

# A Response to Some Distortions by Archbishop Gregory Concerning the GOC

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Anastasios Hudson

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## Introduction

At the onset, I want to say that I have an extreme dislike for engaging in polemics. Nowadays, I normally do not engage in public refutations of false accusations; I spent too many hours of my life doing so in the 2000s, and it caused me a lot of consternation. Perhaps some good came out of it, but I found it impossible to answer every critic, and every argument. Nowadays, I don't mind writing broadly in article or book format to address trends and events, but the point-by-point refutation style of responding so common online is something I do not have the stomach for anymore.

That being said, yet another person has contacted me and asked me about the accusations found on the website of the *soi-disant* Archbishop Gregory of Colorado pertaining to the GOC (referred to there as "GOC Kallinikos").<sup>1</sup> I was preparing to respond in private, when I decided that if this individual has these questions, and others like him have had these questions in the past, then there are probably yet still more who wonder, but have not expressed their doubts. For this reason, I am going to write a public response, in point-by-point fashion.

## Point-by-Point Refutation

For the purposes of this refutation, the original text on Archbishop Gregory's website will be produced in indented quotation style, in italics. Quotations from other sources will be reproduced in indented quotation style, but with normal text. I will refer to Archbishop Gregory by his title of archbishop, despite the fact that he is not recognized as such by the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians or its sister Churches, for the sake of politeness and to avoid confusion.<sup>2</sup> The text begins:

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.trueorthodoxy.org/schismatics\\_kiousites.shtml](http://www.trueorthodoxy.org/schismatics_kiousites.shtml), accessed October 7, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> The GOC and its sister Churches would consider Archbishop Gregory to still be an archimandrite (priest-monk), as that was the last rank he held before being excommunicated in 1997 and departing into sundry other jurisdictions. He was ordained a bishop and elevated to archbishop by the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church (ROAC), whose first-hierarch was deposed by ROCOR, albeit for political reasons. While we have not re-ordained at least one cleric I know of coming from the ROAC, we can only consider the status of someone who has departed from us in the context of his repentance and application to return, not *per se* as he currently exists apart from us. In addition, the ROAC removed Archbishop Gregory in 2004, so he is essentially a *vagante* bishop at this point.

*The GOC Kallinikos is a group that fell into schism in 1994 when it was led by Archbishop Chrysostomos II Kiouisis. His successor at the present time is Archbishop Kallinikos of Achaia.*

First of all, the schism he is talking about in the Lamian schism, which happened in 1995, not 1994.<sup>3</sup>

What is ironic is that then-Archimandrite Gregory left the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) after the December 1995 concelebration of its first-hierarchy Metropolitan Vitaly with the first-hierarchy of the Synod in Resistance, Metropolitan Cyprian, whom he considered to be a deposed heretic.<sup>4</sup> He applied to the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians (GOC) under Archbishop Chrysostomos II, and was received in March 1996. He remained a part of the GOC until 1997, when he was excommunicated by the GOC.<sup>5</sup>

By now claiming that the GOC fell into schism in 1994 (1995), he must admit that by his reasoning, he became a schismatic and was outside the Church from 1996 to 1997, the period that he was in the GOC. Wishing to whitewash this episode, he simultaneously tries to champion this move to the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece in general in 1996, while simultaneously claiming that he specifically joined the Synod of Archbishop Chrysostomos II out of ignorance of its true positions—absolving him of guilt for picking the “wrong synod” and justifying his later moves to be under Metropolitan Kallinikos of the Twelve Islands,<sup>6</sup> and finally the breakaway Lamians, at a later date.

Finally, the present successor of Archbishop Chrysostomos II, who reposed in 2010, is Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens (not Achaia—he was previously the Metropolitan of Achaia, before his elevation to Archbishop).

