

THE ACTS OF THE
EIGHTH ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL



The Holy Eighth Ecumenical Council.
Contemporary wall-painting in St. Steven's Monastery,
Holy Meteora, Greece.

The Acts of the Eighth Œcumenical Council

Convened in Constantinople in the Years 879-880,
under the Presidency of Saint Photius the Great,
in the Reign of Basil I the Macedonian.

Translated by Gregory Heers

ALSO CONTAINING

an Introduction and Commentary
by Dositheus, Patriarch of Jerusalem

Translated by Gregory Heers

AND

an Introduction by Dr. Constantine Siamakis,

*Translated by Peter Stavrinides and Leonidas Kotsiris,
edited by Gregory Heers.*



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THE ACTS OF THE EIGHTH ŒCUMENICAL COUNCIL

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All footnotes are by Dr. Constantine Siamakis, the philologist that edited the Greek edition of 1985, except where marked by TRANS. or ED., in which cases they are by the English translator or editor.

This translation is from the Greek text originally published in the *Tome of Joy* by Patriarch Dositheus of Jerusalem in Rimmik, Romania, in 1705, and republished by Regopoulos Publications in Thessaloniki, Greece, in 1985.

Scriptural quotations are primarily taken from the King James Version. The translator has emended some quotations to better reflect the original Greek text. Citations from the Psalms are primarily taken from The Psalter According to the Seventy, translated from the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Brookline, MA.

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Translated by Gregory Heers.

Introduction by Dr. Constantine Siamakis.
Translated by Peter Stavrinides and Leonidas Kotsiris.
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“We embrace with mind and tongue and declare to all people with a loud voice the definition of the most pure faith of the Christians which has come down even to us from the beginning through the Fathers, subtracting nothing, adding nothing, changing nothing, falsifying nothing.”

— From the Definition (*Oros*) of the Eighth Œcumenical Council (p. 318)

Τ Ο Μ Ο Σ Χ Α Ρ Α Σ Ε Ν Ω Ξ Π Ε Ρ Ι Ε Χ Ο Ν Τ Α Ι

Αἱ ἐπιστολαὶ Φωτίου τοῦ ἀγιοτάτου Πατριάρχου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως,

Ἡ ἀγία καὶ Οἰκουμενικὴ σύνοδος Σιώνος,

Σημειώσεις πρὸς εἰς ταῦτα πῶ ἀγίου Σιώνος.

Τὰ ἀπὸ ἑξήτηκα κατὰ τῆς δεξιῆς τοῦ Πάππου τῆς Ρώμης, Νικολάου
Ἰατροφιλοσόφου,

Λόγος Μελετίου Ἀλεξανδρείας κατὰ τῆς δεξιῆς τοῦ Πάππου,

Διάλογος Ἰερομνήμονος μοναχοῦ μετὰ τινος ἐτέρου Μοναχοῦ κατὰ Λατίνων,

Τυπωθεὶς ἐν τῇ Ἐπισκοπῇ Ῥημῆικῃ.

Ἡ γνημονύοντος τοῦ Ὀσβεστιάτου ἐλαμφοστάτου καὶ ὑψηλοτάτου ἀρχιεπίσκοπου
καὶ ἡγεμόνου πάσης Οὐγκροβλαχίας κυρίου κυρίου
Ἰωάννου Κωνσταντίνου Μπαϊσοαρχάμπου βουβόδα.

Διὰ ἐξόφου καὶ ἐπιμελείας τοῦ μακαριωτάτου καὶ ἀγιοτάτου Πατριάρχου
Ἰεροσολύμων καὶ πάσης Παλαιστίνης κυρίου κυρίου Δοσιθέου,

Παρὰ τοῦ θεοφιλεστάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου ἐπισκόπου Ῥημῆικῃ κυρίου
Ἀνδρέου τοῦ ἐξ Ἰβηρίας.

Ἐν ἔτει, α. ψ. ε, κατὰ Μιῶα Σηπτήμβριον,



T O M E O F J O Y

C O N T A I N I N G

The Epistles of Photius the most holy Patriarch of Constantinople,

The holy and Ecumenical eighth Council,

Certain Notes on this holy Council,

The polemical writings of Nicholas the Physician-Philosopher against the
Power of the Pope of Rome,

A Speech by Meletius of Alexandria against the Power of the Pope,

The Dialogue of a hieromnemon Monk with another Monk against the Latins,

Printed in the Bishopric of Rimmik,

In the voivodeship of the most pious, illustrious, and supreme Master and
Voivode of all Hungrowallachia, lord-lord John Constantine Basarab* voevod,

By the expense and diligence of the most blessed and most holy Patriarch of
Jerusalem and all Palestine, lord-lord Dositheus,

At the press of the most God-beloved and learned bishop of Rimmik, lord
Anthimus* from Iberia,

In the year 1705, in the Month of September.



