

First Witness of Stavros (Letter to Joseph Suaiden)

Dear Joseph Suaiden,

Thank you for your inquiry. I will give you a brief explanation about the Matthewite archives themselves, about my trip in Greece in 2009, and about my current understanding of the "systematized" ecclesiology observed by Matthewites post-1976, and my current opinion regarding the Kirykite faction.

The Matthewite archive is the richest archive for GOC research because it is in fact the original archive since 1924, and documents had continuously been added to it since then. The archive was owned by Fr. Eugene Tombros, secretary of the Matthewite Synod, until as late as 1974, when he was forced to retire. It was at this time that the two laymen theologians, Mr. Eleutherios Gkoutzidis and Mr. Menas Kontogiannis were appointed secretaries and spokesmen for the Synod, and they were given complete access to this archive. They then began writing historical treatises and ecclesiological treatises, in order to boost the position of the Matthewite Synod. It was also they who prompted the Synod to sign a document (written by them) in which they sever communion with the ROCOR Synod. The document was composed and signed in 1975, but the hierarchs demanded that this document not be published until all agree for its publication. But then the two laymen theologians opened up the new official Matthewite periodical with the name "Herald of the Genuine Orthodox" in 1976, and published the severing of communion in the second issue, namely, the February issue. This prompted Bishops Kallistos, Epiphanius, and several others to protest against the publication of the document, since it was done contrary to the decision of the hierarchy to wait until they all agree with it before publishing.

From 1976 onwards, the Matthewite Synod's polemics and apologetics were largely controlled by Mr. Gkoutzidis and Mr. Kontogiannis. They reconstructed the history of the GOC in their own way, deliberately leaving out several documents that didn't suit their mindset. They also "systematized" the Matthewite ecclesiology, to apply a word that Gkoutzidis and Kontogiannis use in their new periodical, "Orthodox Breath" (Quote: "ὁ κ. Γκουτζίδης... ΕΣΥΣΤΗΜΑΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΕΝ τὴν ὁμολογίαν"). The latter of these theologians, Mr. Menas Kontogiannis, was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood in 1981, and eventually became a bishop in 1995. From 1983 until 2001 he served as the official chief-secretary and arch-chancellor of the Matthewite Synod. But when Archbishop Andrew and his fellow bishops unanimously voted to dismiss Met. Kirykos from his duties in 2001, Met. Kirykos took the vast

majority of archives with him to his Monastery at Koropi. This was confirmed to me when I asked if documents were available at the Matthewite Synodal Headquarters at Peristeri, but was informed that none of the archives had remained, since Met. Kirykos had taken them all when he was dismissed.

During the four months I was in Greece (from the last week of August until the last week of December, 2009), fires had swept throughout the entire Attica region, and I was informed that a few days before my arrival a fire had raged just outside the Koropi Monastery itself. The adjacent hill was blackened from the fire, and the atmosphere was smoky, making it difficult to breathe. I was also bitten by a mosquito that had been infected by an animal burned in the fires, which caused my whole body to become almost paralyzed. I thank God daily that Fr. Pedro was able to take me to the hospital, where I was given cortisone and antibiotics to get rid of the numbness my whole body had suffered, but it took weeks for the swelling in my legs to disappear. I am perfectly fine now, but I must say that my first week in the Koropi Monastery was possibly the most frightening week of my life.

But I did not care so much for my own health, for any suffering I receive is a punishment for my sins. The destruction of my health was the least of my worries, for seeing the fires in close proximity to the Koropi Monastery prompted me to fear another kind of destruction. I was horrified by the idea that perhaps one day a fire will burn Met. Kirykos' office and destroy all of these important Synodal documents from 1924 onwards, which are nowhere else to be found in their entirety. This would cause an immensely important spiritual treasure to be lost forever. I then requested the blessing from Met. Kirykos to scan documents from the archive at Koropi for the purpose of apologetics, and so as to create an electronic database of documents, which could be saved on flash drives or computers at different locations, thereby ensuring that nothing hazardous (such as a fire, theft, etc) could cause the loss of these documents to future generations. Met. Kirykos gave me this blessing, thinking that I would become lazy and only scan a few documents here and there. Little did he know that I am a diligent worker, and that I hardly slept, night or day, but spent most of the time in my cell, photographing documents, to make sure I complete the task in its entirety before the time I would have to fly back home.