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<sup>3</sup> Vladimir Moss, *Thirty Years of Trial: The True Orthodox Christians of Greece, 1970-2000*, Surrey, United Kingdom, 2005, [http://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/downloads/257\\_THE\\_TOC\\_OF\\_GREECE\\_1970\\_2000.pdf](http://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/downloads/257_THE_TOC_OF_GREECE_1970_2000.pdf), pg. 45-50, accessed October 9, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Anonymous, *The Life Story of Archbishop Gregory*, Chapter 35: Father Gregory Joins the Greek Old Calendar Church, [http://www.archbishopgregory.info/chapter\\_35\\_father\\_gregory\\_joins\\_greek\\_old\\_calendar\\_church.shtml](http://www.archbishopgregory.info/chapter_35_father_gregory_joins_greek_old_calendar_church.shtml), accessed October 9, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians, “Protocol 507,” October 17, 1997. <https://listserv.okstate.edu/scripts/wa.exe?A2=ind9710E&L=ORTHODOX&P=R4574&1=ORTHODOX&9=A&I=-3&J=on&d=No+Match%3BMatch%3BMatches&z=4>, accessed October 9, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Metropolitan Kallinikos of the Twelve Islands was one of the bishops who sided with the Archbishop in 1995 against the Lamians, but whom Archbishop Gregory’s *Life Story* attempts to portray as having been later removed by the Synod for opposing Fr. Pavlos Stratigeas’s elevation to the episcopacy in 1998. The fact is that Metropolitan Kallinikos of the Twelve Islands issued statements that were Apollinarian in nature, and was condemned for this—as surprising as it may sound in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Fr. Gregory went under this Metropolitan, but later left him and went under the Lamians. His brief sojourn under Metropolitan Kallinikos of the Twelve Islands is omitted from his *Life Story*, but is proven by the fact that books published during this time bear the name of this Metropolitan as having given his blessing for their publication.

*As the leader of his church, Archbishop Chrysostomos broke the unity of the Synod into two factions, and with half of his bishops supporting him, set up with them a secret parallel Synod and incorporated it under the same name, in order to funnel Church funds into this shadow corporation. In this way, he attempted to appropriate all church and monastery property to himself and to run the Church in a totalitarian way. When the shadow corporation was discovered, the Synod split. Kiouisis was the cause of this schism due to his breaking of the canons[sic].*

People who do not have an understanding of Greek property, ecclesiastical, and non-profit law are naturally going to have a hard time following arguments about this issue. The GOC was not legally recognized as a church before 1986, and as such, the church and monastic properties were registered in various ways—under associations, by private individuals, etc. In 1995, there was an attempt to rein in the existence of two separate corporations each controlling church properties, dating back to a division in the 1980s which was resolved by a fantastic and God-pleasing union, wherein the factions reunited and the period of divisions (1974-1984) mostly ended. Archbishop Chrysosotomos II was elected to shepherd the newly-re-united church, precisely because he had remained aloof from the nonsense occurring in this period (he did not attend synod meetings for eleven years).

Even after the reunion, however, there were still problems regarding property, and these issues simmered until 1995, when six bishops left the GOC Synod and formed a counter-synod, known colloquially as the Lamians. Out of these six bishops, two quickly returned to the GOC in repentance, two went on their own way and eventually fell into the heresy of Ecumenism, and the remaining two ordained more bishops. In 2004, these two elected one of these newly-ordained bishops, Bishop Makarios, as their Archbishop of Athens, which is why this group is called the “GOC Makarios” on Archbishop Gregory’s website. Archbishop Gregory formerly was a big fan of them, until they joined with his arch-nemesis HOCNA in 2013.

Historical minutiae aside, the fact is, *one cannot spilt from his Synod over reasons other than of faith...a property dispute is not a valid reason to set up a separate church synod—ever. Those who left were therefore the schismatics.*<sup>7</sup>

*His faction began to stray permanently from the Faith due to what occurred in 1998, when his “synod” endorsed and consecrated a bishop, Archimandrite Paul of Astoria, N.Y. He believed and implemented the Cyprianite heresy of communing New Calendarists. Metropolitan Paul of Astoria, now the so-called ‘Metropolitan of North and South America’, held and still holds to this day, heretical beliefs and practices the of giving communion to Ecumenists (see [World Orthodoxy](#)). Consequently, the Kiouisite schism also bears the taint of having endorsed Cyprianism, and falls under the 1983 Anathema which condemns the heresy Ecumenism [sic].*

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<sup>7</sup> I personally pointed this out to Archbishop Gregory on the telephone, on June 6, 2013, when he had called me trying to convince me to join his church.