* See the page following the Contents for biographical information..

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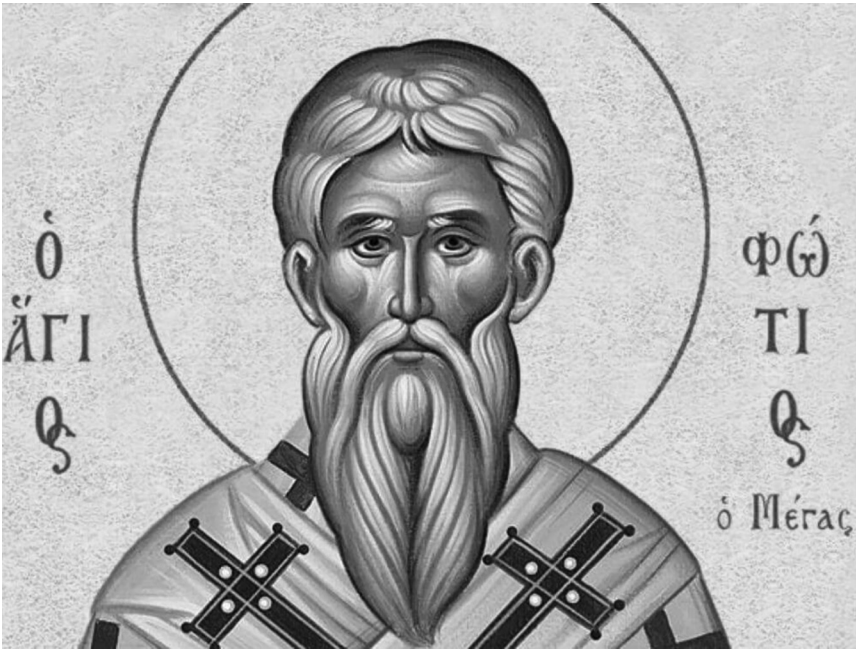
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ABBREVIATIONS

BEΠ	Βιβλιοθήκη Ἑλλήνων πατέρων, Ἀθήναι [Library of Greek Fathers, Athens].
CSHB	Corpus scriptorum historiae Byzantinae, Bonnae.
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte, Leipzig.
LSJ	<i>Liddell H.G., R. Scott, and H.S. Jones</i> , A Greek-English Lexicon, Oxford.
Mansi	<i>Mansi J.</i> , Sanctorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio, Florentiae.
OED	Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford.
PG	<i>Migne J.-P.</i> , Patrologia graeca, Parisiis.
PL	<i>Migne J.-P.</i> , Patrologia latina, Parisiis.

NOTE REGARDING THE TITLE PAGE OF THE EDITION OF 1705:

* On the original title-page of 1705 (p. 7 herein), the “John Constantine Basarab” mentioned is Saint Constantine Brancoveanu, Prince of Wallachia (1688-1714), who labored for the economic and cultural development of his people and who along with his sons was arrested by the Turks on charges of disloyalty to the Sultan, tortured, and upon his insistent refusal to deny Christ and embrace the crescent, finally executed. He is commemorated on August 16. Likewise, Bishop Anthimus of Rinnik is Saint Anthimus the Iberian, a Georgian, brought to Constantinople as a slave but later freed, a very learned man, a polyglot who knew Georgian and learned Greek, Arabic, Turkish, Slavonic, and Romanian, invited to Wallachia by Prince Constantine Brancoveanu, where he was put in charge of the Prince’s press in Bucharest and later made Bishop of Rinnik (in Romanian *Râmnic*, now *Râmnicu Vâlcea*). Four years after the publication of the *Tome of Joy*, he was made Metropolitan of Hungrowallachia, in which capacity he tirelessly continued his activities as writer, printer, and publisher, until the Turkish authorities accused him of involvement in a plot and had him arrested and executed. He is commemorated on September 27.



