



HOLY SYNOD OF BISHOPS
OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

No. 1859/4
June 29, 2002
Belgrade

To
His High Reverence
the Metropolitan of Veles and Povardarje, kyr John
Metropolis, Veles, Macedonia

Subject: Support from His Holiness, the Patriarch of Moscow and of all Russia, kyr Alexy II, on occasion the re-establishment of the liturgical and canonical communication between the Serbian Orthodox Church, through which with the fullness of the Orthodox Catholic Church, and your High Reverence, that is, the holy Metropolis of Veles and Povardarje.

Your High Reverence,

Using the fortunate circumstance that the delegation of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, led by His High Reverence, the Metropolitan of Backa Irineos, made a trip to Moscow on June 25 this year to have bilateral official discussions and preparations for the mutual positions of the two sisterly Churches concerning the issue of the schisms which unfortunately, nowadays, plague the orthodox ecumene in all regions, we informed His Holiness, the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Alexy about the joyous and graceful event of the uniting of your High Reverence and your honourable clergy, together with the most virtuous monastics of your blessed diocese and with all your God-loving flock, with the fullness of our holy local Church and thus with the fullness of the holy Orthodox Church altogether. On this occasion we asked His Holiness for His precious spiritual and moral support to Your High Reverence in these days of misunderstanding, even calumnies and unscrupulous attacks that you are experiencing from your false brethren after making your honest, courageous, correct and above all, responsible decision of a pastor, spiritually redeeming for the laity, dogmatically and canonically irreproachable decision, by which you exhibited and proved that the voice of the Gospel, the voice of the holy fathers, the voice of the holy church Councils and the voice of the holy and eternal Tradition of the Orthodox Church is an authority to your conscience, instead of the voice of "the flesh and blood" and, not to mention the voice of the external to the church, sometimes even openly anti-church forces and "lobbies".

His Holiness, the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, our brother in Christ and co-officiator of our humbleness, Alexy II, responded immediately, handing in a letter to the aforementioned Highly Reverend, Metropolitan of Backa, member of the Holy Synod of Bishops. In his wise letter, inspired with sincere fatherly love, the Holy Patriarch, gave his whole-hearted support both to the positions of the Holy Synod and the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church and to Our humbleness, as well as to the decision of your High Reverence, supported by Your eparchy's congregation, to choose, instead of the spiritual vegetation in the schism, that is, the gradual but certain spiritual decay, the full, blessed life and the path of salvation for yourself and for your flock in the holy, catholic community and in the fullness of the Orthodox Church.

We enclose a copy of our letter to His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Alexy (Synno. 1859/3 from June 25, 2002) and a copy of the reply of His Holiness, the Patriarch Alexy (No. 3727 from June 28, 2002).

Your High Reverence's brother in Christ,

The Archbishop of Pec
Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovci
and Patriarch of Serbia

+PAUL

President of the Holy Synod of Bishops