



July 5, 2006

Teleturgical Encyclical 18

The Priests and Deacons
the Holy Metropolis of Denver

Beloved in the Lord,

In my previous Teleturgical Encyclical 15, dated May 17, 2005, I provided guidance to you regarding the reception of converts from some Christian denominations through Chrismation, as well as concerning the eligibility of certain non-Orthodox Christians to marry an Orthodox Christian in the Mystery of Holy Matrimony.

Our policy, in these matters is determined by Holy Eparchial Synod of Bishops of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, following the protocols and practices established by the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. This provides a uniform practice and expresses the unity of the Orthodox Church. It is therefore inappropriate for any priest to take exception to this policy, and if he does so, he subjects himself to appropriate discipline.

The policy is that an individual who was previously baptized in water, in the "Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" by a heterodox Christian church or denomination that has an expressed belief in the Most Holy Trinity is to be received into the Orthodox Church by extreme oikonomia through Chrismation, not through re-baptism, and may be wed in the Mystery of Marriage to his/her Orthodox fiancée.

Thus, an individual baptized in one of the thirteen Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations cited in my Teleturgical Encyclical 15, dated May 17, 2005 may be received through Chrismation and/or may be married to an Orthodox spouse since it has been generally assumed that priests and ministers of these denominations conduct baptisms in conformance with the elements listed above.

However, in light of the recent report for study and reflection by leaders of the Presbyterian Church (USA) during their recent convention that allows baptisms in the names of different designations, this assumption may no longer be made. Many of you have also reported to me instances of these "alternative" formulas by clergy of other heterodox denominations.

The Presbyter must be very cautious and inquire of converts how they were "baptized." He should insist on seeing their baptismal certificate or a transcript of it. If necessary, he should contact the minister that conducted the baptism, and verify how it was performed. If it cannot be ascertained that the heterodox baptism was done in the name of the Holy Trinity, the convert must be properly baptized according to the rite of the Orthodox Church.

Among the supposedly "Trinitarian" formulas are the following, which the Orthodox Church cannot accept under any circumstances as constituting a recognizable "baptism:"

1 Sun, Light, and Burning Ray

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- 2 Compassionate Mother, Beloved Child, and Life-giving Womb
- 3 Giver, Gift, and Giving
- 4 Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier
- 5 Rainbow of Promise, Ark of Salvation, and Dove of Peace
- 6 Lover, Beloved, and the Love, and Binds Together Lover, and Beloved
- 7 Overflowing Font, Living Water, Flowing River
- 8 One From Whom, the One Through Whom,, and the One in Whom We Offer Our Praise
- 9 Rock, Cornerstone, and Temple
- 10 Fire That Consumes, Sword That Divides,, and Storm That Melts Mountains
- 11 Creator, Savior, Sanctifier
- 12 Rock, Redeemer, Friend
- 13 King of Glory, Prince of Peace, Spirit of Love
- 14 One Who Was, the One Who Is, and the One Who Is to Come

May our merciful Lord, Who called each of you to serve at His Holy Altar as a Presbyter, grant to you strength and wisdom to faithfully and properly discharge the fearsome duties of the priestly office.

With Paternal Blessings,



✠ Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver