she is ever unfailingly rich — it is impossible for her to in any wise err, or to at all deceive, or be deceived; but like the Divine Scriptures, is infallible, and has perpetual authority.

Decree 3

We believe the most good God to have from eternity predestinated unto glory those whom He has chosen, and to have consigned unto condemnation those whom He has rejected; but not so that He

would justify the one, and consign and condemn the other without cause. For that would be contrary to the nature of God, who is the common Father of all, and no respecter of persons, and would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth {1 Timothy 2:4}. But since He foreknew the one would make a right use of their free-will, and the other a wrong, He predestinated the one, or condemned the other. And we understand the use of free-will thus, that the Divine and illuminating grace, and which we call preventing [or, prevenient] grace, being, as a light to those in darkness, by the Divine goodness imparted to all, to those that are willing to obey this — for it is of use only to the willing, not to the unwilling — and co-operate with it, in what it requires as necessary to salvation, there is consequently granted particular grace. This grace co-operates with us, and enables us, and makes us to persevere in the love of God, that is to say, in performing those good things that God would have us to do, and which His preventing grace admonishes us that we should do, justifies us, and makes us predestinated. But those who will not obey, and co-operate with grace; and, therefore, will not observe those things that God would have us perform, and that abuse in the service of Satan the free-will, which they have received of God to perform voluntarily what is good, are consigned to eternal condemnation.

But to say, as the most wicked heretics do and as is contained in the Chapter [of Cyril's' Confession] to which this answers — that God, in predestinating, or condemning, did not consider in any way the works of those predestinated, or condemned, we know to be profane and impious. For thus Scripture would be opposed to itself, since it promises the believer salvation through works, yet supposes God to be its sole author, by His sole illuminating grace, which He bestows without preceding works, to show to man the truth of divine things, and to teach him how he may co-operate with it, if he will, and do what is good and acceptable, and so obtain salvation. He takes not away the power to will — to will to obey, or not obey him.

But than to affirm that the Divine Will is thus solely and without cause the author of their condemnation, what greater defamation can be fixed upon God? and what greater injury and blasphemy can be offered to the Most High? We do know that the Deity is not tempted with evils, {cf. James 1:13} and that He equally wills the salvation of all, since there is no respect of persons with Him. we do confess that for those who through their own wicked choice, and their impenitent heart, have become vessels of dishonor, there is justly decreed condemnation. But of eternal punishment, of cruelty, of pitilessness, and of inhumanity, we never, never say God is the author, who tells us that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. {Luke 15:7} Far be it from us, while we have our senses, to believe or to think this; and we do subject to an eternal anathema those who say and think such things, and esteem them to be worse than any infidels.

Decree 4

We believe the tri-personal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to be the maker of all things visible and invisible. The invisible are the angelic Powers, rational souls, and demons, — though God did not make the demons what they later became by their own choice, — and the visible are heaven and

what is under heaven. Because the Maker is good by nature, He made everything that he made very good {cf. Genesis 1:31}, and cannot ever be the maker of evil. But if there is any evil, that is to say, sin, that comes about contrarily to the Divine Will, in man or in demon, — for that evil is simply in nature, we do not acknowledge, — it is either of man, or of the devil. For it is a true and infallible rule, that God is in no way the author of evil, nor can it at all by just reasoning be attributed to God.

Decree 5

We believe that all things, whether visible or invisible, are be governed by the providence of God. Although God foreknows evil things and permits them, yet in that they are evils, He is neither their contriver nor their author. When evil things occur, they may be over-ruled by the Supreme Goodness for something beneficial, not indeed as being their author, but as engrafting onto them something for the better. And we ought to adore, but not curiously pry into, Divine Providence in its ineffable and only partially revealed judgments. {cf. Romans 11:33} . Even though what is revealed to us in Divine Scripture concerning [the providence of God] as being conducive to eternal life, we ought honestly to search out, and then unhesitatingly to interpret the same agreeably to primary notions of God.

Decree 6

We believe the first man created by God to have fallen in Paradise, when, disregarding the Divine commandment, he yielded to the deceitful counsel of the serpent. And as a result hereditary sin flowed to his posterity; so that everyone who is born after the flesh bears this burden, and experiences the fruits of it in this present world. But by these fruits and this burden we do not understand [actual] sin, such as impiety, blasphemy, murder, sodomy, adultery, fornication, enmity, and whatever else is by our depraved choice committed contrarily to the Divine Will, not from nature. For many both of the Forefathers and of the Prophets, and vast numbers of others, as well of those under the shadow [of the Law], as well as under the truth [of the Gospel], such as the divine Precursor, and especially the Mother of God the Word, the ever-virgin Mary, did not experience these [sins], or such like faults. But only what the Divine Justice inflicted upon man as a punishment for the [original] transgression, such as sweats in labor, afflictions, bodily sicknesses, pains in child-bearing, and, finally, while on our pilgrimage, to live a laborious life, and lastly, bodily death.

Decree 7

We believe the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to have emptied Himself, {cf. Philippians 2:7} that is, to have taken into His own Person human flesh, being conceived of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the ever-virgin Mary; and, becoming man, to have been born, without causing any pain or labor to His own Mother after the flesh, or injury to her virginity, to have suffered, to have been buried, to have risen

again in glory on the third day, according to the Scriptures, {cf. 1 Corinthians 15:3,4} to have ascended into the heavens, and to be seated at the right hand of God the Father. Whom also we look for to judge the living and the dead.

Decree 8

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ to be the only mediator, and that in giving Himself a ransom for all He has through His own Blood made a reconciliation between God and man, and that Himself having a care for His own is advocate and propitiation for our sins. Notwithstanding, in [our] prayers and supplications unto Him, we say the Saints are intercessors, and, above all, the undefiled Mother of the very God the Word; likewise, the holy Angels — whom we know to be set over us — the Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs, Pure Ones, and all whom He hath glorified as having served Him faithfully. We also count with those the Bishops and Priests, as standing about the Altar of God, and righteous men eminent for virtue. We learn from the Sacred Oracle that we should pray one for another, and that the prayer of the righteous avails much, {James 5:16} and that God hears the Saints rather than those who are steeped in sins. And not only are the Saints while on their pilgrimage regarded as mediators and intercessors for us with God, but especially after their death, when all reflective vision being done away, they behold clearly the Holy Trinity in whose infinite light they know what concerns us. Just as we do not doubt that the Prophets while they were in a body with the perceptions of the senses knew what was done in heaven, and so foretold what was future; so also that the Angels, and the Saints become as Angels, know in the infinite light of God what concerns us, we do not doubt, but rather unhesitatingly believe and confess.