St. Photius the Great



PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

The Faith of the Church of Christ, once delivered to the saints, is the faith of the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and Fathers; and it was these Fathers, in the Holy Œcumenical Councils, that confirmed this Faith, at times when the ship of the Church was being rocked by the tempests and waves of this world, not only of heresies but also of the oft-accompanying political and wordly interests that would use the Ark of Salvation for their own, temporal ends. These, “the God-proclaiming hoplites of the Lord’s company, most brilliant stars of the spiritual firmament, impregnable towers of the mystical Sion,” laid down the boundaries of the faith and life of the Church, defining, delineating, rightly dividing Truth from falsehood. Among these are included the Holy Fathers of the great and holy Eighth Œcumenical Council.

At a time when the temporal empires of the Franks and the Romans, and even the would-be temporal kingdom of the pope, strove for dominance over Christendom, and when the westernmost members of Christ’s Body were grievously suffering from the error of the Filioque and under a nascent papal supremacy, the Lord of history wonderfully used a convergence of imperial and ecclesiastical interests for the good of His Church. Working through his faithful servant, the renowned Photius, patriarch of Constantinople, He healed the rifts which had been created between Rome and Constantinople and pastorally rebuked dogmatic innovations.

This council and its history is of unique and exceptional importance for the Church then and now, for it is apparent that the Church in Rome under Pope John VIII readily agreed to the rejection of the Filioque, even if his later successors in the eleventh century walked away from him and the Council, adopting the condemned addition. Only when one considers this nearly two-hundred-year acceptance of the Eighth Œcumenical Council by the Church in Rome can he rightly understand the cause of the Great Schism and the stance of the Eastern Patriarchs vis-à-vis the Pope of Rome and his pretensions.

The significance of the Acts of this Council for the Church today, in this age of ecumenism and before the threat of yet another false union, cannot be overstated. This Œcumenical Council, as having been accepted by both East and West and having successfully reunited the patriarchates after the schism provoked by Pope Nicholas, is the only basis for a true union with Rome today.

For the honor of publishing this most definitive edition of the Acts of the Great and Holy Eighth Œcumenical Council we are most grateful to God. This first English edition includes extensive commentary by Dositheus (†1707), the renowned Patriarch of Jerusalem and tireless defender of the Church's flock. Included also is Dositheus's introduction to his publication of the Acts in 1705, in which he provides a general summary of the events surrounding the convocation of the council, and the extensive and meticulous introduction to the edition of 1985 by the philologist Dr. Constantine Siamakis.

We are also most grateful for the self-less labor of our translators. First among them is Gregory Heers, chief editor and translator, for his relentless dedication and patience to painstakingly and accurately render the Ancient Greek text into proper English. With him, we are also indebted to the translators of Dr. Siamakis's comprehensive introduction, Peter Stavrinides and Leonidas Kotsiris. May the Lord Who resteth in His Saints richly bless and multiply His grace upon these, His servants, who labored in service of the Saints of the Eighth Œcumenical Council and the upbuilding of His Church today.

May the Holy Fathers of the great and holy Eighth Œcumenical Council intercede with the Ruler of All for the triumph of Orthodoxy once again in our own day over the heresy of ecumenism which so deceptively besets us, and for the continual upbuilding of His One Body, the Orthodox Catholic Church, upon the rock of the unalterable Symbol of Faith of Nicaea and Constantinople.

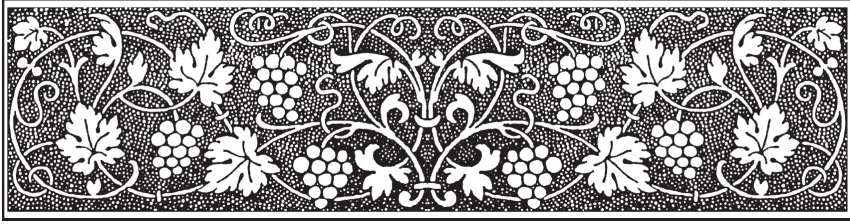
Archpriest Peter Heers
Florence, Arizona
November 14, 2024
Feastday of St. Gregory Palamas



Δ Ο Σ Ι Θ Ε Ο Σ

Εἴλω Θεοῦ Πατριάρχης τῆς μεγάλης καὶ ἁγίας Πόλεως τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἱερουσαλήμ, τοῖς Ἐντάξουχοις ἐν Κυρίῳ χαίρειν.