While in Greece for four months, I spent the majority of time residing at Koropi Monastery, except for various trips to other parts of Greece. I took a three-week road trip to Northern Greece to venerate relics and visit Metropolitan Tarasios. I also took a one-week trip to Crete to serve as chanter for an important feast day and to visit the village of Panethymo where Bishop Matthew of Bresthena was born, as well as Mt. Kophinas, where the

miraculous appearance of the cross had occurred in the sky above the chapel of the Holy Cross in 1937. I also spent a week on the island of Andros, where I have relatives, and spent most of the time at St. Nicholas of Vounena Monastery, where I was able to venerate several holy relics, including those of many of the Kollyvades Fathers who I have always had a great reverence towards. So if all of this time I was on road-trips is taken into account, it adds up to five weeks of absence, meaning that I was only in Koropi Monastery for eleven weeks, which is one week short of three months. I also spent three weeks traveling to Athens every morning so as to photograph books and documents at the National Library, as there is much information there concerning ecclesiastical history and biographies of hierarchs and clergy from the 1920s, which would help give us a clue as to how the schism of 1924 was allowed to happen in the first place. Thus, if these three weeks are also taken into account, it means that I only spent eight weeks (two months) of working around the clock, day and night, to complete the task of photographing every document in the archive that pertained to GOC history and ecclesiology. There were several folders that I didn't bother scanning as they were entirely of a local nature to the Monastery and Diocese itself, which were of little interest to me, or anyone seeking the true history of the GOC. Although residing at Koropi, I was seldom seen by anyone, except for Fr. Pedro, Matushka Lucia, and their little baby daughter. Theoharis was also residing in the monastery, but he was never there because he was fulfilling his army duty that whole time. So I spent most of the time practically alone, because I wanted to get this work done as soon as possible. I had to reschedule my flight twice, because the task had not been completed, and then I even had to allow my return flight to expire. When I completed scanning all the documents, I booked and paid for a new return flight.

During my time in the Monastery I had become sick from the food in the first week, so I stopped eating and began to purchase my own food, which I would also share with others. I would also assist Fr. Pedro and Matushka Lucia with their shopping, and with various of their chores wherever I was able. For the most part I was under the spiritual guidance of Fr. Pedro, because Met. Kirykos was never present at Koropi Monastery (supposedly his "residence" and "diocesan house"). Fr. Pedro was an exceptional spiritual father, and I still consider him to be a spiritual father even today, although since the beginning of Great Lent of 2010 I have been confessing to a priest of the Russian True Orthodox Church, and receiving communion in that parish.

My decision to depart the omophorion of Met. Kirykos is based on several reasons. But the most important reason is the fact that when I returned home, I began reading through all of the documents I had collected in the archive, and I began to realize that the "story" Met. Kirykos has been giving us was

quite different from what the fullness of the documents portrayed. It seems as though from 1976 onwards, that the two laymen theologians, Mr. Gkoutzidis and Mr. Kontogiannis (the latter of whom is now known as Met. Kirykos) did not just "systematize" the Matthewite ecclesiology, but they slightly changed the ecclesiology, taking it towards the ultra-right extreme. The documents also prove that today's Matthewite super-correctness and their refusal to allow any union with the Florinites, their fanatic mentality that led to their current factionalism into four rival groups, and their gradual disappearance into the realm of obscurity, is a product of the Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian dictatorship over the Matthewite Synod from 1976 until they were thrown out of the Synodal headquarters in 2001, in which period the two laymen theologians through their publications brainwashed the Matthewites into a certain mindset which is based only on the documents they chose to reveal, deliberately hiding the plethora of documents that prove otherwise, and conditioned the Matthewites to an ecclesiology that at first glance appears completely sound and logical, and yet in light of all the missing documents, proves itself to be self-refuting, utterly illogical, and certainly not the ecclesiology of the original GOC, and not even the ecclesiology of St. Matthew himself, whose hundreds of writings I have now compiled.

What all of the documents in this archive prove is that although Mr. Gkoutzidis and Mr. Kontogiannis (Met. Kirykos) thought of themselves as "saving the Matthewites," they proved to be the very ones who destroyed the Matthewites from within. The unfortunate truth is that each of the four current groups in which the Matthewites exist are victims of this brainwashing for over 30 years now, and their current positions reflect the Goutzidian-Kontogiannian influence on their understanding. Surprisingly, even the Nicholaitan Synod, which appears to be antagonistic towards Met. Kirykos and Mr. Gkoutzidis more than any other, is in fact tainted by this same Gkoutzidian-Kontigiannian ecclesiological unsoundness, which can be clearly expressed by their 2007 "encyclical" in which they "condemn" the "cheirothesia." The truth is that this is all simply a product of the 30-year long brainwashing process, beginning with the premature departure from the ROCOR in 1976, and resulting in the ensuing schisms of 1995, 2003, 2005, and the departure of clergy and laity in 2009.