Decree 9

We believe that no one can be saved without faith. By faith we mean the right notion that is in us concerning God and divine things, which, working by love, that is to say, by [keeping] the Divine commandments, justifies us with Christ; and without this [faith] it is impossible to please God.

Decree 10

We believe that what is called, or rather is, the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church in which we have been taught to believe, contains generally all the Faithful in Christ, who, being still on their pilgrimage, have not yet reached their home in the Fatherland [heaven]. But we do not in any wise confound this Church which is on its pilgrimage with that which is in the Fatherland, because it may be, as some of the heretics say, that the members of the two are sheep of God, the Chief Shepherd, {cf. Psalm 94:7} and hallowed by the same Holy Spirit. For that [confusing the heavenly and earthly Church] is absurd and impossible, since the one is yet militant, and on its journey; and the other is triumphant, and settled in the Fatherland, and has received the prize. Since a mortal man cannot universally and perpetually be

head of this Catholic Church, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is head, and Himself holding the rudder is at the helm in the governing of the Church through the Holy Fathers. And, therefore, the Holy Spirit has appointed Bishops as leaders and shepherds over particular Churches, that are real Churches, and consist of real members [of the Catholic Church]. These authorities and heads [were not appointed] by abuse, but properly, and look unto the Author and Finisher of our Salvation, {cf. Hebrews 2:10; 12:2} and refer to Him what they do in their capacity of heads.

But along with their other impieties, the Calvinists have imagined this also, that the simple Priest and the High Priest [Bishop] are perhaps the same; and that there is no necessity for High Priests. [They assert] that the Church may be governed by some Priests, and that not [only] a High Priest but a [simple] Priest also is able to ordain a Priest, and a number of Priests to ordain a High Priest. They affirm in lofty language that the Eastern Church assents to this wicked notion — for which purpose the Tenth Chapter was written by Cyril [Confession of Cyril Lucaris]— we explicitly declare according to the mind which has obtained from the beginning in the Eastern Church: —

That the dignity of the Bishop is so necessary in the Church, that without him, neither Church nor Christian could either be or be spoken of. For he, as a successor of the Apostles, having received in continued succession by the imposition of hands and the invocation of the All-holy Spirit the grace that is given him of the Lord of binding and loosing, is a living image of God upon the earth, and by a most ample participation of the operation of the Holy Spirit, who is the chief functionary, is a fountain of all the Mysteries [Sacraments] of the Catholic Church, through which we obtain salvation.

And he is, we suppose, as necessary to the Church as breath is to man, or the sun to the world. It has also been elegantly said by some in commendation of the dignity of the High Priesthood, “What God is in the heavenly Church of the first-born, {cf. Hebrews 12:23} and the sun in the world, that every High Priest is in his own particular Church, as through him the flock is enlightened, and nourished, and becomes the temple of God.” {cf. Ephesians 2:21}

It is obvious that this great mystery and dignity of the Episcopate has come down to us by a continued succession. For since the Lord has promised to be with us always, although He is with us by other means of grace and Divine operations, yet in a more eminent manner does He make us His own and dwell with us through the Bishop as chief functionary and through the divine Mysteries [sacraments] is united with us. The Bishop is the first minister, and chief functionary, through the Holy Spirit, and does not allow us to fall into heresy. And, therefore [John] of Damascus, in his Fourth Epistle to the Africans, said that the Catholic Church is everywhere committed to the care of the Bishops. Clement, the first Bishop of the Romans, and Evodius at Antioch, and Mark at Alexandria, were acknowledged successors of Peter. Also [acknowledged] is that the divine Andrew seated Stachys on the Throne of Constantinople, in his own stead; and that in this great holy city of Jerusalem our Lord Himself appointed James, and that after James another succeeded, and then another, until our own times. And, therefore, Tertullian in his Epistle to Papianus called all Bishops the Apostles’ successors. To their succession to the Apostles’

dignity and authority Eusebius, the [friend] of Pamphilus, testifies, and all the Fathers testify, of whom it is needless to give a list. The common and most ancient custom of the Catholic Church confirms this .

And that the dignity of the Episcopate differs from that of the simple Priest, is obvious. For the Priest is ordained by the Bishop, but a Bishop is not ordained by a Priest, but by two or three High Priests, as the Apostolic Canon directs. And the Priest is chosen by the Bishop, but the High Priest is not chosen by the Priests or Presbyters, nor is he chosen by secular Princes, but by the Synod of the Primatial Church of that country, in which is situated the city that is to receive the ordinand, or at least by the Synod of the Province in which he is to become a Bishop. Or, if the city should choose him, it does not do so absolutely, but the election is referred to the Synod. And if it appear that he has [been chosen] agreeably to the Canons, the [Bishop] Elect is advanced by ordination by the Bishops, with the invocation of the All-holy Spirit. But if not, he whom the Synod chooses is advanced .

The [simple] Priest, indeed, retains to himself the authority and grace of the Priesthood, which he has received; but the Bishop imparts it to others also. And the one having received the dignity of the Priesthood from the Bishop, can only perform Holy Baptism, and Prayer-oil, minister sacrificially the unbloody Sacrifice*, and impart to the people the All-holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, anoint the baptized with the Holy Myron [Chrism oil], crown the Faithful legally marrying, pray for the sick, and that all men may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, {cf. 1 Timothy 2:4} and especially for the remission and forgiveness of the sins of the Faithful, living and dead. And if he be eminent for experience and virtue, receiving his authority from the Bishop, he directs those Faithful that come unto him, and guides them into the way of possessing the heavenly kingdom, and is appointed a preacher of the sacred Gospel.

[Ed. Note: In Catholic and Eastern theology, the Eucharist is not just a symbol or memorial of Christ's death, but is an actual participation in the sacrifice of Christ, a manifestation of that one sacrifice but without the shedding of blood, that is, "unbloody." This is the doctrine of "Transubstantiation" in which the substance of bread and wine are truly changed in the Eucharist into the reality of the body and blood of Christ.]

