



# GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

## ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΦΡΑΓΚΙΣΚΟΥ

### Minutes of the San Francisco Metropolis Ecclesiastical Tribunal Spiritual Court of First Instance

In the matter of V. Rev. Archimandrite Michael Rymer

January 19, 2006

Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco, California

#### **Complainant:**

**Respondent:** V. Rev. Archimandrite Michael Rymer

At the request of the members of the Court, a preparatory session began with prayer at 10:10 AM. Present at this time were His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco, Presiding over the Court; the Reverend Demetrios-Earl Cantos, Chancellor; and four Senior Clergy members of the Tribunal.

Following prayer, the Reverend Constantine C. Pappademos was appointed secretary of the proceedings. Subsequently, the members of the Court reviewed the document entitled: "Guidelines for the Conduct of the Metropolis Spiritual Court in the Matters of Clergy Discipline."

The members then individually reviewed several documents pertinent to the case, including the Notices to both Fr. Rymer and to Mr. requesting their appearance before the Tribunal.

A discussion of the case history then followed. The Chancellor emphasized to the members that they technically constituted an administrative body. He also reminded the members that during the proceedings, they were to adhere to ecclesiastical/spiritual standards.

#### **Call Tribunal to Order**

Metropolitan Gerasimos called the Tribunal to order at 10:55 AM with the appearance of Fr. Rymer before the Tribunal.

#### **Opening Prayer**

Metropolitan Gerasimos offered prayers and Father Pappademos read from the Gospel of Saint Matthew 18: 15-18.

#### **Explanation of the Process**

The Chancellor read the document, "Guidelines for the Conduct of the Metropolis Spiritual Court in the Matters of Clergy Discipline" aloud in its entirety.

#### **Introduction of the members of the Court**

Metropolitan Gerasimos introduced the Members of the Court:

- Rev. Protopresbyter John Asimacopoulos, Saint Nicholas, San Jose, Ca.
- Rev. Protopresbyter Thomas Paris, Ascension Cathedral, Oakland, Ca.
- Rev. Protopresbyter Constantine Efstathiou, Nativity of Christ, Novato, Ca.
- Rev. Ekonomos Constantine C. Pappademos, Saint Katherine, Elk Grove, Ca.

## **The Proceedings:**

### **Presentation of the Charges**

The Chancellor presented the charge against Father Rymer as follows: "The act of fornication by a member of the clergy (Father Rymer) with a layman

### **Examination of Complainant**

In the absence of the complainant, the Chancellor read excerpts, details and the chronology of events from the letter sent to the Metropolis by the attorney for Mr. [redacted], dated August 31, 2005.

### **Examination of Respondent**

- Father Rymer was then asked to respond. He read from a prepared text in which he:
- Acknowledged that many of the accusations were true, but consensual.
  - Claimed that [redacted] initiated contact and began the seduction.
  - Regretted the [redacted]
  - Had repented of the sin with this man" and had received absolution.
  - Asked the Spiritual Court to allow him to be buried as a Priest and to allow his present disability stipend from the Archdiocese to continue.
  - Indicated that he never intended to hurt the Church or any one else with his actions.

### **Examination of Witnesses**

No witnesses were presented to the Court by either the Complainant or the Respondent.

### **Deliberation by the Court**

Father Rymer and the Chancellor adjourned to another room while the members of the Court deliberated for approximately 1 ½ hours.

### **Rendering of the Decision**

Metropolitan Gerasimos, on behalf of the members of the Spiritual Court of First Instance in the matter of V. Rev. Archimandrite Michael Rymer rendered the following unanimous decision:

"Because of Mr. [redacted] failure to appear before the Tribunal or to provide any witnesses, we are unable to determine the veracity of the allegations contained in the letter from his attorney dated August 31, 2005 which initiated these proceedings."

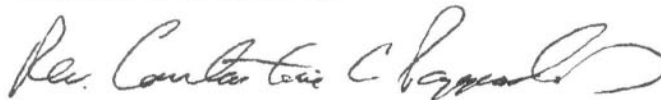
"Being sensitive to all the parties involved in this case, as well as to the good of the Church, and upon examination of all the evidence presented, the decision of this Spiritual Court of First Instance is to recommend to the Holy Eparchial Synod, the Spiritual Court of Second Instance, that Father Michael Rymer be returned to the-status or rank of layman.

"Furthermore, it is recommended that the Church makes available its pastoral and spiritual care to Father Michael Rymer and to Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ for the ultimate redemption of both parties."

**Closing Prayer**

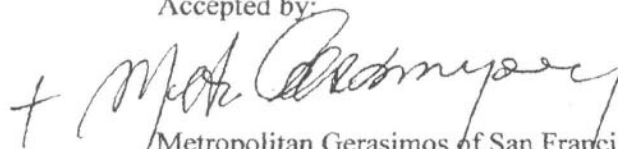
Metropolitan Gerasimos offered the closing prayer and the Court was adjourned at 1:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:



Reverend Constantine C. Pappademos  
Spiritual Court Secretary of the Proceedings

Accepted by:



Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco  
Presiding Officer of the Proceedings