Those who become familiar with Archbishop Gregory and his writings will note that he displays a disproportionate and curious animus against the group of Old Calendarist bishops which formerly constituted the Synod in Resistance (SiR), headed by Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Phyle (whom he generally refers to as the “Cyprianites”).<sup>8</sup> This was due to the SiR’s views concerning New Calendarists held at the time, which Archbishop Gregory unbelievably and quite hyperbolically considered as a form of Ecumenism!<sup>9</sup> This is quite ironic, given the tireless efforts the SiR dedicated toward exposing the heresy of Ecumenism, and witnessing to Orthodox tradition.

Archbishop Gregory also has been extremely antagonistic over the years toward Metropolitan Pavlos (Stratigeas), the retired former Metropolitan of America, who at that time was the chancellor of the Diocese of Astoria for Metropolitan Petros. Archbishop Gregory’s charge against him is the same as with the former SiR: accusations of being crypto-ecumenist, and that New Calendarists were given communion (in this case, at St. Markella’s Cathedral, in Astoria, New York).

The truth is, however, that it was a known fact that Metropolitan Petros not only communed New Calendarists, but thought that they still possessed grace—although he was not a subscriber to the ecclesiological views of Metropolitan Cyprian, as I explain in my book, *Metropolitan Petros of Astoria: A Microcosm of the Old Calendar Movement in America*.<sup>10</sup> Archbishop Gregory knew the truth about Metropolitan Petros’s views and practices, and joined the GOC anyway.

At any rate, before the GOC Synod eventually elected and ordained Fr. Pavlos a bishop, there certainly were some concerns that he was soft on Ecumenism, due to a newspaper interview he gave in 1994 which seemed to suggest that he believed that Patriarch Bartholemew was ultimately the canonical leader of Orthodoxy. Fr. Pavlos repented of the interview soon after it came out, and stated that he did not believe some of the things that were later attributed to him on account of his “thinking out loud” approach during the

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<sup>8</sup> The Synod in Resistance reunited with the GOC in March 2014.

<sup>9</sup> The Synod in Resistance did not condemn the New Calendarists as without sacramental grace and many of its bishops held an opinion that considered the New Calendarists part of the Church—albeit a sick part. While the GOC would agree with Archbishop Gregory that these views were incorrect, Archbishop Gregory took his disagreement to an unhealthy extreme, frequently denouncing the SiR vocally, despite the fact that they were a small minority of the total population of Genuine Orthodox Christians, and had little if no contact with him in the past. To label them as ecumenist for not denying the grace of the New Calendarists’ sacraments is to turn an opinion into an article of faith, and to ignore the SiR’s prodigious work in the area of anti-ecumenism and traditionalism. The bishops of the former SiR gave up any teachings which conflicted with the teaching of the GOC when they united with it in March 2014, and signed a joint ecclesiological statement, *The True Orthodox Church and the Heresy of Ecumenism: Doctrinal and Canonical Issues*, <http://www.hotca.org/orthodoxy/theological-texts/532-the-true-orthodox-church-and-the-heresy-of-ecumenism-dogmatic-and-canonical-issues>, accessed October 10, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Anastasios Hudson, *Metropolitan Petros of Astoria: A Microcosm of the Old Calendar Movement in America*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014.

interview.<sup>11</sup> Again, this did not stop Fr. Gregory from entering in to communion with Metropolitan Petros and Fr. Pavlos in 1996; it was only when it came time for a new bishop to be elected that there suddenly was a problem.

In part as a result of the interview, the GOC Synod made certain demands of Fr. Pavlos, should he be ordained a bishop, such as that he stop communing New Calendarists at St. Markella's Cathedral and reiterate his Orthodox confession of faith, which he did. He made several good faith efforts to stop the communing of New Calendarists at St. Markella's, such as promulgating a 2002 Encyclical<sup>12</sup> which forbade the practice.

There were some serious pastoral concerns, however, which mitigated a vocal and public approach at St. Markella's. The preferred approach at the cathedral was to address these concerns in private. There were also some people who continued to slip through the cracks here and there, but what is clear is that these were *exceptions* in some cases and *mistakes* in others (such as when people misrepresented themselves, and were not properly investigated by the clergy beforehand).<sup>13</sup> Metropolitan Pavlos retired in 2013, at any rate, and his successor Metropolitan Demetrius has made it clear that any vestigial exceptions to policy occurring at the cathedral should and must cease. At his enthronement in May 2014, a clear message was read before Holy Communion that to approach, one must be a member of the Holy Synod of Archbishop Kallinikos, or one of our sister Churches.

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<sup>11</sup> One must appreciate the strong attachment Greeks have towards the institution of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was the locus of Hellenic identity throughout the Turkish occupation. The fall of the Ecumenical Patriarchate produced mixed feelings in the hearts of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece, which continues to produce tension between their ecclesiastical and cultural sensibilities. In the interview, Fr. Pavlos spoke about the institution of the Patriarchate in positive terms, but gave the impression that he supported its incumbent, who is an active Ecumenist. Fr. Pavlos later clarified his intentions in private letters, which I have copies of, and this satisfied his ecclesiastical superiors at the time.

<sup>12</sup> Metropolitan Pavlos of America, "Encyclical Regarding Holy Communion," December 5/18, 2002, <http://www.hotca.org/documents/encyclicals/152-encyclical-regarding-holy-communion>, accessed October 10, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Part of the confusion is that Metropolitan Petros and Metropolitan Pavlos allowed the use of economy at St. Markella's, and received New Calendarists generally by confession and profession of faith in private, versus the synodically-approved practice of chismating them. This is certainly within the prerogative of the local bishop, as I will explain below in my comments on Trullo Canon 102. However, for those who have a black-and-white view of Orthodoxy, the fact that these people were not chrismated means to them that they never really converted; hence, it was easy to claim that New Calendarists were being communed at St. Markella's. In some cases, children were given communion without being questioned, and these children turned out to be of New Calendarist parents. On Pascha, over 3000 people show up at the Cathedral, most of whom leave after they get the fire (an unfortunate modern Greek practice among the lax), so anyone staying until 3:30 am when communion is distributed is presumed to be a member of the parish, which is when other New Calendarists might have "slipped through the cracks" and been communed. These examples are illustrative of the types of exceptions and mistakes that occurred at the cathedral during the tenure of Metropolitan Pavlos, who inherited one situation from his uncle, while having to deal with contrary demands from the Synod in Greece. It was difficult to maneuver, he did the best he could, and he will ultimately give account for his decisions; but in any event, they were *not* indicative of heresy on his part. For the record, Metropolitan Pavlos *did* on occasion chrismate New Calendarists, and ordered me to do so when I served as his priest from 2008-2013.

That being said, even intentionally communing New Calendarists would not be a heresy. It is an abuse, a canonical violation, and a sin, but not a heresy. Metropolitan Pavlos did not believe that New Calendarists are “ailing members of the Church,” as the former Synod in Resistance opined in some of its publications (but which they rejected during their dialogue with the GOC), nor did he think it was okay for them to stay in the New Calendar Church. I asked him directly if he thought that New Calendarists have grace, and his response was, “I sure hope so, for their sake...but I don’t see how Metropolitan Philip of the Antiochians can be an Orthodox bishop.” One can see in his measured words a *hope* for the best, while concurrently accepting the *reality* of the situation. The fact is, over the decades since the Calendar change, there have been different opinions about the status of the New Calendarists, especially as some of them seem to move back toward Tradition, while others move forward toward Ecumenism. The mistake of the reposed Metropolitan Cyprian was to overly qualify these hopes and wishes into an ecclesiological position paper, but these opinions still never constituted heresy, and have been withdrawn by his successors.

Metropolitan Pavlos, as did his uncle, instead believed that a lenient approach would bear fruit in getting people, who were often ignorant of these things, into the Church—their concern was therefore not one of trying to curry favor with the New Calendarists, as Archbishop Gregory has insisted, but rather one of trying to find the best way to bring these people in to the GOC!<sup>14</sup> St. Markella’s is a unique case in the American Orthodox scene; it is one of the only places left where when the church bell rings, people walk down the street from their homes to attend the services. It is one of the last remaining “neighborhood” Orthodox parishes. Many of these people go to St. Markella’s precisely because it is traditional and like their village parish in Greece, but are unaware of the problems of Ecumenism, the New Calendar, etc.

The soft approach was directed at these people. There are, in fact, numerous families in St. Markella’s who were brought over by the gentle approach of Metropolitans Petros and Pavlos. The intent was never to give out the Holy Mysteries willy-nilly to anyone, but rather to not chase people away from the Church before giving them a chance to truly encounter it. Different people had different approaches to the pastoral problem of bringing New Calendarists into the Church; eventually, the Synod ruled on the matter, and the practice at St. Markella’s was gradually brought into line. That is how conciliarity works in real life.

*After Kiouisis accomplished [sic] the ordination of Paul of Astoria, he proceeded to ordain five other young bishops known as the “baby bishops”, because, they were all cononically[sic] under age; two of them were his nephews and one of these two was even in his twenties! He did this*

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<sup>14</sup> It should be noted for completeness’ sake that elsewhere, Archbishop Gregory insists that Metropolitans Petros and Pavlos communed New Calendarists in order to get their money. I can testify that the passersby and occasional visitors to St. Markella’s do not donate large sums of money. It is the core Old Calendarist families—those whose families never abandoned the Old Calendar, and those who have returned to the Old Calendar—who support the Church. Any desire to get more people into the Church is in order to save their souls, not get a few extra bucks.

*not only to fill the ranks of the bishops who were lost due to his schism, but also to maintain complete control of the synod by installing those who would always vote to support him.*

First of all, the canons do not specify the canonical age for ordination to the episcopacy. They do state that a subdeacon must be 20,<sup>15</sup> a deacon 25,<sup>16</sup> a priest 30,<sup>17</sup> and that a deaconess must be 40,<sup>18</sup> but they do not state that a bishop must be 35, as I have seen Archbishop Gregory state elsewhere.

In *The Rudder*, a collection of canons compiled by St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite with commentary in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and translated into English in 1957 by D. Cummings, there is a footnote which states:

The bishops when ordained must be of advanced age, that is, not less than fifty years old, except only where a small province is involved wherein one of advanced age cannot be found, according to Ap. Inj. Bk. II, ch. I, and according to the 52<sup>nd</sup> epistle of St. Cyprian, or even above the thirtieth year, according to Justinian's Novel 137.<sup>19</sup>

What this footnote demonstrates is that the canons themselves do not state a canonical age for ordination to the episcopacy, and as such, other authorities have given their opinion or ruling depending on circumstances. There is therefore no basis at all to the allegation that the so-called "baby bishops" were below the canonical age.

At this point, it behooves us to take a broad look into the nature of the Canonical Tradition. In seminary, we were taught to use the term Canonical Tradition, as opposed to Canon Law, because the canons are not laws, but rather spiritual guidelines that must be applied to the individual and by circumstance. By guideline, we not imply that the canons are *optional*, but rather that the spiritual truths underlying them must be applied in a context, by a competent spiritual authority. This is made clear by Canon 102 of the Council of Trullo, which states:

Those who have received from God authority to bind and loose must take into consideration the quality of the sin and the willingness and readiness of the sinner to return, and thus offer a treatment suited to the sin in question, lest by employing an immoderate adjustment in one direction or the other, they fail in compassing the salvation of the one ailing. For the diseases called sin are not simple affairs, but on the contrary, various and complex, and they produce many offshoots of the injury, as a result whereof the evil becomes widely diffused, and it progresses until it is checked by the power of the one treating it. So that a person who

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<sup>15</sup> Council in Trullo, Canon 15. *The Rudder*, D. Cummings, ed., Chicago: Orthodox Christian Education Society, 1957, p. 308.

<sup>16</sup> Council in Trullo, Canon 14. *The Rudder*, p. 307.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *The Rudder*, p. 3. N.B.: The footnotes of *The Rudder* are from the English translation, and not part of the original text of St. Nikodemos.

is professing the science of treating ailments as a spiritual physician ought first to examine the disposition of the sinner and ascertain whether he tends to health, or on the contrary, provokes the illness to attack him by his own actions; at the same time bearing in mind that he must provide against any reversion, and considering whether the patient is struggling against the physician, and whether the ulcer of the soul is being aggravated by the application of the remedy; and accordingly to mete out mercy in due proportion to the merits of the case. For all that matters to God and to the person undertaking pastoral leadership consists in the recovery of the straying sheep, and in healing the one wounded by the serpent. Accordingly, he ought not to drive the patient to the verge of despair, nor give him rein to dissoluteness and contempt of life, but, on the contrary, in at least one way at any rate, either by resorting to extreme and stringent remedies, or to gentler and milder ones, to curb the disease, and to put up a fight to heal the ulcer for the one tasting the fruits of repentance, and wisely helping him on the way to the splendid rehabilitation to which the man is being invited. We must therefore be versed in both, that is both the requirements of accuracy and the requirements of custom. In the case of those who are obstinately opposed to extremities, we must follow the formula handed down to us, just as sacred Basil teaches us outright.<sup>20</sup>