The High Priest is also the minister of all these, since he is in fact, as has been said before, the fountain of the Divine Mysteries and graces, through the Holy Spirit, and he alone consecrates the Holy Myron [Chrism oil]. And the ordinations of all orders and degrees in the Church are proper to him; and in a primary and highest sense he binds and looses, and his sentence is approved by God, as the Lord hath promised. {Matthew 16:19} And he preaches the Sacred Gospel, and contends for the Orthodox faith, and those that refuse to hear he casts out of the Church as heathens and publicans, {cf. Matthew 18:17} and he puts heretics under excommunication and anathema, and lays down his own life for the sheep. {cf. John 10:11} From which it is apparent, that without contradiction the Bishop differs from the simple Priest, and that without him all the Priests in the world could not exercise the pastorate in the Church of God, or govern it at all.

But it is well said by one of the Fathers, that it is not easy to find a heretic that has understanding. For when these forsake the Church, they are forsaken by the Holy Spirit, and there remains in them neither understanding nor light, but only darkness and blindness. For if that had not happened to them, they would not have opposed things that are most plain; among which is the truly great mystery of Episcopacy, which is taught by Scripture, written of, and witnessed to, both by all Ecclesiastical history and the writings of holy men, and always held and acknowledged by the Catholic Church.

Decree 11

We believe that members of the Catholic Church are all the Faithful, and only the Faithful, who, truly having received the blameless Faith of the Savior Christ from Christ Himself, and the Apostles, and the Holy Ecumenical Synods, adhere to the same without wavering, although some of them may be guilty of all manner of sins. For unless the Faithful, even when living in sin, were members of the Church, they could not be judged by the Church. But now being judged by her, and called to repentance, and guided into the way of her salutary precepts, though they may be still defiled with sins, for this only, that they have not fallen into despair, and that they cleave to the Catholic and Orthodox faith, they are, and are regarded as, members of the Catholic Church.

Decree 12

We believe that the Catholic Church is taught by the Holy Spirit. For he is the true Paraclete; whom Christ sends from the Father, {cf. John 25:26} to teach the truth, {cf. John 26:13} and to drive away darkness from the minds of the Faithful. The teaching of the Holy Spirit, however, does not directly illuminate the Church, but [does so] through the holy Fathers and Leaders of the Catholic Church. All Scripture is, and is called, the word of the Holy Spirit, not that it was spoken directly by Him, but that it was spoken by Him through the Apostles and Prophets. In like manner the Church is taught indeed by the Life-giving Spirit, but through the medium of the holy Fathers and Doctors (whose rule is acknowledged to be the Holy and Ecumenical Synods; for we shall not cease to say this ten thousand times); and, therefore, not only are we persuaded, but do profess as true and undoubtedly certain, that it is impossible for the Catholic Church to err, or at all be deceived, or ever to choose falsehood instead of truth. For the All-holy Spirit continually operating through the holy Fathers and Leaders faithfully ministering, delivers the Church from error of every kind.

Decree 13

We believe a man to be not simply justified through faith alone, but through faith which works through love, that is to say, through faith and works. But [the idea] that faith can fulfill the function of a hand that lays hold on the righteousness which is in Christ, and can then apply it unto us for salvation, we

know to be far from all Orthodoxy. For faith so understood would be possible in all, and so none could miss salvation, which is obviously false. But on the contrary, we rather believe that it is not the correlative of faith, but the faith which is in us, justifies through works, with Christ. But we regard works not as witnesses certifying our calling, but as being fruits in themselves, through which faith becomes efficacious, and as in themselves meriting, through the Divine promises {cf. 2 Corinthians 5:10} that each of the Faithful may receive what is done through his own body, whether it be good or bad.

Decree 14

We believe man in falling by the [original] transgression to have become comparable and similar to the beasts; that is, to have been utterly undone, and to have fallen from his perfection and impassibility, yet not to have lost the nature and power which he had received from the supremely good God. For otherwise he would not be rational, and consequently not a human. So [he still has] the same nature in which he was created, and the same power of his nature, that is free-will, living and operating, so that he is by nature able to choose and do what is good, and to avoid and hate what is evil. For it is absurd to say that the nature which was created good by Him who is supremely good lacks the power of doing good. For this would be to make that nature evil — what could be more impious than that? For the power of working depends upon nature, and nature upon its author, although in a different manner. And that a man is able by nature to do what is good, even our Lord Himself intimates saying, even the Gentiles love those that love them. {Matthew 5:46; Luke 6:32} But this is taught most plainly by Paul also, in Romans 1:19, [actually Rom 2:14] and elsewhere expressly, saying in so many words, “The Gentiles which have no law do by nature the things of the law.” From which it is also apparent that the good which a man may do cannot truly be sin. For it is impossible for that what is good to be evil. Although, being done by nature only and tending to form the natural character of the doer but not the spiritual, it does not itself contribute to salvation without faith. Nor does it lead to condemnation, for it is not possible that good, as such, can be the cause of evil. But in the regenerated, what is wrought by grace, and with grace, makes the doer perfect, and renders him worthy of salvation.

A man, therefore, before he is regenerated, is able by nature to incline to what is good, and to choose and work moral good. But for the regenerated to do spiritual good — for the works of the believer being contributory to salvation and wrought by supernatural grace are properly called spiritual — it is necessary that he be guided and prevented [preceded] by grace, as has been said in treating of predestination. Consequently, he is not able of himself to do any work worthy of a Christian life, although he has it in his own power to will, or not to will, to co-operate with grace.

Decree 15

We believe that there are in the Church Evangelical Mysteries [i.e., Sacraments of the Gospel Dispensation], and that they are seven. For a less or a greater number of the Mysteries we have not in

the Church; since any number of the Mysteries other than seven is the product of heretical madness. And the seven of them were instituted in the Sacred Gospel, and are gathered from the same, like the other dogmas of the Catholic Faith.

For in the first place our Lord instituted Holy Baptism by the words, "Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;" {Matthew 28:19} and by the words, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he that does not believe shall be condemned." {Mark 16:16}

And that of Confirmation, that is to say, of the Holy Myron or Holy Chrism, by the words, "But ye — tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." {Luke 24:49} With which they were endued by the coming of the Holy Spirit, and this the Mystery of Confirmation signifies; concerning which Paul also wrote in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 1, and Dionysius the Areopagite more explicitly.

And the Priesthood by the words, "This do ye for My Memorial;" {Luke 22:19} and by the words, "Whatever you bind and loose upon the earth shall be bound and loosed in the heavens." {Matthew 18:18}

And the unbloody Sacrifice by the words, "Take, eat; This is My Body;" {Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; and cf. Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 2:24} and, "Drink all of It; This is My Blood of the New Testament;" {Matthew 26:27; and cf. Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 2:25} and by the words, "Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, you do not have life in yourselves." {John 6:53}

And Marriage, when, having recited the things which had been spoken thereof in the Old [Testament], He, as it were, set His seal thereto by the words, "Those whom God hath joined together, do not let man put asunder," {Matthew 19:6} and this the divine Apostle also calls a great Mystery. {Ephesians 5:32}

And Penance, with which is joined sacramental confession, by the words, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." [NRSV]; {John 20:23} and by the words, "unless you repent, you will [all] likewise perish." {Luke 13:3,5}

And lastly, the Holy Oil or Prayer-Oil is spoken of in Mark, {Mark 6:13} and is expressly witnessed to by the Lord's brother. {James 5:14}

And the Mysteries consist of something natural, and of something supernatural; and are not bare signs of the promises of God. For then they would not differ from circumcision — what could be worse than that [idea]? We acknowledge them to be, of necessity, efficient means of grace to the receivers. But we reject, as alien to Christian doctrine, the notion that the integrity of the Mystery requires the use of the earthly thing [i.e., depends upon its reception]; for this is contrary to the Mystery of the Offering [i.e., the Sacrament of the Eucharist], which being instituted by the Substantial Word, and hallowed by the invocation of the Holy Spirit, is perfected by the presence of the thing signified, specifically, of the Body and Blood of Christ. And the perfecting of it necessarily precedes its use. For if it were not perfect before its use, he that receives it wrongly could not eat and drink judgment unto himself; {1 Corinthians 11:26,28,29} since he would be partaking of mere bread and wine. But now, he that partakes unworthily eats and drinks judgment unto himself; so that not in its use, but even before its use, the Mystery of the Eucharist has its perfection. Moreover, we reject as something abominable and pernicious the notion that when faith is weak the integrity of the Mystery is impaired. For heretics who renounce their heresy and join the Catholic Church are received by the Church; although they received their valid Baptism with weakness of faith. Wherefore, when they afterwards become possessed of the perfect faith, they are not again baptized.

Decree 16

We believe Holy Baptism, which was instituted by the Lord, and is conferred in the name of the Holy Trinity, to be of the highest necessity. For without it none is able to be saved, as the Lord says, “Whoever is not born of water and of the Spirit, shall in no way enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens.” {John 3:5} And, therefore, baptism is necessary even for infants, since they also are subject to original sin, and without Baptism are not able to obtain its remission. Which the Lord showed when he said, not of some only, but simply and absolutely, “Whoever is not born [again],” which is the same as saying, “All that after the coming of Christ the Savior would enter into the Kingdom of the Heavens must be regenerated.” And since infants are men, and as such need salvation, needing salvation they need also Baptism. And those that are not regenerated, since they have not received the remission of hereditary sin, are, of necessity, subject to eternal punishment, and consequently cannot without Baptism be saved. So that even infants should, of necessity, be baptized. Moreover, infants are saved, as is said in Matthew; {Matthew 19:12} but he that is not baptized is not saved. And consequently even infants must of necessity be baptized. And in the Acts {Acts 8:12; 16:33} it is said that the whole houses were baptized, and consequently the infants. To this the ancient Fathers also witness explicitly, and among them Dionysius in his Treatise concerning the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; and Justin in his fifty-sixth Question, who says expressly, “And they are guaranteed the benefits of Baptism by the faith of those that bring them to Baptism.” And Augustine says that it is an Apostolic tradition, that children are saved through Baptism; and in another place, “The Church gives to babes the feet of others, that they may come; and the hearts of others, that they may believe; and the tongues of others, that they may promise;” and in another place, “Our mother, the Church, furnishes them with a particular heart.”

Now the matter of Baptism is pure water, and no other liquid. And it is performed by the Priest only, or in a case of unavoidable necessity, by another man, provided he is Orthodox, and has the proper intention to Divine Baptism. And the effects of Baptism are, to speak concisely, firstly, the remission of the hereditary transgression, and of any sins of any kind that the baptized may have committed. Secondly, it delivers him from the eternal punishment, to which he was liable, as well for original sin and for mortal sins he may have individually committed. Thirdly, it gives to the person immortality; for in justifying them from past sins, it makes them temples of God.

And it cannot be said that there is any sin which may have been previously committed that remains, though not imputed, that is not washed away through Baptism, For that were indeed the height of impiety, and a denial, rather than a confession of piety. Indeed, truly, all sin existing, or committed before Baptism, is blotted out, and is to be regarded as never existing or committed. For the forms of Baptism, and on either hand all the words that precede and that perfect Baptism, do indicate a perfect cleansing. And the same thing even the very names of Baptism do signify. For if Baptism is by the Spirit and by fire, {Matthew 3:11} it is obvious that it is in all a perfect cleansing; for the Spirit cleanses perfectly. If it is light, {Hebrews 6:4} it dispels the darkness. If it is regeneration, {Titus 3:5} old things are passed away. And what are these except sins? If the baptized puts off the old man, {Colossians 3:9} then sin also. If he puts on Christ, {Galatians 3:27} then in effect he becomes free from sin through Baptism. For God is far from sinners. This Paul also teaches more plainly, saying: "As through one [man] we, being many, were made sinners, so through one [are we made] righteous." {Romans 5:19} And if righteous, then free from sin. For it is not possible for life and death to be in the same [person]. If Christ truly died, then remission of sin through the Spirit is true also. Hence it is evident that all who are baptized and fall asleep while babes are undoubtedly saved, being predestinated through the death of Christ. Forasmuch as they are without any sin; — without that common [to all], because delivered from it by the Divine laver, and without any of their own, because as babes they are incapable of committing sin; — and consequently are saved. Moreover, Baptism imparts an indelible character, as does also the Priesthood. For as it is impossible for any one to receive twice the same order of the Priesthood, so it is impossible for any once rightly baptized, to be again baptized, although he should fall even into myriads of sins, or even into actual apostasy from the Faith. For when he is willing to return unto the Lord, he receives again through the Mystery of Penance the adoption of a son, which he had lost.

