

PRESS RELEASE

CONFERENCE CONCLUSION

On Thursday, the 24th of May 2018 the works of the 8th International Conference of Orthodox Theology were successfully concluded with the participation of numerous presenters, conferrers, and students. The Conference, “The Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church. Orthodox Theology in the 21st century» was organized by the Faculty of Theology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and under the auspices of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

The international academic community responded to its duty to contribute to the work of the Church with theological thought, research and specific suggestions by one hundred and twenty prominent presenters, members of the clergy as well as lay people coming from fifteen countries and twenty-five Schools of Theology, Institutes and research centers.

In an era of mental frailty, the 8th International Conference was an eloquent expression of vigorous theological discourse in relation to the irresponsible catchwords as well as the unfounded public appositions against the truth.

The Faculty of Theology of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, being consistent to its main focus, that is the dynamic approach and promotion of the Orthodox tradition, renewed all the previous decisions for cooperation among the Orthodox Theological Faculties. This cooperation will be expressed through similar regular conferences, on online platforms as well, in order to support the conciliar institution on a Pan-Orthodox level.

The theological community through the study, research, and dialogues puts itself at the disposal of the Orthodox Church for all the issues on the agenda, as it will be developed, for the next Pan-Orthodox Synod, in the hope that

additional crucial pastoral and canonical issues will be dealt with, as well as that its complete today's testimony will be clearly expressed.

During the Conference there were significant presentations by hierarchs and academics in which the obligation of the Church in the modern world, the crucial issues of Diaspora, and the position of the Serbian Church in the Holy and Great Council were analyzed.

Furthermore, there were approaches to ecclesiological matters, the reality and the perspective of the Holy and Great Council, its decisions and the future of theological studies, along with references to individual pastoral, theological, and historical parameters.

The official opening of the Conference took place at Saint George / Rotunda with the byzantine music concert by the Musical Ensemble "Romanos the Melodist" performing under the conductor Panagiotis Neochoritis, Archon Protopsaltis of the Great Church of Christ. The opening session took place at the Ceremony Hall of the Old Building of the Faculty of Philosophy and all the parallel sessions were held at the Faculty of Theology. The Conference was attended by His Eminence Elder Archbishop Demetrios of America, representing His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, by His Eminence Anthimos Metropolitan of Thessaloniki, Metropolitans of the New Lands, representatives from the Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem, Serbia and Romania, the Church of Greece, the Church of Cyprus, of Albania, and of Czech Lands. Participants came from Faculties of Theology from Russia, Georgia, and Bulgaria. Prominent Hierarchs from the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Churches were also present as well Deans from Theological Faculties, Heads of Schools of Theology, Professors, prominent representatives of other Christian families (Oriental Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran), of the WCC and numerous students.