The first people to bring up the charges of "iconoclasm" in the official Matthewite periodical were Mr. Gkoutzidis and Mr. Kontogiannis themselves, as they were using it as a means to slander the clairvoyant Metropolitan Kallistos for his refusal to accept the uncanonical method in which the Synod was being run by two lay theologians, namely Gkoutzides and Kontogiannis, and that these two had opened the new periodical "Herald of the Genuine Orthodox" and had published the severing of communion

with ROCOR in its second issue (February, 1976) despite the fact the Synod had agreed not to publish it until all were in agreement with it. It was also Gkoutzidis and Kontogiannis that sent the copy to the ROCOR headquarters, again without complete Synodal approval. The version they sent contains the typed form of the signatures, without possessing the signatures of all the bishops themselves, since four of the hierarchs were not in agreement with it. Of those four hierarchs, two of them (Demetrios and Kallistos) were among the very bishops that St. Matthew himself had ordained. Meanwhile the third hierarch (Epiphanius) was also the first-hierarch of his own Local Church (Cyprus), while the fourth hierarch was Bishop Pachomios of Corinth (still living today and serving as the vice-president of the Nicholaitan faction). Yet Gkoutzidis and Kontogiannis published their printed version of the document and sent it off to the ROCOR, as well as in the new official Matthewite periodical they were in charge of, with the names of all the bishops included as having signed, yet without signatures, but rather with their typed names. When Kallistos, Epiphanius and Pachomios protested against this, while Demetrios could not as he reposed within months of that time, their protests were ignored.

After Kallistos departed the Matthewite Synod, the two lay theologians were responsible for "deposition" of Kallistos, in which the first and most important charge and reason for deposition is given as "iconoclasm against the [western] icon of the Holy Trinity." Thus it is from this pact that we see for the first time the use of so-called "neo-iconoclasm" to judge hierarchs as "heretics." Together with this was coupled the charge of "cheirothesia," as if the cheirothesia received by Kallistos was a consecration, when in reality all of the documents in the archive, both from ROCOR as well as Matthewite and Florinite sources, prove that the cheirothesia was not real at all. This was just a rumor spread among the Florinites themselves, and also falsely spread by Holy Transfiguration Monastery, in order to convince Greek parishes in ROCOR not to follow the Matthewites into breaking communion with the ROCOR in 1976. Recently the HOCNA made similar comments, but that was at request of the Nicholaitan faction, with whom they sympathized at the time.

The schism among the Matthewites in 1995 over so-called "iconoclasm" and so-called "cheirothesia" is also a direct product of the Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian brainwashing from 1976 onwards. After all it was Gkoutzidis and Kontogiannis who were first to accuse Met. Kallistos of "iconoclasm" and even published an article in their official periodical "Herald of the Genuine Orthodox" at this time, regarding this same issue. If my memory serves me correctly, the article has the title of "Why do they war against the icon of the Holy Trinity?" The author of the article is Mr. Eleutherios Gkoutzidis. In 1983, 1986, 1989, 1991 and 1992 the Matthewite Synod also published official

recommendations in which they express a pro-western anti-byzantine understanding of the icon issue, and demand for the western forms to be preferred, and for the byzantine forms to be diminished to one day per year, or discouraged altogether. The author of each and every one of these encyclicals against so-called "iconoclasm" happens to be one of the two laymen theologians, Mr. Menas Kontogiannis, who had become a priest by that time (during the 1980s), and was therefore known as Hieromonk Kirykos Kontogiannis. It was also during that time that Hieromonk Kirykos persistently tried to make the Synod reject or condemn the cheirothesia. He had originally requested this as a layman in 1972. But Gkoutzidis was aware that by rejecting or condemning the cheirothesia it would imply the existence of a real cheirothesia. Basically, it would imply that the Matthewite Synod "fell" in 1971 by accepting the cheirothesia in the first place. But that is because Gkoutzidis and Kontogiannis were defining the cheirothesia according to their own ecclesiology, which they "systematized" from 1976 onwards. Yet, according to the real Matthewite ecclesiology (pre-"systematization") the cheirothesia was not a fall whatsoever, but actually a fulfillment of whatever Bishop Matthew of Bresthena would have wanted (as indicative of his books and writings which are in the hundreds and thousands of pages, but which Gkoutzidis and Kontogiannis have kept secret and unpublished for over three decades, except for whatever they could publish that suited their newly-systematized ecclesiological position). Thus the entire "icon issue" and "cheirothesia" issue which led to the schism of 1995 was largely attributable to the brainwashing that Kirykos and Gkoutzidis committed upon the Matthewite hierarchy, clergy and flock since 1976.

In 1995, after five Matthewite hierarchs departed the Synod and deposed Archbishop Andrew and Bishops Nicholas and Pachomios, the latter three bishops ordained five new hierarchs. The second hierarch to be consecrated was Hieromonk Kirykos who became Bishop of Mesogaea and Laureotica. He continued to serve as Synodal secretary, just as had been the case since 1983. In 1996, Bishops Kirykos and Nicholas published a lengthy booklet regarding the icon issue, again trying to enforce the western icons and downcast the Byzantine ones. This booklet was condemned by various theologians and scholars throughout the world, and also by people of various other old calendarist synods in Greece, as being a booklet full of all manner of heresy, including the heresies of Barlaam and Akyndinus, which were anathematized by the councils held under St. Gregory Palamas. It was only in 1998, when Met. Kirykos was given a large treatise written by the theologian Mr. Christos Noukas, that Kirykos realized his errors and together with Bishop Nicholas, he retracted all of the heretical statements contained within that book and apologized. But this only took place because Archbishop Andrew and the other bishops of the Synod forced them to apologize and retract their heresies.

Had they not been forced by the Synod, it is likely Kirykos and Gkoutzidis would both still continue to hold their incorrect views regarding iconography.

But surprisingly, from 1998 onwards, both Kirykos and Gkoutzidis began referring to the positions held by the "five" as heretical, and proof of their gracelessness, and also began attacking Bishop Nicholas for secretly still holding all of those opinions. Additionally, in a speech delivered in 1998, Mr. Gkoutzidis suggested that not only should the "second encyclical" regarding iconography (that of 1993) be rejected, but that even the "first encyclical" (that of 1992, written by Kirykos with the help of Nicholas back then) should also be rejected, since "there is no iconoclasm," and because even the first encyclical was admittedly "heretical." In my personal opinion, the first encyclical is indeed heretical (inasmuch as it is unorthodox), whereas the second encyclical seems closer to Orthodoxy! Yet from 1995 until 1998, Kirykos and Gkoutzidis were stressing the acceptance of the first encyclical and rejection of the second, while from 1998 onwards they were stressing the rejection of both encyclicals due to the fact that "there is no iconoclasm," and that the issue was "created" for the purpose of "schism." These are rather interesting words coming from the very two men who CREATED THE ISSUE back in 1977, when they began hurling it against Metropolitan Kallistos, and even deposed him primarily for that reason (as the documents prove), and even continued forcing their opinions on the Synod from that year onwards, which caused this fanatical brainwashing of the Matthewites into believing that only those who observe these encyclicals on iconography are really Orthodox.

Then of course there is the schism of 2003 within the Synod of the five Metropolitans who had departed in 1995. By 2003, only two Metropolitans were alive, namely, Gregory of Messenia and Chrysostom of Thessalonica. Gregory of Messenia was strongly influenced by the layman theologian Mr. Lampros Ktenas, who for several years was a victim of the brainwashing of the Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian "systematization of the ecclesiology." Thanks to the bright expertise of "theologian" Mr. Ktenas, the Gregorian faction now holds positions that are largely Arian and Paulician in content. For instance, they state that Jesus Christ is not pre-eternal, but that only God the Word is pre-eternal, and that Jesus Christ exists only from the Nativity onwards. In making this statement, they undermine the oneness of the Person of Jesus Christ, who is the Word made flesh, and whether before the incarnation or after, can be called Jesus Christ, and pre-eternal God. The Gregorians also claim that the Church was non-existent prior to the day of Pentecost in 33 AD, despite the fact that the Holy Fathers believe in a pre-eternal Church, which derives its pre-eternity from the pre-eternity of Jesus Christ. They also claim that only the humanity of Christ is the head of the Church, while his divinity

is not. Additionally they claim that the Church can only be called the Church of Christ, but not the Church of God, or that only the humanity of Jesus Christ is the ruler of the Church, whereas the Father and the Holy Spirit do not rule the Church. In so doing they separate the Holy Trinity from the Church. Because Metropolitan Chrysostom of Thessalonica refused to prescribe to such blasphemies, Mr. Ktenas forced Metropolitan Gregory to sever communion and consecrate a bishop alone, and consecrate more bishops, forming a new synod. Metropolitan Chrysostom of Thessalonica remains alone from 2003 onwards and denounces the Gregorians as heretics. Yet Chrysostom himself is still highly influenced by the Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian brainwashing from 1976 onwards, despite the fact he is much more sober than the Gregorian faction. This same controversy arose among the mainstream Matthewites, but in far less extremity. The reason why this issue wasn't taken to extremes is because Mr. Gkoutzidis and Met. Kirykos avoided discussing the theological questions at hand, and smothered them with the issue of "cheirothesia" which is the same thing they did in the early 1990s when the issue of "iconoclasm" was raised.

On 14 May 2005, Bishop Kirykos severed communion with Archbishop Andrew, denounced him and all the other bishops, declaring them to have just "lost grace" because of their canonical crimes and alleged blasphemy against their own apostolic succession, when in reality all they were doing was fulfilling what Kirykos and Gkoutzidis were originally asking for in the 1970s, that is, to consider the cheirothesia real, and condemn it, and declare that the Synod "fell" back then and needs to restore its dignity. The break-away group under the leadership of Kirykos and Gkoutzidis consisted primarily of the following in Greece: Met. Kirykos himself, Fr. Thomas (his 85-year-old father), Mr. Gkoutzidis (his best friend), Fr. Amphilochios (Gkoutzidis' long-time friend, who recently published a very controversial book containing his extremist position on iconography, a book which has been criticized as containing Sabellianism and Patripassionism, and is definitely a product of the Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian extremism "to the right" as much as the Gregorians are extremists "to the left," neither side following the Royal Path of Orthodoxy), and Fr. Andrew Sidnev (who had no choice but to follow Kirykos since the house he lives in is owned by Kirykos and he'd have nowhere else to go). So all of Greece only had one bishop and three priests since their departure, and this is still the number of clergy they have today within Greece itself. As for the people, only one real parish followed them (St. Demetrius at Menidi), which consists of somewhere between two thousand and three thousand people, most of them simpletons, whereas only about 50 people in all of Greece actually understand Met. Kirykos' ecclesiology and bother reading his periodical. But the majority of the subscribers to "Orthodox Breath" prefer to call it "Orthodox Bronchitis,"

