

## Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) was founded in November of 1920, with the blessing of the Supreme Church Authority in Russia - at a joint session of the Holy Synod and the Supreme Church Council, under the chairmanship of St. Patriarch Tikhon (Decree № 362). The reason for the formation of an independent church administration abroad was that due to hostilities and the establishment of a natural border, communication with Patriarch Tikhon became impossible. Patriarch Tikhon himself was isolated and subjected to great pressures from the Soviet authorities.

**The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was founded not arbitrarily, but canonically, legally - by the decree of the Supreme Church Authority.**

This administration was recognized by all Local Churches and appealed to it as a representation of the Russian Church, since communication with Patriarch Tikhon was impossible.

After the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925 in the USSR, it was impossible to convene a Council and to form a canonical ecclesiastical authority, therefore, there were different hierarchs at the head of the Church administration, placed there not through the canonical, conciliar way, but "by designation". One of those "by designation" primates- a former Renovatianist, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), unable to withstand the pressure from the Soviet authorities- surrendered and submitted to them. In 1927, he issued a Declaration which testified to his complete submission to the communist authorities. Because of this betrayal, the ROCOR ceased its declarative submission to the center in Moscow, and, since then, has nothing to do with the Moscow administration. At the same time, the ROCOR preserved its spiritual unity with the persecuted Catacomb Church in the USSR, which also broke all ties with the "soviet church". Some parts of the Catacomb Church even declared an anathema on this "Soviet church".

One of the consequences of the subordination to the God-warring government was Metropolitan Sergius' (Stragorodsky) statement of February 15, 1930, in which he renounced all of Christ's martyrs and confessors, saying that there was no persecution of the Church in the USSR, and that all the priests and believers held in prisons and camps are there not because of their faith, but because of criminal offenses. This is the belief of the "Soviet church"- according to her primate- that there was not, and there is not one martyr nor confessor. This statement has not been denounced by the MP to this day.

On September 4, 1943, at a meeting with three "loyal" metropolitans, for political reasons and for the fulfillment of the demands of the allies in the war, Stalin decided to form an "Orthodox Church" subordinate to himself. Therefore, on September 8, 1943, according to his instructions- a Bishops' Council, made up of 19 bishops who were inclined to compromise, was held. (In 1917, the ROC had 163 bishops. In 1942 there were 28 left in the MP - not counting the foreign and catacomb bishops.) They "elected" the "Patriarch" Sergius (Stragorodsky), appointed by Stalin, and, as a result- the current Moscow Patriarchate was administratively founded.

**The Moscow Patriarchate was formed on September 8, 1943, uncanonically, according to the will of the Communist dictator Joseph Stalin, who is its founder.**

It was a **schism** in the Russian Orthodox Church, planned and implemented by the godless Communist government. This schism was initially completely under the control of the Soviet government, which set as its ultimate goal the complete destruction of religion.

The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia did not recognize this new administration, nor any of the subsequent "patriarchs" assigned by the Soviet authorities. After the war, a process of pressure and bribery by the Kremlin through the Moscow Patriarchate began, of the Primates of the Local Churches. Also, as a result of the active ecumenical participation of these primates themselves, intercommunication between ROCOR and the Local Churches was severed.

Since the ROCOR in the USSR was regarded as an anti-Soviet organization, the communist authorities did everything possible to discredit and abolish it. After the fall of the "iron curtain" from the former USSR, streams of Soviet people flooded the border, which then filled the parishes of the Church Abroad. As a result of these circumstances, the Kremlin has increased its efforts to eradicate our Church, with these efforts of eradication being led by President Vladimir Putin himself.

On May 17th 2007, the union of a part of the ROCOR with the Moscow Patriarchate was signed, despite the fact that the MP did not renounce that which was originally the reason for its separation from the ROCOR; however, on their part, the traitors shamefully renounced the past of the Church Abroad, and all of its Decrees and Resolutions in relation to the Moscow patriarchate. That is, those who went with the union, signed an Act of renunciation from the whole path of the ROCOR Fathers, for the sake of joining the MP. The Russian President Putin then said that only now the Civil War had ended, a war in which, respectively, the side of the Soviet power had won. At the same time, the Moscow Patriarchate recognized the Russian Church Abroad as canonical and not schismatic, despite the many years of slander. But, thank God - not all the members of the Church Abroad went with the union. The part which remained, is the part which has remained true to the behests of its Fathers and the Fathers of the Catacomb Church. The Church which remains faithful to Sacred Tradition, contains an uninterrupted continuity with the Church beginning with the times of Prince Vladimir up until our day, while the Moscow Patriarchate - at the moment of its formation, through an alliance with Stalin - fell away from the Body of Christ.

In all of its history, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia never fell into a schism, heresy or any other deviations, and to this day- remains the true guardian and successor of Holy Orthodoxy in its Russian tradition.

We have the freedom to choose, concerning the matter of reunification with other parts of Russian Orthodoxy, and in particular, with the Moscow Patriarchate. But we do not consider it possible to reunite with her, because she has departed from the path of the Holy Fathers and now remains: 1) in the **heresies of ecumenism** (that is, her leadership believes that it is necessary to unite with all heretics condemned by the Fathers of the Ecumenical Councils and the Fathers of the latter times, and, respectively, prays together with heretics despite the Church Canons and Rules), 2) in **Sergianism** (dependence on external political and anti-Christian forces- a consciously chosen lack of freedom in its actions and decisions), and 3) **in the infliction of moral and spiritual corruption (decay) of her higher hierarchy.**

The Russian Church Outside of Russia sincerely desires a complete recovery for the Moscow Patriarchate from everything that was introduced into it by the godless communist authorities. Remembering the words of the Apostle Paul: "A man that is an heretick, after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (Titus 3:10-11), the ROCOR does not consider the salvation of one's soul to be possible in whichever "heretical, depraved and sinful" community.

Therefore, according to the apostle's admonition, and "having turned away from heretics"- we stand in fraternal eucharistic unity with those who have preserved in purity the traditions of the Holy Fathers, including the like-minded with us in the faith Old Calendar Churches of Greece, Romania and Bulgaria.