The canons are thus spiritual medicine for the soul, which can be modified through leniency (*economia*) or through strictness (*akriveia*) by the one with authority to apply them, not immutable rules and regulations to be forced onto someone, with no regard for what it might do to him.

Lest anyone think that this canon only applies to penances, and not canons about discipline, it should be emphasized that disciplines such as the age of the clergy at ordination are precisely spiritual concerns—so that the candidate is prepared himself for the office, and so that the people under his charge will be under the care of a competent spiritual physician. For this reason, the bishops have the right to ordain someone when they are younger than the canonical age, if needed, and they have the right to make a candidate wait longer if he is not prepared.

In the history of the Church, there have been numerous examples of clergy ordained below 30 years old to the priesthood, or 25 years old to the diaconate. Even assuming that the canons were inflexible regulations for the sake of the argument, the violation of them would not amount to heresy. If it did, then the entire Orthodox world would be in heresy, and there would be no more Church left on Earth, because of the numerous times this and other canons have been violated (whether the violation be real or imagined) over the centuries. The fact is, canons are flexible, and the breaking of a canon by a bishop is not reason enough to break from him, because the situation must be judged by a synod. There must be a divergence in faith, not solely in practice, for an individual to leave a bishop, or a bishop to leave a synod, unilaterally.

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<sup>20</sup> Council in Trullo, Canon 102. *The Rudder*, p. 409.



One final point to make is that in other cultures, one's age is counted by the year one is in, so a baby is in his "first year" and someone who is going to turn 17 is in his "eighteenth year" which, upon turning what we consider 18, will then be in his "nineteenth year." That is common in Greek. As such, the bishop that was ordained allegedly "in his twenties" was ordained at the age of 29, a few months before he turned 30, and was thus in his "thirtieth year."

In regards to the assertion that Archbishop Chrysostomos II ordained these bishops to fill the ranks of those lost, it is obvious that the Archbishop and Synod would want to ordain bishops for widowed dioceses, but the fact is that of the departing six bishops:

1. Two (Metropolitans Justin and Stephanos) had quickly returned to the Synod, certainly before the ordinations of the "baby bishops";
2. Two had departed into schism and later heresy (Metropolitan Paisios and Bishop Vikentios), and Metropolitan Pavlos had been assigned their diocese;
3. The two remaining (Metropolitans Kallinikos of Lamia and Euthymius) did not take their entire dioceses with them when they departed.

In reality, Archbishop Gregory has no way of knowing whether the candidates ordained were pliable, and whether Archbishop Chrysostomos II ordained them with that intention in mind.

*To the present day, this synod of Archbishop Kallinikos<sup>21</sup> has the reputation of being Cyprianite in their [sic] ecclesiology by the administration of the Holy Mysteries to the Ecumenist New Calendarists [sic] of both Greece and the United States.*

Having a "reputation" of being something does not mean that someone is, in fact, that thing. Accusations against clergy, especially bishops, must be documented, proven, and judged by a competent authority. The Synod of Archbishop Chrysostomos II condemned what Archbishop Gregory refers to as "Cyprianism" in the 1980s when it first originated, and everything that Archbishop Gregory knows about the subject ultimately comes from them, yet he would have us believe that a mere decade after condemning so-called Cyprianism, the Synod suddenly and completely changed course and now espoused it.

Again, then-Archimandrite Gregory joined the GOC under Archbishop Chrysostomos II in 1996, when Metropolitan Petros was part of the Synod, and it was well-known that he openly gave communion to New Calendarists, yet we are supposed to believe that it was only when his successor Fr. Pavlos was ordained bishop, that the Synod fell into heresy, even though Metropolitan Pavlos was the one who actually started to put the brakes on his predecessor's policy, at the Synod's direction?