because it hardly contain anything edifying that can be considered inspired of the Spirit, but rather from cover to cover it is full of the coughs of demons, being the product of the demonic illness of deliberate delusion, where despite knowing the truth, the authors believe in their own lies and fool their flock.

Additionally to the above, when I visited Koropi I was given very shocking information regarding Bishop Kirykos, that made me realize that he is not as honest as he claims to be, and that his judgment of other bishops for defying canons is quite hypocritical, since those hierarchs broke a canon or two only once in a while, whereas he himself was breaking several canons on a daily basis, as part of his daily life. Breaking a canon once in a while can be seen as an exercise of *economia*. But making the severing of dozens of canons a way of life is certainly NOT the conduct of a bishop who claims to be fighting for the truth of Orthodoxy or for the adherence to holy canons. This breaking of canons on the part of Met. Kirykos was first made known to me by his very own sister, who happens to be a nun originally from Keratea but now living and controlling the Koropi Monastery. She told me many shocking things about her own brother, Metropolitan Kirykos, that shocked me to death. To use a Greek saying, "I fell from the clouds." When I inquired with people throughout Menidi, Kareia, Larissa, Mt. Athos, to ask others who had previously lived as monastics at Koropi, as well as to people currently living at Kallithea (where Kirykos was parish priest during the first half of the 1980s decade), and people living at Menidi (Kirykos' current main parish), they all confirmed to me the truthfulness of whatever Kirykos' own sister had told me. Even some among Kirykos' own priests, their wives, and members of his own parishes, among them monastics and laymen, widows and families, all confirmed to me the same thing. When I asked how on earth they could put up with such a scandal, they offered only a sad face and a helpless response. They said "Yes, this is all true, and unfortunate, but what can we do? When we even try to say the least, he yells at us."

Recently, Met. Kirykos was also responsible for yet another heretical practice that he and Mr. Gkoutzidis implemented and enforced upon the Matthewite Synod from 1976 onwards, through their "clergy camps" they gathered in 1979, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1987 and 1989. They had a strong influence over Archbishop Andrew during this time, as did the Tsakiroglou brothers, who throughout this time were close friends and collaborators with Gkoutzidis and Kirykos. They basically enforced a "one-size-fits-all" method of fasting for all adult laymen prior to communion, demanding seven days without meat, five days without dairy or eggs either but permitting oil, three days without oil, and the last day without any olives, sesame, halva, or anything that could be considered as containing oil. This "one-size-fits-all" fasting rule was applied to all adult laymen, whether they were virgins or married, whether

they were frequent church-goers or once-in-a-blue-moon attendants, whether they were big sinners or little sinners, whether they were young or old.

This unorthodox practice is exactly what the Holy Kollyvades Fathers of the 18th and 19th century were struggling against. The Holy Kollyvades Fathers were against the innovation of performing memorial services on Sundays, and were also against the innovations of making it impossible for laymen to commune every Sunday, while making it absolutely easy for priests to do this. The two main enemies of the Kollyvades Fathers were Bessarion of Rapsani (died 1801) and Theodoret of Joannina (died 1823). These two men not only defended the practice of memorials on Sundays, but they also defended the pharisaism of priests being able to eat whatever they wanted and commune the next day, while laymen were required to follow specific practices of preparation regardless of whether they were righteous or sinful. But the Kollyvades Fathers strongly encouraged frequent communion among laymen, stating that if laymen do not have a penance, that is, if they are not excommunicated for any particular sin, then nothing should prevent them from communing every Sunday of the year, and if possible even to commune four times per week during the Lenten seasons. Among the champion Holy Kollyvades Fathers were:

1. **St. Cosmas Aetolus** (+1779), who traveled throughout Greece trying to return the peasants to their faith, and preached frequent communion.
2. **St. Neophytus Caysocallyvites** (+1784), who preached throughout the Balkans and reposed in Romania.
3. **St. Paisius Velichkovsky** (+1794), who published the Slavonic version of the Philokalia, which greatly influenced the Optina Elders.
4. **St. Makarius Notaras of Corinth** (+1805), author of "On Frequent Communion."
5. **St. Nicodemus of Mt. Athos** (+1809), author of "Evergetinos," "Philokalia," "The Rudder," "Christoethia," the "Synaxarion," and "On Frequent Communion."
6. **St. Nephon of Chios** (+1810), founder of Annunciation Skete on Skiathos island, which greatly influenced the writings of Papadiamantis and Moraitidis.
7. **St. Athanasius of Paros** (+1813), author of several works against the western enlightenment movement within Greece, and in favor of frequent communion.
8. **St. Agapius the Cypriot** (+1816), co-author with St. Nicodemus of "The Rudder."
9. **St. Nicephorus of Chios** (+1821), disciple and biographer of St. Athanasius of Paros.
10. **St. Daniel of Chios** (+1837), the spiritual father of St. Arsenius of Paros.

11. **St. Christopher Papulacus** (+1861), who traveled throughout Greece trying to return the peasants to their faith, and preached frequent communion.
12. **St. Arsenius of Paros** (+1877), who preached frequent communion and was also a schoolteacher, and the spiritual father of St. Nectarius of Aegina.
13. **St. Pachomius of Chios** (+1905), who was the spiritual father of St. Nectarius of Aegina as well as of the Matthewite Elder St. Moses of Athikia.
14. **St. Parthenius of Koudouma** (+1905), brother of St. Eumenius of Koudoumas.
15. **St. Elias Panagoulakis** (+1918), founder of Panagoulakis Skete in Kalamata and spiritual father of the Matthewite Bishop Chrysostom of Messenia.
16. **St. Eumenius of Koudouma** (+1920), spiritual father of the Matthewite Bishop Eumenius of Crete.
17. **St. Nectarius of Aegina** (+1920), spiritual child of St. Pachomius of Chios, and spiritual father of Bishop Matthew of Bresthena.
18. **St. Nicholas Planas** (+1931), who blessed the the office of the GOC in Athens in January, 1926, and who never accepted the new calendar.
19. **St. Moses of Athikia** (+1940), spiritual son of St. Pachomius of Chios, and spiritual father of the Matthewite Bishop Callistus of Corinth.

In 1933, Bishop Matthew of Bresthena published a 5-page work with the title "Regarding Holy Communion," and in these pages he speaks very strongly about the importance of receiving Holy Communion at every Divine Liturgy, for as long as one has attended confession and does not have a penance. In the whole five pages he speaks only of confession as a prerequisite to Holy Communion, and nowhere does he apply a "one-size-fits-all" fast from oil for three or more days before communion. This was clearly not his teaching, because it cannot be found anywhere in his writings, and I have compiled more than a thousand pages of his writings, which for some reason the Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian regime has not bothered to publish at all in the past 30 years. I wonder why...? From what St. Matthew writes regarding the importance of frequent communion, it is quite clear that he was influenced by the Kollyvades Fathers. But of course he would be, for he strongly admired St. Nicodemus of Mt. Athos, St. Macarius Notaras, and of course his own spiritual father, St. Nectarius of Aegina, all three of which preached frequent holy communion by the laymen, without giving them "one-size-fits-all" compulsory fasts that would make it impossible for them to commune every Sunday. On the contrary, St. Matthew speaks only regarding the fast from oil on every Wednesday and Friday, and he recommends that married couples abstain from intercourse on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

These seem to be his only recommendations for couples to be righteous before God and to be able to commune. Nowhere does he mention an extra fast for laymen that clergy are supposedly exempt from. Furthermore, Fr. Eugene Tombros published a book in 1966 in which he included a paragraph from the work "On Frequent Communion" by St. Macarius of Corinth. All of this proves that as early as 1933 and as late as 1966, the Matthewites were being taught on the importance of frequent communion, and that the laymen should aspire to commune as often as the clergy, by of course preparing themselves with confession and by fasting according to whatever is indicated on the calendar.

Despite all of the above, Kirykos wrote two letters to Fr. Pedro during Great Lent of this year (2010), requesting him to stop allowing laymen to receive Holy Communion on Sundays, claiming that Christians are supposedly only to commune on Saturdays. He also says that communion on Sundays is only to be allowed by "economia" and if that be the case that the laymen are to fast from oil on Saturdays. But fasting from oil on Saturdays was actually condemned by the Holy Apostles in their canons, and by the Sixth Ecumenical Council in its 55th canon. Also, believing that meat is "impure" is condemned by the first canon of Ancyra. Imagine how much more anathema it is to believe that oil is "impure" just for simply consuming it on a day the Orthodox Church declares it to be permissible? This is Manicheanism at its worst. Additionally, St. Photius the Great in his Encyclical to the Eastern Patriarchs refers to the forced fasting from oil during Saturdays of Great Lent to be "the first heresy of the Westerners." So much for Met. Kirykos trying to defend Orthodoxy from Papism, when he is all but happy to dogmatize the first heresy of the Papists! Met. Kirykos also states in his letters that fasting somehow makes people "worthy" of communion, as if the actions performed by mankind can make them "worthy." If they are "worthy" then why would they even require Holy Communion which is meant to be "for the remission of sins?" This theory of Met. Kirykos is nothing but an obscure offshoot of Pelagianism, for he makes the human effort the cause of "worthiness" as opposed to the Mystery itself which is the source of God's grace. In both letters, Met. Kirykos mentions nothing regarding the mystery of confession, as if this is somehow unimportant before communion, while making his "one-size-fits-all" fasting rule somewhat of a dogma! This theory of Met. Kirykos is completely contrary to the teaching of the Fathers, including Bishop Matthew of Bresthena, who, in his five-page treaty on Holy Communion, declares that the Mystery of Repentance/Confession is like entering into the baptismal font all over again, but being washed with one's own tears. This Mystery (the grace of God) is what cleanses the soul allowing it to approach the Immaculate Mysteries and partake of Christ instead of a consuming fire. Whereas Bishop Matthew of Bresthena, in his treatise on Holy Communion,

