



THE HOLY SYNOD OF BISHOPS
OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

No. 1859/3
June 25, 2002
Belgrade

To: His Holiness
The Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia
Kyr kyr Alexy
Moscow

Subject: New events in the church life of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

YOUR BEATITUDE,

With fraternal love and joy, and, before all, with gratitude to the Lord, We inform You that His Eminence kyr Jovan (John), Metropolitan of Veles and Povardarje, has responded to Our appeal addressed to the clergy, priests, monastics and the believers of the Orthodox Church in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (separated from the Serbian Orthodox Church after the schism in 1967), on June 20 of the current year (Synno. 1859). In this we appealed to those who are willing to unite again, on a canonical basis, with the Serbian Orthodox Church, and thus with the holy ecumenical Orthodoxy. His Eminence John addressed Us a response, namely, an act no. 106, dated June 21 of the current year, informing Us and the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church, that he himself, together with his clergymen and the faithful of his Diocese, accept liturgical and canonical unity with the Serbian Orthodox Church and the entire Orthodox ecumene and ask to be accepted into communion.

Based on Our responsibility as the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church and based on the decisions enacted by the Holy Assembly of Bishops and the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church (Asno. 38/Note 16 dated May 23, 2002 and Synno. 1686/Note 713 dated June 1, 2002), We promptly informed His Eminence kyr John, Metropolitan of Veles and Povardarje, that We fraternally accepted him into communion and unity of the Holy Catholic Orthodox Church through liturgical communion with him within the canonical framework of our local Church. Therefore, We fraternally ask Your Holiness that, bearing in mind the aforementioned, You mention in Your prayers our brother and co-officiator in Christ, His Eminence kyr John, Metropolitan of Veles and Povardarje, and - when possible or necessary - let him officiate in the canonical region of Your Most Holy Church, as You would let any other canonical hierarch of the Orthodox Church.

Herewith We would also like to ask You, Your Holiness, to address urgently and without any delay - through Our humble self, or, if you consider it better, directly - a paternal message of support to Our Highly Reverend brother John, who has personally had sufficient faith and courage to exclude his Diocese from the schism and to approach the Mother Church. We hope that his God-pleasing example, motivated by an honest pastor's conscience, will incite the majority of other bishops, who are still in a schism, to find within the strength of faith and enough courage to make the same step themselves. Your Patriarchal support, due both to the reputation of Your Most Holy local Church and to Your personal reputation in the Orthodox world, is going to be of enormous

importance in this matter and the overcoming of this long-lasting schism is going to be, God willing, an excellent message to all the initiators of and participants in schismatic movements, from the Balkans to Ukraine.

Enclosure:

1. Copy of the letter sent by His Eminence John, Metropolitan of Veles and Povardarje, no. 106, dated June 21, 2002
2. Our answer to Metropolitan John, Synno. 1859/1

Your Holiness' brother in Christ,



Archbishop of Pec,
Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci and
Serbian Patriarch

+ Pavle

(+ P A V L E),
President of the Holy Synod of Bishops