Ἐπεὶ ἕκαστος τῶν ἱερῶν λαχόντων πέδεται ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ σκοπὸς. καὶ ὡς ἂν τῶν πνευματικῶν ἱερέων ἐν κεφαλῇ τῶν τεταρτῶν λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, εἰ μὴ ἀπαγγέλλει τοῖς ὀρθοδόξοις λαοῖς τὸ πνευματικὸν ἀδικεῖν, ἡμεῖς ὁρῶμεν πρὸς τὸν ἑαυτῶν τὸ χρεῖμα ποιήσασθαι. ἀπεισεύθη δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τῆς ἁγίας τοῦ ὀρθοδόξου ἁγίου. Ἐπεὶ οὖν οἱ δόδοι τῆς πρεσβυτείας Ἐξουσίας ἐκ τῆς τοῦ σπυριτοῦ διδασκαλίας διημερομήνηται, οὐκ ἔστιν ἵσα σπουδαία ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ ἁγίου ἐξουσίας κατὰ τῆς Ἀνατολικῆς, ἣτοι κατὰ τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡδη καταπολεμισθὲν ἀπὸ μάλα πολυτρόπων, ποτὲ μὲν διὰ τῆς χρησιμότητος καὶ ἀπάτης καταμιζνύμετες ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἵνα ἐκ τοῦ ἀφανῆ τῆς παρ᾽ ἑαυτῶν βλάβης τοῖς ἀνεροτέροις ἐμβάλλουν, ποτὲ δὲ διὰ πολέμων καὶ βίας παντοδαπῆς καταπολεμῶν, ὡς ἂν ἐπὶ τῆς βλασφημίας αὐτῶν δόγματα διδασκαλία διὰ τῆς ἰσοσολομικῆς πρὸς τὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν ἀποδομῆται καταβάσκειν. εἶχαν ἔχουσα τὸ ψῆφισμα, καὶ πατέρα τὸν Σαταναῖ. ἡμεῖς τὸν Θεοῦ πειρημένους σκοποὶ, καὶ τῶν λαῶν κηδεμόνες, θύον ἐκείνων μάλιστὰ ἀποδομῶν τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικῶν λαβόντες σάλπιγγα, κατασημαίμεν τοῖς ἀσεβέσι τῶν κακῶν τῶν πᾶσι κακοπέμων, ἵνα μὴ σιωπῶντες εἰς πᾶσαν ἡλθούμεν τῆς θείας ἀγαπητικῆς. τοῖς γὰρ σιωπῶν ἔφη ὁ πάντων Θεὸς Δεῖν τὸν ἀπὸ τῶν πνευματικῶν ἐν τῇ Μεγαλιφρονίᾳ κεφαλῇ, τὸ αἶμα αὐτῶν ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς σου ἐκζητήσω. ταῦτα ὁμῆρας Κύβελλος γράφων ἐπὶ τῶν Νεσολεωνῶν ἐν τῇ πρὸς τὸν ἀποκεῖντα Θεοῦ δόξα λόγια ἀπὸ τῶν περὶ συμφωνῶν ὁμῆρας Βασιλεῖς ἐν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ κεφαλῇ καὶ ἐβδουμῶν κοσμοῦ ἔχον τῶν ἡθικῶν ἀπὸ τῶν φησὶν, ὁ ἐμπροσθεν τὸν λόγον τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου διδασκαλίας, ἐκ σιωπῆς τὴν τῶν εἰς τὴν πρὸς Θεὸν ἀρετήν, ἐνόχως ἐπὶ τὸν ἀμαρτωλὸν κινδυνολόντων. ἀναμφιβίλως γὰρ σύμφωνος δοκεῖ τοῖς ἀρετικῶν, ὁ παῖς καταπολεμῶν αὐτῶν μὴ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν τρεῶν, ἀλλὰ ἀπὸ τῶν καὶ σιωπῶν, λέγει ὁ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων Κύβελλος, ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν Βικτωρ ὁ ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Καθαροῦ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπισημῶν τὸν μακαρίτην Πάπαν Θεόδωρον ὅπως ἀδίστηται ἀγρυπνῶς τοῖς Μονοθεϊταῖς, τῶν σιωπῶν φησὶ μὴ ποτε καταναρκωδῶντες τῇ ἀκρίβει, σιωπῆς ἐκλήματι ἐκδομῶν γυνώμεθα, καὶ κερδίζωμεν ὡς σωεργοὶ, ἐκδομῶντες δόδοσασθαι τὰ κατὰ τῆς καθολικῆς πίστεως. παρὸν γὰρ τὸ μακαρίτην Φήλικος τοῦ τῆς ὁμῆρας ἀγρυπνῶν τῶν σιωπῶν ἐξουσίας. τὸ γὰρ ἀμείβειν, διωκόμενον ἀπαρξίμα τῆς ἐναντίας ἐθῶν ἄλλων ἐστίν, ἡ σωεργῶν καὶ ἀπεισεύσασθαι. καὶ οὐκ ἀμείβει τῶν σιωπῶν ἐκδομῶν, ὁ μὴ βυλάμενος φανερώς καὶ ἐμπροσθεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπὸ τῶν φησὶν. αὐτῇ ἡ ἐπισημῶν κείνη ἐν τῇ τέλει τῆς δόδο τῆς πρὸς τῶν, τῆς ἐν Λατινῶν ἐπὶ τὸν ἁγίον Μαρκίον ἁγίον Σιωπῶν, ἐν οἷς τῶν παραμένειν