Decree 17

We believe the All-holy Mystery of the Sacred Eucharist, which we have enumerated above, fourth in order, to be that which our Lord delivered in the night in which He gave Himself up for the life of the world. For taking bread, and blessing, He gave to His Holy Disciples and Apostles, saying: "Take, eat; This is My Body." {Matthew 26:26} And taking the chalice, and giving thanks, He said: "Drink you all of It; This is My Blood, which for you is being poured out, for the remission of sins." {Matthew 26:28} In the celebration of this we believe the Lord Jesus Christ to be present. He is not present typically, nor figuratively, nor by superabundant grace, as in the other Mysteries, nor by a bare presence, as some of the Fathers have said concerning Baptism, or by impanation, so that the Divinity of the Word is united to

the set forth bread of the Eucharist hypostatically, as the followers of Luther most ignorantly and wretchedly suppose. But [he is present] truly and really, so that after the consecration of the bread and of the wine, the bread is transmuted, transubstantiated, converted and transformed into the true Body Itself of the Lord, Which was born in Bethlehem of the ever-Virgin, was baptized in the Jordan, suffered, was buried, rose again, was received up, sits at the right hand of the God and Father, and is to come again in the clouds of Heaven; and the wine is converted and transubstantiated into the true Blood Itself of the Lord, Which as He hung upon the Cross, was poured out for the life of the world. {John 6:51}

Further [we believe] that after the consecration of the bread and of the wine, there no longer remains the substance of the bread and of the wine, but the Body Itself and the Blood of the Lord, under the species and form of bread and wine; that is to say, under the accidents of the bread.

Further, that the all-pure Body Itself, and Blood of the Lord is imparted, and enters into the mouths and stomachs of the communicants, whether pious or impious. Nevertheless, they convey to the pious and worthy remission of sins and life eternal; but to the impious and unworthy involve condemnation and eternal punishment.

Further, that the Body and Blood of the Lord are severed and divided by the hands and teeth, though in accident only, that is, in the accidents of the bread and of the wine, under which they are visible and tangible, we do acknowledge; but in themselves to remain entirely unsevered and undivided. Wherefore the Catholic Church also says: "Broken and distributed is He That is broken, yet not severed; Which is ever eaten, yet never consumed, but sanctifying those that partake," that is worthily.

Further, that in every part, or the smallest division of the transmuted bread and wine there is not a part of the Body and Blood of the Lord — for to say so were blasphemous and wicked — but the entire whole Lord Christ substantially, that is, with His Soul and Divinity, or perfect God and perfect man. So that though there may be many celebrations in the world at one and the same hour, there are not many Christs, or Bodies of Christ, but it is one and the same Christ that is truly and really present; and His one Body and His Blood is in all the several Churches of the Faithful; and this not because the Body of the Lord that is in the Heavens descends upon the Altars; but because the bread of the Prothesis* set forth in all the several Churches, being changed and transubstantiated, becomes, and is, after consecration, one and the same with That in the Heavens. For it is one Body of the Lord in many places, and not many; and therefore this Mystery is the greatest, and is spoken of as wonderful, and comprehensible by faith only, and not by the sophistries of man's wisdom; whose vain and foolish curiosity in divine things our pious and God-delivered religion rejects.

[*Ed. Note: GK: prothesis, "setting forth," in Orthodox churches the liturgical act of preparing the bread and wine for the Divine Liturgy or Eucharist.]

Further, that the Body Itself of the Lord and the Blood That are in the Mystery of the Eucharist ought to be honored in the highest manner, and adored with latria [Gk: adoration or worship*]. For one is the adoration of the Holy Trinity, and of the Body and Blood of the Lord. Further, that it is a true and propitiatory Sacrifice offered for all Orthodox, living and dead; and for the benefit of all, as is set forth expressly in the prayers of the Mystery delivered to the Church by the Apostles, in accordance with the command they received of the Lord.

[Ed. Note: The Greek term latria refers to the highest form of adoration or worship and is directed only to God, as opposed to dulia, "veneration" of the saints, and hyperdulia, "highest veneration" of Mary.]

Further, that before Its use, immediately after the consecration, and after Its use, What is reserved in the Sacred Pixes* for the communion of those that are about to depart [i.e. the dying] is the true Body of the Lord, and not in the least different from it; so that before Its use after the consecration, in Its use, and after Its use, It is in all respects the true Body of the Lord.

[Ed. Note: Pixes: a container in which the consecrated bread for Communion is placed so that it can be taken to those who cannot leave home.]

Further, we believe that by the word "transubstantiation" the manner is not explained, by which the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of the Lord, — for that is altogether incomprehensible and impossible, except by God Himself, and those who imagine to do so are involved in ignorance and impiety, — but that the bread and the wine are after the consecration, not typically, nor figuratively, nor by superabundant grace, nor by the communication or the presence of the Divinity alone of the Only-begotten, transmuted into the Body and Blood of the Lord; neither is any accident of the bread, or of the wine, by any conversion or alteration, changed into any accident of the Body and Blood of Christ, but truly, and really, and substantially, doth the bread become the true Body Itself of the Lord, and the wine the Blood Itself of the Lord, as is said above.

Further, that this Mystery of the Sacred Eucharist can be performed by none other, except only by an Orthodox Priest, who has received his priesthood from an Orthodox and Canonical Bishop, in accordance with the teaching of the Eastern Church. This is compendiously the doctrine, and true confession, and most ancient tradition of the Catholic Church concerning this Mystery; which must not be departed from in any way by such as would be Orthodox and who reject the novelties and profane vanities of heretics. But necessarily the tradition of the institution must be kept whole and unimpaired. For those that transgress, the Catholic Church of Christ rejects and anathematizes.

Decree 18

We believe that the souls of those that have fallen asleep are either at rest or in torment, according to what each has done; — for when they are separated from their bodies, they depart immediately either

to joy, or to sorrow and lamentation; though confessedly neither their enjoyment nor condemnation are complete. For after the common resurrection, when the soul shall be united with the body, with which it had behaved itself well or ill, each shall receive the completion of either enjoyment or of condemnation.

And the souls of those involved in mortal sins, who have not departed in despair but while still living in the body, though without bringing forth any fruits of repentance, have repented — by pouring forth tears, by kneeling while watching in prayers, by afflicting themselves, by relieving the poor, and finally by showing forth by their works their love towards God and their neighbor, and which the Catholic Church has from the beginning rightly called satisfaction — [their souls] depart into Hades, and there endure the punishment due to the sins they have committed. But they are aware of their future release from there, and are delivered by the Supreme Goodness, through the prayers of the Priests, and the good works which the relatives of each do for their Departed; especially the unbloody Sacrifice benefiting the most; which each offers particularly for his relatives that have fallen asleep, and which the Catholic and Apostolic Church offers daily for all alike. Of course, it is understood that we do not know the time of their release. We know and believe that there is deliverance for such from their direful condition, and that before the common resurrection and judgment, but when we know not.

Question 1

Should the Divine Scriptures be read in the vulgar tongue [common language] by all Christians?

