

# Communique of the Pan-Orthodox Assembly of Bishops

## INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE PAN-ORTHODOX ASSEMBLY FOR THE BRITISH ISLES

The Inaugural Meeting of the Pan-Orthodox Assembly of Bishops with Churches in the British Isles was held on 21st June 2010 at Thyateira House, the centre of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain. The Assembly operates in accordance with the Decision reached at the 4th Pre-conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference Meeting at Chambésy ( Switzerland) on 13th June 2009.

The following bishops were present:

His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira & Great Britain (Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople)

The Most Revd Metropolitan Youhanna of Western & Central Europe (Patriarchate of Antioch)

His Eminence Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh (Patriarchate of Moscow)

The Rt Revd Bishop Dositej of Great Britain & Scandinavia (Patriarchate of Serbia)

The Most Revd Archbishop Iossif of Western & Southern Europe (Patriarchate of Romania)

The Rt Revd Bishop Zenon of Dmanisi & Great Britain (Patriarchate of Georgia)

The Most Revd Archbishop Mark of Berlin, Germany & Great Britain (Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia)

The Most Revd Archbishop Anatoly of Kerch (Diocese of Sourozh)

The Most Revd Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia (Archdiocese of Thyateira)

The Rt Revd Bishop Chrysostomos of Kyanea (Archdiocese of Thyateira)

The Rt Revd Bishop Athanasios of Tropaeou (Archdiocese of Thyateira)

The Most Revd Metropolitan Simeon of Central and Western Europe (Patriarchate of Bulgaria) and the Rt Revd Ioan of Parnassos (Ecumenical Patriarchate's Ukranian Orthodox Diocese in Great Britain) were unable to attend.

All those present noted the importance of this Meeting: until now in the British Isles there has been no kind of Inter-Orthodox Episcopal Committee. The bishops discussed the future organisation of their work, and an Executive Committee was set up, with Archbishop Gregorios as President, Metropolitan Youhanna and Archbishop Elisey as Vice-presidents, Bishop Dositej as Treasurer, and Archbishop Iossif as General Secretary. Bishop Zenon, Archbishop Mark and Metropolitan Kallistos were also appointed Members of the Executive Committee. The Secretariat of the Committee is made up of Archimandrite Vassilios Papavassiliou and Protopresbyter Samir Gholam.

Three Committees were set up:

- 1) Theological Committee, *Chairman: Metropolitan Kallistos* (For the time-being, this will also deal with liturgical, canonical and ecumenical questions, and with the preparation of an agreed list of Saints of the British Isles)
- 2) Pastoral Committee, *Chairman: Archbishop Elisey* (This will also deal with inter-Orthodox relations and with the organisation of Pan-Orthodox events)
- 3) Educational Committee, *Chairman: Archbishop Gregorios* (This will be concerned, among other things, with chaplains to universities, catechetical work and publications)

In the case of each committee, each Orthodox diocese will appoint a representative from either the clergy or the laity.

In the course of the discussion, the bishops mentioned in particular the need to keep children and young people within the Church. They spoke of pastoral problems arising in connection with marriage, and canonical issues involving the transfer of clergy from one diocese to another. They noted that there was a need to discuss current issues in bio-ethics and questions connected with the theology of the human person.

It was decided that a further Meeting would be held in December 2010.

The Meeting concluded with a festal meal provided by Archbishop Gregorios at Thyateira House.