NOTE ON THE TEXT

The Acts of the Eighth Œcumenical Council, passed down for centuries in manuscript form, were first printed in type by the effort and expense of Patriarch Dositheus in Rimnik, Romania, September 1705, as part of the *Tome of Joy*. The *Tome* was reprinted by Basil Regopoulos in Thessalonica, Greece, in 1985, having been edited and annotated by Dr. Constantine Siamakis, who also wrote an extensive introduction to the entire volume with subsections for each work contained therein. The relevant portions of this introduction, Dositheus' own introduction, the relevant chapters of his *Dodecabiblus*, and of course the Acts themselves are now published for the first time in the English language, in the United States of America, September 2024.¹

The translator.

ON THE *TOME OF JOY*, FROM DR. SIAMAKIS' INTRODUCTION

Dositheus was the first to use the word *Tome* with the triple meaning of tome, collection, and periodical: tome, because it is a confession of faith and contains confessional texts, like the ancient ecclesiastical tomes; collection, because it is a gathering of many writings; and periodical, for the same reason and also because it

1 Note that in this translation, in order to preserve the distinction between the singular and plural pronouns of the second person, we have used the archaic forms of the said pronouns (*thou, thee, thy, thine* singular and *ye, you, yours* plural), for the sake of clarity. —TRANS.

is recurrent, being followed by successive issues. As for the names *Tome of Reconciliation*, *Tome of Love*, *Tome of Joy*, these have little or no connection to their contents; they are almost like the names of ships or contemporary periodicals, as if to say, “the periodical *Joy*” or “the periodical called *Love*.” The only difference is that it had not yet begun to appear as the consistent name of many consecutive numbered issues; rather, each issue had its own name.

The *Tome of Joy* was published in Rimnik, in Hungrowallachia (i.e. Romania), in September 1705, in other words a year and a half before the death of Dositheus. It contains perhaps the choicest material compared to the other two *Tomes*. It contains the following eight texts, all of them anti-Latin and anti-papal.

1. Introduction to the *Tome of Joy*, by Dositheus of Jerusalem
2. Five epistles by Photius
3. The Acts of the Eighth Œcumenical Council
4. Two chapters from the *Dodecabiblus* of Dositheus of Jerusalem, dealing with the Eighth Œcumenical Council
5. *The Counter-Charge*, by Nicholas Cerameus
6. *Against the Pope’s Power*, by Meletius Pegas
7. *Dialogue of a Hieromnemon with a Monk*
8. Encyclical epistle by Mark Eugenicus

The *Tome of Joy* makes reference to Dositheus’ *Dodecabiblus* as to an older text and cites two chapters therefrom; yet the *Tome of Joy* is itself mentioned in the *Dodecabiblus*, that is, in the latter’s final version printed after Dositheus’ death (7,13,16).

