

James George Jatras
Washington, DC

March 15, 2010

Via Fax & Email

To:

His Holiness, Patriarch Irinej,
President of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the
Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Belgrade
Information Office, Serbian Orthodox Church (Vladika Irinej of Backa),
Belgrade
The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Greece, Athens
Romfea (romfea.gr)

I respectfully request that the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church ensure the retraction of the false claim made in the Greek website *Romfea* and posted on the “official” website of the [Eparchy of Ras and Prizren](#) under the administration of Vladika Atanasije that I am an “Old Calendarist.” (“*Ο Τζάτρας, πού είναι παλαιοημερολογίτης, . . .*”) In the *Romfea* article it is stated that the information contained was received from the Information Office of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which is headed by Vladika Irinej of Backa (*Να αναφερθεί, ότι του Γραφείου Ενημερώσεως της Ιεράς Συνόδου της Σερβικής Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας, προΐσταται ο Μητροπολίτης Μπάτσκας κ. Ειρηναίος Μπούλοβιτς*), whose picture appears on the *Romfea* page with the offending article. Because such attacks on me are used as a tool to further the systematic campaign of defamation being waged by the Information Office against Vladika Artemije of Ras and Prizren, I feel compelled to ask that this falsehood be retracted without delay.

I am, and have been for three decades, a layman at the parish of Saint Katherine’s in northern Virginia, under the authority of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, in turn under the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. For many years I taught catechetical school for youth and adults. Saint Katherine’s, as with the rest of the Greek Archdiocese, is under the New Calendar. Like many other people in the New Calendar jurisdictions, I believe the Old Calendar is patristic and preferable to the New, and that we should return to it. I share the concerns of many about the false ecumenism and modernism often associated with the New Calendar. But I am not and have never been under the authority of any Old Calendar jurisdiction, Greek or otherwise.

It seems to me strange to defend myself against the accusation of “Old Calendarism” in a Serbian context, since the Serbian Church, to its credit, is on the Old Calendar. But it is clear that this accusation is meant to suggest that I am some kind of “schismatic” or “fanatic,” as some consider the image of the “Greek Old Calendarist.” This can be considered only part of a conscious effort to defame not only me but Vladika Artemije, as I have noted above.

If the falsehood about me is any indication, the rest of the article is likewise unfactual. My family has been in the United States for a century, now into our fourth generation. I do not read Greek, but I am reliably informed that the *Romfea* article, in which I am only briefly featured, is full of the inaccuracies and slanders about Vladika Artemije, of a type with which we are now very familiar. These include the suggestion in the article that Vladika Artemije was suspended from administration of his Eparchy only *after* a meeting with members of the Sabor in Belgrade on February 13 (not February 11, as reported in *Romfea*) and his subsequent alleged failure to cooperate; in fact, as stated by Vladika Irinej elsewhere, the meeting was solely to inform Vladika Artemije of a decision that *already* had been made in his absence. Likewise disturbing is the suggestion that a “*final solution* to the problem” (“*Η τελική λύση του προβλήματος . . .*”) of Vladika Artemije will be addressed by the Sabor at the end of April. Chillingly, the Greek expression, no less than the English and the Serbian (*Коначно решење*), conveys the meaning of *Endlösung*, which is exactly the fate being prepared by the Muslim Albanians and their western sponsors for the Orthodox Serbs of Kosovo and Metohija, and for which Vladka Artemije’s removal is a necessary precondition. For these reasons alone, aside from the inaccurate assertion about me, the *Romfea* article should be removed at once and appropriate retractions issued.

With all appropriate respect, I firmly ask that on behalf of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church the Information Office immediately (a) issue a statement disavowing the claim that I am an “Old Calendarist,” and (b) remove the *Romfea* article from the Eparchy website with the posting of a correction. *Romfea* is likewise requested to remove the article from the website and issue a correction.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jatras', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James George Jatras