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<sup>21</sup> For clarification purposes, Archbishop Kallinikos is the successor to Archbishop Chrysostomos II, who reposed in 2010.

As I touched upon above, Metropolitan Petros did not subscribe to what is referred to as “Cyprianism,” even though he gave communion to New Calendarists, because in his mind, the two things were not the same. Furthermore, the so-called Cyprianites, or more properly, the Synod in Resistance, itself forbade the communing of New Calendarists in a synodal decision. ROCOR itself at various times communed New Calendarists, and gradually stopped the practice. As such, one cannot claim that by communing New Calendarists, one is therefore a “Cyprianite.”

*In March of 2014, this schismatic synod of the G.O.C. of Greece under Archbishop Kallinikos and the heretical synod of the Cyprianites, the Synod of Resistors, entered into union with each other. This was accomplished with no repentance from either side. Two illegitimate and schismatic groups united to form one synod led by Kallinikos.*

*Because of all of the above uncanonical actions, this group finds a place on this site with schismatics and heretics.*

The union of March 2014 was really a fantastic event in the life of the Church. Many of the beliefs which Archbishop Gregory finds issue with were laid to rest by the humble actions of the bishops of the Synod in Resistance, who dismantled their synod and completely joined the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians under Archbishop Kallinikos.<sup>22</sup> This also brought the GOC into communion with the Romanian Old Calendar Orthodox Church, and that portion of the ROCOR that did not enter communion with Moscow in 2007, headed by Metropolitan Agafangel (more commonly referred to by the acronym ROCA: Russian Orthodox Church Abroad; both this and ROCOR were used historically). For the first time in decades, the Genuine Orthodox of Greece, Russia, Romania, the United States, and elsewhere are united in one common Church, manifesting opposition to the heresy of Ecumenism together. Glory to God for all things!

## Final Thoughts

There is always a risk in replying to people like Archbishop Gregory of getting dragged into an Internet war. There is also the risk of giving more credence to someone than is due. The conclusion of following Archbishop Gregory’s line of reasoning is to end up in a dark place—a place of suspicion, constant “heresy hunting,” spiritual fatigue, and either prideful delusion or despair. I have known several people who have gone through his jurisdiction, who have ended up burning out altogether from Genuine Orthodoxy, and who are now in New Calendar jurisdictions. Others are not even Orthodox any longer.

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<sup>22</sup> For documents pertaining to the union, please see *The True Orthodox Church and the Heresy of Ecumenism*, previously cited, and *The Ecclesiastical Union of the Orthodox Community in Resistance with the Church of the True Orthodox Christians of Greece: Objections, Concerns, and their Resolution*, <http://www.hotca.org/news/miscellaneous/585-the-ecclesiastical-union-of-the-orthodox-community-in-resistance-with-the-church-of-the-true-orthodox-christians-of-greece-objections.-concerns.-and-their-resolution>, accessed October 10, 2014, for a discussion of what was discussed, how it was handled, and what was agreed upon in order to form this union.

Archbishop Gregory is a talented individual, in terms of iconography, assembling a team of people to publish books and print calendars, and he has established a beautiful monastery in Colorado. He is prodigious about visiting prison inmates, and has a strong missionary drive. All of these things are vital for the furtherance of Orthodoxy in America. However, his separate church, disparagement of others, and the isolation he creates among his followers corrode his witness.

We must pray for Archbishop Gregory and his small flock, that they will come out of their isolation and return to the Church, from which they are unfortunately in schism. They have backed themselves into an untenable corner, and anyone who takes seriously the exaggerated and often slanderous claims that Archbishop Gregory puts on his website—mostly hearsay or restating of half-truths—will end up in the same place. Please! For the love of God, stop this nonsense! It is not too late, either for the inquirer, or for Archbishop Gregory himself, to change his trajectory! There is another way!



Anastasios Hudson is an Orthodox Christian author, speaker, and web developer living in Reston, Virginia. He is the author of [Metropolitan Petros of Astoria: A Microcosm of the Old Calendar Movement in America](#) (2014). Your purchase of this book, which is available at the low price of 7.99 (print) and 4.99 (eBook) will help him support his family! His personal website is [AnastasiosHudson.com](#), and features over 175 free articles discussing the Orthodox Christian faith.