No. Because all Scripture is divinely-inspired and profitable {cf. 2 Timothy 3:16}, we know, and necessarily so, that without [Scripture] it is impossible to be Orthodox at all. Nevertheless they should not be read by all, but only by those who with fitting research have inquired into the deep things of the Spirit, and who know in what manner the Divine Scriptures ought to be searched, and taught, and finally read. But to those who are not so disciplined, or who cannot distinguish, or who understand only literally, or in any other way contrary to Orthodoxy what is contained in the Scriptures, the Catholic Church, knowing by experience the damage that can cause, forbids them to read [Scripture]. Indeed, it is permitted to every Orthodox to hear the Scriptures, that he may believe with the heart unto righteousness, and confess with the mouth unto salvation {Romans 10:10}. But to read some parts of the Scriptures, and especially of the Old [Testament], is forbidden for these and other similar reasons. For it is the same thing to prohibit undisciplined persons from reading all the Sacred Scriptures, as to require infants to abstain from strong meats.

Question 2

Are the Scriptures plain to all Christians that read them?

If the Divine Scriptures were plain to all Christians that read them, the Lord would not have commanded such as desired to obtain salvation to search them; {John 5:39} and Paul would have said without reason that God had placed the gift of teaching in the Church; {1 Corinthians 13:28} and Peter would not have said of the Epistles of Paul that they contained some things hard to be understood. {2 Peter 3:16} It is evident, therefore, that the Scriptures are very profound, and their sense lofty; and that they need learned and divine men to search out their true meaning, and a sense that is right, and agreeable to all Scripture, and to its author the Holy Spirit.

Certainly, those that are regenerated [in Baptism] must know the faith concerning the Trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God, His passion, resurrection, and ascension into the heavens. Yet what concerns regeneration and judgment — for which many have not hesitated to die — it is not necessary, indeed impossible, for them to know what the Holy Spirit has made apparent only to those who are disciplined in wisdom and holiness.

Question 3

What Books do you call Sacred Scripture?

Following the rule of the Catholic Church, we call Sacred Scripture all those which Cyril [Lucaris] collected from the Synod of Laodicea, and enumerated, adding to Scripture those which he foolishly and ignorantly, or rather maliciously, called Apocrypha; specifically, “The Wisdom of Solomon,” “Judith,” “Tobit,” “The History of the Dragon” [Bel and the Dragon], “The History of Susanna,” “The Maccabees,” and “The Wisdom of Sirach.” For we judge these also to be with the other genuine Books of Divine Scripture genuine parts of Scripture. For ancient custom, or rather the Catholic Church, which has delivered to us as genuine the Sacred Gospels and the other Books of Scripture, has undoubtedly delivered these also as parts of Scripture, and the denial of these is the rejection of those. And if, perhaps, it seems that not always have all of these been considered on the same level as the others, yet nevertheless these also have been counted and reckoned with the rest of Scripture, both by Synods and by many of the most ancient and eminent Theologians of the Catholic Church. All of these we also judge to be Canonical Books, and confess them to be Sacred Scripture.

Question 4

How ought we to think of the Holy Icons, and of the adoration of the Saints?

Since The Saints are and are acknowledged to be intercessors by the Catholic Church, as has been said in the Eighth Decree, it is time to say that we honor them as friends of God, and as praying for us to the God of all. The honor we pay them is twofold. According to one manner which we call hyperdulia* we honor the Mother of God the Word. For though indeed the Theotokos [Gk: "godbearer," a title for Mary] is servant of the only God, yet she is also His Mother, having borne in the flesh one of the Trinity. Because of this also she is hymned as being beyond compare, as well as above all Angels as Saints. This is why we pay her the adoration of hyperdulia.

But according to the other manner, which we call dulia [Gk: "veneration"], we adore or rather honor, the holy Angels, Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs, and, finally, all the Saints. Moreover, we adore and honor the wood of the precious and life-giving Cross on which our Savior underwent this world-saving passion, and the sign of the life-giving Cross, the Manger at Bethlehem, through which we have been delivered from irrationality, [an allusion to the manger out of which the irrational animals eat their food - translator] the place of the Skull [Calvary], the life-giving Sepulcher, and the other holy objects of adoration; as well the holy Gospels, as the sacred vessels by which the unbloody Sacrifice is performed. And by annual commemorations, and popular festivals, and sacred edifices and offerings; we do respect and honor the Saints. And then we adore, and honor, and kiss the Icons of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the most holy Theotokos, and of all the Saints, also of the holy Angels, as they appeared to some of the Forefathers and Prophets. We also represent the All-holy Spirit, as He appeared, in the form of a dove.

[Note: Gk: dulia, "veneration"; hyperdulia is "highest veneration", a reference specifically to the veneration of Mary]

And if some say we commit idolatry in adoring the Saints, and the Icons of the Saints, and the other things, we regard it as foolish and frivolous. For we worship with latria [Gk: adoration] the only God in Trinity, and none other; but the Saints we honor for two reasons: firstly, for their relation to God, since we honor them for His sake; and for themselves, because they are living images of God. But that which is for themselves hath been defined as of dulia. But the holy Icons [we adore] relatively since the honor paid to them is referred to their prototypes. For he that adores the Icon, through the Icon adores the prototype; and the honor paid to the Icon is not at all divided or at all different from [the honor paid to the one who] is portrayed, and is done unto the same like that done unto a royal embassy.

And what they adduce from Scripture in support of their novelties does not help them as they think, but rather we agree. For we, when reading the Divine Scriptures, examine the occasion and person, the example and cause. Therefore, when we contemplate God Himself saying at one time, "You shall not make for yourself any idol, or likeness; neither shall you adore them, nor serve them;" {Exodus 20:4,5; Deuteronomy 5:8,9} and at another, commanding that Cherubim should be made; {Exodus 25:18} and further, that oxen and lions {1 Kings 7:29} were placed in the Temple, we do not rashly consider the seriousness of these things. For faith is not in assurance; but, as has been said, considering the occasion and other circumstances we arrive at the right interpretation of the same; and we conclude that, "You shall not make for yourself any idol, or likeness," is the same as saying, "You shall not adore strange

Gods," {Exodus 20:4} or rather, "You shall not commit idolatry." For so both the custom prevalent in the Church from Apostolic times of adoring the holy Icons relatively is maintained, and the worship of latria [Gk: adoration] reserved for God alone; and God does not appear to speak contrarily to Himself. For if the Scripture says [absolutely], "You shall not make," "You shall not adore," we fail to see how God afterwards permitted likenesses to be made, even though not for adoration. Therefore, since the commandment concerns idolatry only, we find serpents, and lions, and oxen, and Cherubim made, and figures and likenesses, among which Angels appear, as having been adored.