There are two texts by Dositheus in the *Tome of Joy*: his Introduction to the *Tome* and especially to the Eighth Œcumenical Council, and two chapters from the seventh book of his *History of the Patriarchs of Jerusalem*, commenting on the Council. In his lengthy introduction, one can admire Dositheus’ erudition and delight in the simplicity of his language. The two chapters, taken from the first form of the *History*, wherein they are numbered as 15th and 16th, differ from their counterparts in the second form, reworked by Chrysanthus, which is the one published in print and in which the chapters appear as 14th and 15th. In both of his texts, Dositheus

skillfully rebuts Photius' enemies, both ancient and contemporary, and reaffirms the authority of the Eighth Œcumenical Council.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON CONSTANTINE SIAMAKIS

(from the website of the Central Public Library of Serres, serrelib.gr)

Dr. Constantine Siamakis, philologist and theologian, was born into a large agrarian family on 15 May 1941 in Terpne, Serres, Greece. In 1959 he entered the Philosophical School of the Aristotelian University and has since lived and worked in Thessalonica. He has written many scientific books, studies, and articles; produced critical editions of Ancient Greek and Latin texts from ancient manuscripts; translated Ancient Greek and Latin authors; deciphered two syllabograms written in the prehistoric Achaean script (linear B), from among those that had not been deciphered in 1953; participated as a speaker in nine international or pan-Hellenic scientific conferences; given many scientific lectures in various cities; been for five year the host of the broadcast “Ἀρχαιογνωσία” on television, producing about 250 presentations; and completed 30 years as preacher from the pulpit of the church, mainly in Thessalonica but also in other cities of Greece and abroad. Dr. C. Siamakis' published work numbers 13,500 printed pages.



Historical image of Constantinople (Antoine Herbert)

A C T S



of the Council Convened in Constantinople
in the Time of Photius,
When after the Death of Ignatius
He Returned to the Patriarchate

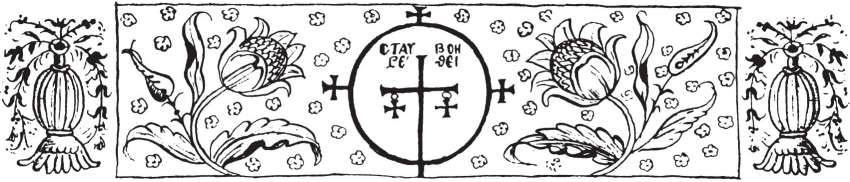


The Holy and Eighth Ecumenical Council

The Gospel reads: “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Mt. 5:18”

The left scroll reads: “Blessed be God, for the opinions and wills of all the most holy patriarchs have come together so into one. Through the common concord and peace, everything begun and done by the holy and Ecumenical Council has come to a good end.”

The right scroll reads: “We embrace with mind and tongue and declare to all people with a loud voice the definition of the most pure faith of the Christians which has come down even to us from the beginning through the Fathers, subtracting nothing, adding nothing, changing nothing, falsifying nothing.”



FIRST ACT

**On the fourteenth of the month of November, of
the 13th indiction, on Saturday.**

[1] When Photius the most holy and œcumenical patriarch¹⁵⁰ had taken the first seat in the auspicious Great Chancery,¹⁵¹ and when with him had sat Elias the most God-fearing priest and representative¹⁵² of Jerusalem and also the most God-beloved

150 After his restoration in 877.

151 Chancery (in the sense of ‘a court of record; an office of public records; archives’ [OED]); in Greek σήκηριον (later spelled σέκρητον), from the Latin *secretum*, ‘a mystery.’ In the Roman political and judicial terminology, the *secretum* was the secretariat of a service, or the offices of the said secretariat. Here it refers to a suitable hall of the patriarchal chancery. The imperial chancery was something between a ministry of presidency and foreign affairs and a ministry of the general management of the diplomatic corps, since at that time the structure and worth of the state agencies was entirely different from nowadays. [Eusebius, *Church History*, 7.30.9 (σήκρ.). *Minutes of the Council of Constantinople in 448*, Act 1, Mansi 6,652a (σήκρ.). Gregentius of Taphar, *Laws of the Homerites*, PG 86,577d (σέκρ.). St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, Synodical Epistle: “To Sergius of Constantinople,” PG 87,3200a (σέκρ.).] The public servants of the chancery were called *asecretis* (Gr. ἀσηκρητίς, from L. *a secretis*, ‘from the secrets,’ an uninflected form); their chief was the *protoasecretis*. [*Paschal Chronicle*, δλ. 327 CSHB 1,625; 628 (ἀσηκρητίς). St. Theophanes, *Chronicle*, 6205 CSHB1,588 (πρωτοασηκρητίς). Synaxarion of St. Maximus the Confessor, PG 90,209ab.]

152 Representative. In Greek, τοποτηρητής (not in the current senses of

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