spends five pages writing about the importance of confession without mentioning any "one-size-fits-all" fasting rule, Met. Kirykos, quite on the contrary, writes in his letters to Fr. Pedro only regarding this obscure fast, without even mentioning Confession!

Although it is true that this unorthodox rule has been kept in practice in many circles among the Matthewites, and even among the Florinites, this was due to the existence of this practice ever since the 1700s when it was introduced by the Jesuits and Jansenists who opened schools all over Greece. It may also have been introduced by the clergy who studied in the West. Yet the Kollyvades Fathers fought against this Western innovation, and the Matthewites largely descended from the Kollyvades Movement. Bishop Matthew of Bresthena and Fr. Eugene Tombros appear to be greatly influenced by the Holy Kollyvades Fathers. It seems that the anti-Kollyvades "one-size-fits-all" rule for preparation for Holy Communion only began being enforced from the 1970s onwards, when the "laymen theologians" Mr. Gkoutzidis and Mr. Kontogiannis ran their "clergy camps" and taught each of the priests to apply this rule. Yet now, Met. Kirykos has taken his original error to extremes, and has added heresies on top of the practice. His first letter to Fr. Pedro contains no less than five heresies, namely, Sabbatianism, Pelagianism, Manicheanism, Papism and Pharisaism. These five heresies can easily be spotted by any theologian. So much for thinking of himself as the only real Orthodox bishop left in Greece, when he is willing to preach heresies that the Orthodox Church has condemned several centuries ago.

I guess, Met. Kirykos and Mr. Gkoutzidis are the victims of their own brainwashing, and refuse to allow anyone to explain to them the unorthodoxy of their views. Let it be known that outside of the fasting periods, Met. Kirykos eats cheese, eggs, yogurt, etc, as late as 11:30pm and sometimes midnight on a Saturday night, and receives communion on Sunday morning thinking he is absolutely "worthy." Yet when it comes to laymen, no matter how pure they may be defined as by their own spiritual father, Kirykos enforces the rule that such laymen must fast for seven days from meat, five days from dairy, three days from oil, and the last day without olives or sesame pulp, and that they can only commune on a Saturday and never on a Sunday! Meanwhile within Great Lent, Met. Kirykos was consuming oil almost every day, despite the fact oil is forbidden from Monday to Friday, and yet he was communing four times per week, including Sundays. Meanwhile, although laymen were fasting strictly from Monday to Friday, consuming only fresh fruit and vegetables and no oil or cooked foods, while eating oil only on Saturdays and Sundays as per the Orthodox instructions for fasting during Great Lent, Kirykos was forbidding them to commune on Sundays, but demanding them to commune only on Saturdays, considering

the fact they eat oil on Saturdays to make them "impure." How interesting is it that this "impurity" somehow does not affect Met. Kirykos when he eats eggs, yogurt, cheese and fish on Saturday nights outside of fasts, and he still communes on Sundays with no problems. Yet if laymen consume only oil on Saturdays during Great Lent this suddenly makes them "impure" and unable to approach the Immaculate Mysteries. This hypocrisy is not Orthodox teaching, it is Pharisaism. Christ condemned the Pharisees for placing heavy burdens on the shoulders of laymen while not daring to lift the slightest weight which even their finger could handle. Everything our Lord Jesus Christ condemned the Pharisees for can be equally applied to Met. Kirykos.

The sad thing is that Met. Kirykos in his first letter was trying to say that his personal teaching on pre-communion fast for laymen was supposedly advocated by Bishop Matthew of Bresthena. But this could not be further from the truth! Bishop Matthew would be turning in his grave to even hear that Met. Kirykos is calling himself a "Matthewite." But the fact Met. Kirykos has misrepresented Bishop Matthew on this issue is just yet another clear example of how Met. Kirykos and Mr. Gkoutzidis have been misrepresenting Bishop Matthew for the past 30 years, such as when they reconstructed his ecclesiology through their process of what they like to call "systematization," but what I prefer to call "deliberate hiding of documents," "re-writing history," and "spreading half-truths." When all of the documents in the archive are finally made available to the public, as well as all of the writings of Bishop Matthew of Bresthena, all of this will be made very clear to all.

Met. Kirykos' recent actions have actually caused Fr. Pedro and his family, a few more families in Greece, and some in Australia, to already depart from his omophorion. Met. Kirykos has covered up this entire incident by preaching to people that Fr. Pedro was supposedly preaching the notion that all people should "eat meat before communing." But this is clearly not true, and this lie on the part of Met. Kirykos can be dispelled by simply reading the two letters of Kirykos to Fr. Pedro, and the reply of Fr. Pedro to Kirykos. The issue has nothing to do with meat as the dispute occurred during Great Lent. The dispute has to do with the fact Kirykos himself, and his priests, were all eating oil on Saturdays yet being able to commune on Sundays, while Kirykos was demanding that all laymen should only commune on Saturdays, consume oil, and then never commune on Sundays. The issue is not a "meat-eating heresy" of Fr. Pedro. The issue is Kirykos' clear and shocking preaching of Sabbatianism, Pelagianism, Manicheanism, Papism and Pharisaism in his two letters to Fr. Pedro, in which Kirykos also defied over a dozen canons, throwing them in the trashcan as somehow not applicable for Orthodox Christians today. This is not any different to what the modernists and ecumenists think of the canons, when they too throw them in the trashcan

and claim that they are outdated and unsuitable for our times. If all of this isn't enough, in Met. Kirykos' second letter to Fr. Pedro, he calls the Orthodox teaching "cacodox" (heretical), despite it was the very teaching of the Apostles, the Ecumenical Councils, and the Holy Kollyvades Fathers.

The worst thing is that when Met. Kirykos went to Romania during Bright Week to celebrate the feast of the Friday of the Life-Giving Spring, he held a council on the following day in which he convinced the rest of his hierarchs and the clergy to all approve and officially adopt his blasphemous positions. The Synod of Bishops agreed to apply Met. Kirykos' rules to the entire Synod, in all local countries, including throughout the diaspora. Of course he knew he would be able to convince them because all of his fellow bishops lack any form of theological training. Met. Kirykos is the most "educated" among them, and he only completed two years theology in the 1970s, which is hardly anything at all, yet he still had the pride to refer to himself as a "theologian" ever since that time. The fact that Kirykos' blasphemous teaching has now become the Synod's official position means that no confessor-spiritual father will ever be allowed to determine which of his parishioners should fast more or less to prepare for communion. The discernment of spiritual fathers will now be entirely defunct, and the completely unnatural, mechanical "one-size-fits-all" rule will be applied to laymen, making it impossible to commune on any Sunday during the year except for Pascha Sunday, while only being able to commune on Saturdays during Lenten Seasons. Meanwhile, this strict rule for pre-communion fast was not applied to any of the bishops or priests, meaning Met. Kirykos and all the rest of his Synods' clergy can continue eating eggs, cheese, yogurt, fish, as late as midnight on any Saturday night and then commune on Sunday all by themselves, since communion will never be available to laymen on Sundays, even if they fast from all things except oil, because it won't be good enough for them, since they are laymen, and only priests (Pharisees) can eat anything and commune with no worries of becoming "impure."

The above action has been nothing but a stab in the heart of every Holy Kollyvades Father, and I am sure Bishop Matthew of Bresthena shudders to know that Kirykos and his followers dare to call themselves "Matthewite," for they have defied everything he ever stood for. They are not Matthewite. They are Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian, the product of 30 years of "systematization of the ecclesiology" that has now been taken to the point of no return. But thank God the archive they have hidden for 30 years is now available to people who actually believe in God and actually care for the Truth, and are willing to publish the documents in their totality, without any agenda or deliberate misleading like Mr. Gkoutzidis and Kontogiannis have unfortunately done since 1976 until now. It is time for the world to know the

true history of the GOC, and for them to read every document and then make their conclusions, as opposed to having a preconceived mentality and deliberately overlooking or ignoring documents that contradict ones preconceptions.

In any case, little does the Gkoutzidian-Kontogiannian faction realize, but they really did stab the Kollyvades in the heart in more ways than one, possibly without even realizing it. For the day upon which they began their talks for dogmatizing Kirykos' heretical views, which was the Saturday of Bright Week, happens to be the day upon which the Orthodox Church celebrates the "Choir of Holy Kollyvades Fathers." Thus, on the day the Church of Christ in heaven and on earth praises the Kollyvades, the Kirykite hierarchy, without shame, walked all over them.

May God have mercy on them all, and help them repent and return to the Orthodox Tradition, which they so hypocritically claim to defend.

In Christ,

Stavros, a sinner