And as to the Saints whom they bring forward as saying that it is not lawful to adore Icons, we conclude that they rather help us since they in their sharp disputations inveighed both against those that adore the holy Icons with latria [Gk: adoration], as well as against those that bring the icons of their deceased relatives into the Church. They subjected to anathema those that do so that, but not against the right adoration, either of the Saints, or of the holy Icons, or of the precious Cross, or of the other things that have been mentioned, especially since the holy Icons have been in the Church, and have been adored by the Faithful even from the times of the Apostles. This is recorded and proclaimed by very many with whom and after whom the Seventh Holy Ecumenical Synod puts to shame all heretical impudence.

It is clear that it is appropriate to adore the Holy Icons, and what have been mentioned above. And it anathematizes, and subjects to excommunication, both those that adore the Icons [themselves] with latria [Gk: adoration] as well as those that say that the Orthodox commit idolatry in adoring the Icons. We also, therefore, do anathematize with them such as adore either Saint, or Angel, or Icon, or Cross, or Relic of Saints, or sacred Vessel, or Gospel, or anything else that is in heaven above, or anything on the earth, or in the sea, with latria [Gk: adoration]; and we ascribe adoration with latria to the only God in Trinity. And we anathematize those that say that the adoration of Icons is the latria [Gk: adoration, here as worship] of Icons, and who adore them not, and honor not the Cross, and the Saints, as the Church has delivered.

Now we adore the Saints and the Holy Icons, in the manner declared. We portray them in adornment of our temples, so that they may be the books of the unlearned, and so that they may imitate the virtues of the Saints; and for them to remember, and have an increase of love, and be vigilant in always calling upon the Lord, as Sovereign and Father, but [also] upon the Saints, as his servants, and our helpers and mediators.

And so much for the Chapters and Questions of Cyril [Lucaris]. But the heretics find fault even with the prayers of the pious unto God, since we do not know why they should maliciously malign the Monks only. Prayer is a conversation with God and a petitioning for such good things as are suitable for us, from Him of whom we hope to receive. We also know that it is also an ascent of the mind to God and a pious expression of our purpose towards God, a seeking what is above, the support of a holy soul, a worship most acceptable to God, a token of repentance, and of steadfast hope. Prayer is made either with the mind alone, or with the mind and voice, thereby engaging in the contemplation of the goodness and

mercy of God, of the unworthiness of the petitioner, and in thanksgiving, and in realizing the promises attached to obedience to God.

It is accompanied by faith, hope, perseverance, and observance of the commandments. And, as already said, it is a petitioning for heavenly things, and has many fruits, which it is needless to enumerate. It is made continually, and is accomplished either in an upright posture, or by kneeling. And so great is its efficacy, that it is acknowledged to be both the nourishment and the life of the soul. All this is gathered from Divine Scripture, so that if any ask for demonstration of it, he is like a fool, or a blind man, who disputes about the sun's light at the hour of noon, and when the sky is clear. But the heretics, wishing to leave nothing that Christ has enjoined unassailed, carp at this also.

But being ashamed to impiously maintain these things concerning prayer openly, they do not forbid it to be offered at all, but are disturbed at the prayers of the Monks. They act this way in order to raise in the simple-minded a hatred towards the Monks, so that they may not endure even the sight of them, as though they were profane and innovators, much less to allow the dogmas of the pious and Orthodox faith to be taught by them. For the adversary is wise as to evil, and ingenious in inventing malicious attacks. Therefore, his followers also — such as these heretics especially — are not so much anxious about piety, as desirous of always involving men in an abyss of evils, and of estranging them into places that the Lord does not take under his care. {cf. Deuteronomy 11:12}

They should be asked, therefore, what are the prayers of the Monks? If they can show that the Monks do anything entirely different from themselves, and not in accordance with the Orthodox worship of Christians, we also will join with them, and say, not only that the Monks are no Monks, but also no Christians. But if the Monks set forth particularly the glory and wonders of God, continually and unremittingly at all times, as far as is possible for man, proclaim the Deity, with hymns and doxologies; now singing parts of Scripture, and now gathering hymns out of Scripture, or at least giving utterance to what is agreeable to it, we must acknowledge that they perform a work apostolic and prophetic, or rather that of the Lord.

Therefore, we also, in singing the Paracletikê, the Triodion, and the Menæon* [Menaion], perform a work in no way unbecoming Christians. For all such Books talk about the Deity as one, and yet of more than one personality, and that even in the Hymns, some gathered out of the Divine Scriptures, and others according to the direction of the Spirit. In order that in the melodies the words may be paralleled by other words, we sing parts of Scripture. Also moreover, that it may be quite plain that we always sing parts of Scripture, to every one of our Hymns, called a Troparion, we add a verse of Scripture. And if we sing, or read the Thecara [Treasury], or other prayers composed by the Fathers of old, let them say what there is in these which is blasphemous, or not pious, and we will prosecute these [Monks] with them.

[Ed. Note: The Paracletike, the Triodion, and the Menæon are books of liturgy used in Orthodox worship.]

But if they only say that to pray continually and unremittingly is wrong, what have they to do with us? Let them contend with Christ — as indeed they do contend — who said in the parable of the unjust judge {Luke 28:2} that prayer should be made continually. He taught us to watch and pray, {Mark 13:33} in order to escape trials, and to stand before the Son of man. {Luke 21:36} Let them contend with Paul in the Chapter of the First [Epistle] to the Thessalonians [5:17], and elsewhere in many places. I refrain from mentioning the divine leaders of the Catholic Church from Christ until us. For it is sufficient to put these [heretics] to shame [to point out] the accord of the Forefathers, Apostles, and Prophets concerning prayer.

If, therefore, what the Monks do is what the Apostles and Prophets did and, we may say, what the holy Fathers and Forefathers of Christ Himself did, then it is manifest that the prayers of the Monks are fruits of the Holy Spirit, the giver of graces. But the novelties which the Calvinists have blasphemously introduced concerning God and divine things, perverting, mutilating, and abusing the Divine Scriptures, are sophistries and inventions of the devil.

A futile effort, too, is the assertion, that the Church cannot appoint fasts and abstinence from certain meats without violence and tyranny. For the Church, acting most rightly, carefully appoints prayer and fasting for the mortification of the flesh and all the passions. Of this, all the Saints have been lovers and examples. It is through this that our adversary the devil {cf. 1 Peter 5:8} is overthrown by the grace from on high, together with his armies and his hosts, and the race {cf. 2 Timothy 4:7} that is set before the pious is the more easily accomplished. In making these provisions the undefiled {cf. Ephesians 5:27} Church everywhere uses neither violence nor tyranny, but exhorts, admonishes, and teaches, in accordance with Scripture, and persuades by the power of the Spirit.

And to what has been mentioned a certain fellow at Charenton — we mean the previously mentioned Claud* — adds certain other ridiculous objections against us, and unworthy of any consideration; but what has been said by him we regard as idle tales. We consider the man himself as a trifler and altogether illiterate. For from [the time of] Photius there have been vast numbers in the Eastern Church, and are now, well known for wisdom, theology, and holiness, by the power of the Spirit. And it is most absurd [to argue] that because certain of the Eastern Priests keep the Holy Bread in wooden vessels, within the Church, but outside the Bema** [sanctuary -translator] hung on one of the columns, that therefore they do not acknowledge the real and true transmutation of the bread into the Body of the Lord. For that certain of the poor Priests do keep the Lord's Body in wooden vessels, we do not deny. For truly Christ is not honored by stones and marbles, but asks for a sound intent and a clean heart.

[*Ed. Note: a reference to part of the longer document not included here.]

**Ed. Note: bema, a raised platform at the front of Orthodox churches on which the altar is located.]

And this is what happened to Paul. “For we have,” {2 Corinthians 4:7} he says, “the treasure in earthen vessels.” But where particular Churches are able, as with us here in Jerusalem, the Lord’s Body is honorably kept within the Holy Bema of such Churches, and a seven-light lamp always kept burning before it.

I am tempted to wonder if it is possible that the heretics have seen the Lord’s Body hanging in some Churches outside the Bema, because perhaps the walls of the Bema were unsafe on account of age, and so have arrived at these absurd conclusions. But they did not notice Christ portrayed on the apse* of the Holy Bema as a babe [lying] in the Paten*. * If they did, they might have known that the Easterns do not represent that there is in the Paten a type, or grace, or anything else, but the Christ Himself; and so believe that the Bread of the Eucharist is nothing else, but becomes substantially the Body Itself of the Lord, and so maintain the truth.

[*Ed. Note: the apse is the semicircular part of the church, often in three parts, that lies beyond the altar.]

[**Ed. Note: a Paten is a plate that holds the bread used for Eucharist or Communion; in Orthodox services, only a portion of this bread (called the Lamb) is used for the Divine Liturgy.]

But concerning all these things it has been treated at large and most lucidly in what is called The Confession of the Eastern Church, by George, of Chios, from Coresius in his [Treatises] concerning the Mysteries, and of predestination, and of grace, and of free-will, and of the intercession and adoration of Saints, and of the adoration of Icons, and in the Refutation composed by him of the illicit Synod of the heretics held on a certain occasion in Flanders, and in many other [Treatises]; by Gabriel, of Peloponnesus, Metropolitan of Philadelphia; and by Gregory Protosyncellus of Chios in his [Treatises] concerning the Mysteries; by Jeremias, the Most Holy Patriarch of Constantinople, in three dogmatic and Synodical Letters to the Lutherans of Tübingen in Germany; by John, Priest, and Economist of Constantinople, surnamed Nathaniel; by Meletius Syrigus, of Crete, in the Orthodox Refutation composed by him of the Chapters and Questions of the said Cyril [Lucaris]; by Theophanes, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in his dogmatic Epistle to the Lithuanians, and in innumerable other [Epistles]. And before these it has been spoken most excellently of these matters by Symeon, of Thessalonica, and before him by all the Fathers, and by the Ecumenical Synods, by ecclesiastical historians too; and even by writers of secular history under the Christian Autocrats of Rome, have these matters been mentioned incidentally; by all of whom, without any controversy, the aforesaid were received from the Apostles; whose traditions, whether by writing, or by word, have through the Fathers descended until us. Further, the argument derived from the heretics also confirms what has been said. For the Nestorians after the year of Salvation, 428, the Armenians too, and the Copts, and the Syrians, and further even the Ethiopians, who dwell at the Equator, and beyond this towards the tropics of Capricorn, whom those that are there commonly call Campesii, after the year ... [The date is wanting in the text -translator] of the Incarnation broke away from the Catholic Church; and each of these hath as peculiar only its heresy, as all know from the Acts of the Ecumenical Synods. Although concerning the purpose and number of the Sacred Mysteries, and everything that has been said above — except their own particular heresy, as has been noted — they entirely believe with the Catholic Church. As we see with our own eyes every hour, and

learn by experience and conversation, here in the Holy City of Jerusalem in which there either dwell or are continually staying temporarily, vast numbers of them are as well learned, such as they have, as are illiterate.

Let, therefore, idle speech and innovating heretics keep silence, and not try [as] against us cunningly to bolster up falsehood as all apostates and heretics have ever done, by stealing some sentences from the Scriptures and the Fathers. Let them say this one thing only, that in contriving excuses {cf. Psalm 140:4} for sins they have chosen to speak wickedness against God, {cf. Psalm 74:6} and blasphemies against the Saints.

EPILOGUE

Let it be sufficient for the reputation of the falsehoods of the adversaries, which they have devised against the Eastern Church, that they allege in support of their falsehoods the incoherent and impious Chapters of the said Cyril [Lucaris]. And let it be for a sign not to be contradicted {cf. Luke 2:34} that those heretics have unjustly make maliciously false statements against us, as though they spoke the truth. But let it be for a sign to be believed, that is for reformation of their innovations and for their return to the Catholic and Apostolic Church, in which their forefathers also were of old, and [who] assisted at those Synods and contests against heretics, which these now reject and revile. For it was unreasonable on their part, especially as they considered themselves to be wise, to have listened to men that were lovers of self and profane, and that spoke not from the Holy Spirit, but from the prince of lies, and to have forsaken the Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, which God hath purchased with the Blood of His own Son, {cf. Acts 20:28} and to have abandoned her. For otherwise there will overtake those that have separated from the Church the pains that are reserved for heathens and publicans. But the Lord who has ever protected her against all enemies, will not neglect the Catholic Church. To Him be glory and dominion unto the ages of the ages. Amen.

In the year of Salvation 1672, on the 16th [day] of the month of March, in the Holy City of Jerusalem: —

I, Dositheus, by the mercy of God, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and of all Palestine, declare and confess this to be the faith of the Eastern Church.

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