

Metropolitan John LoBue and the Synod  
Abbey of the Holy Name  
100 Abbey Ln  
West Milford, NJ 07480

September 10/August 28 2016  
St. Augustine of Hippo (ob)

To the Synod of the Autonomous Metropolia:

This “trial” is a farce. It was never meant to be anything else. There have been no clear charges filed, nor any “discovery,” something required in the church as well as the secular state. You cannot try someone who doesn't know the arguments of the prosecution, their evidence or even clear charges (that is, canonical charges, not vague aspersions). The Metropolitan has gone silent inexplicably. I know that he is no longer in control of the little Archdiocese. There is no dossier of whom will be “judging” me or even their identity. The 1956 ROCOR standards for trials are that the “judges” are known to the accused and their backgrounds transparent. I remain ignorant on these men.

These are common-sense things to deal with before a trial of any kind. Financial conflicts of interest require that I see the financial records of the Archdiocese. I've received no answer to any of my questions about the trial. I have inquired about the financial contributions of Bishop Joseph. I've asked about basic procedural issues. Most importantly to me, I've asked for the qualifications of these bishops to judge on these complex historical and philosophical matters. These are all legitimate questions. They were all ignored. Without any alternative explanation, they were ignored because an honest answer would be embarrassing to the synod in general.

Metropolitan John, behaving in a bizarre and radically uncharacteristic way, has refused all phone calls or emails from his spiritual son of 14 years. This has caused me tremendous emotional pain since it is so unlike him. We have not fought or had any sort of a rupture other than this “trial” which already has caused far more harm than any good it seeks to establish.

When my supporters have called the synod with questions, Deacon Joseph Suaiden has answered with authority, making policy decisions on his own. This means the Metropolitan is not in control of anything. I firmly believe that this is the very tiniest amount of power that has ever gone to someone's head.

I'm certain that the qualifications of these bishops to judge on these issues is non-existent. Nothing in their histories or writings suggests otherwise. These are largely invisible entities who have been consecrated for reasons unknown. They don't have more than a handful of people under them. Bishops exist to oversee dioceses or assist others in doing so. Since the Autonomous Metropolia is very small, the latter cannot be the case. Hence, the reason for their consecration is unknown.

The Metropolitan promised me three times that he would send “obediencies.” These were meant to be changes made to essays that would obviate the need for a trial. He promised them that very day “if it killed him.” That was a month ago and the bishop, last I heard, was still alive. There has been no attempt to contact me about any of this. This is not only suspicious but also delegitimizes whatever authority this summons ever had.

Metropolitan John has lost two close friends in the last year and being preoccupied with his health, has seemingly handed the synod over to the newly received Bishop Joseph, Enoch and Joseph Suaiden. Why Bishop Joseph? The answer can only be financial. Losing Frs. Brendan and Paisius means the loss of the monastery's income. This was a terrible blow. Add to this the Metropolitan's health, the death of the shadowy “Eric” and the scandal there, Bishop Joseph's willingness to finance the monastery is the only rational explanation for Metropolitan John's abnormal behavior.

This is buttressed by the fact that the infamous “Statement on Race and Phyletism” is very similar to the wording on Joseph's (Royer) website. The Metropolitan, in the many, many conversations I've had about these issues with him in the past, does not agree with the contents of this “Statement.” This is why

it was so shocking to read. Like everything else, it is uncharacteristic of the Metropolitan. The “Statement” is poorly written, laughably vague and utterly incoherent.<sup>1</sup> The Metropolitan is the opposite of these things. The “Statement” however, is similar to the elementary level of understanding that Royer has shown on his own website.

I am familiar with the Metropolitan's writing style. The “Statement” is not an example of it. This is firm evidence that Royer is now running our little group, using Enoch and Joseph Suaiden as his minions. The Metropolitan's insistence that it was “mere coincidence” that this statement was published precisely one day after my radio broadcast on the same issue is highly suspicious.

Given that I know the Metropolitan very well personally, I can say with certainty that his present behavior is out of character to an extreme. From a distance, it seems that Bishop Joseph or others have taken charge. The last few phone conversations between the Metropolitan and myself showed him depressed and anxious. None of this is the fault of the Metropolitan, but it does make him an easy target and also raises further suspicions.

Metropolitan John has, many times in conversation with me, designated Joseph as his successor without explanation. The man has gone from church to church, with each move denoting an ideological shift that is never accounted for. From the Unia to the Greeks; from the Greeks to the UAOC-Sobornapravna (“Pratzky lineage”), and finally, of all things, to the True Orthodox Church of Auxentius. This does not make any sense. It is nonsensical because the mentality and theology of our synod and the Pratzky group are like night and day. It is almost a conversion in itself to switch jurisdictions that have such extreme differences. Is there evidence of such a “conversion?” Most certainly not.

This is not the UAOC of Dionysus, Polykarp or Mstislav. It is that of Hryhoriy Ohiychuk. His faction descends from those who rebelled against Ivan Tedorevich's reconsecration into the Polish church in 1949. While Nikanor had consecrated Hryhoriy in 1942, the latter went into schism seven years later, accusing Ivan of “betraying” the “spirit of 1921.”<sup>2</sup> The resultant group was called the “UAOC-Sobornopravna.” They accepted married bishops and homosexual lifestyles.<sup>3</sup>

Andrei Pratsky was consecrated by Ohiychuk himself in 1969. The invalid heretic “Metropolitan” Michael Champion proudly boasts this as his canonical lineage. Unfortunately, Joseph (Royer) comes from them too. Chances are Joseph himself is unaware of this canonical issue and the likes of Mike Champion just hope that there are few who even understand this tortuous history. Thus, he has no legitimate succession from Ohiychuk. Since the Metropolitan John has condemned that sect many times to me (calling it the “fake Pratsky lineage”<sup>4</sup>) permitting him such control over things so soon is very suspicious if money is not involved.

Bishop Joseph's website does not mention the True Orthodox mission at all. There is no mention of ecumenism, the Moscow Patriarchate, the current “Pan-Orthodox” synods or anything else. It can only be called deliberately noncommittal. At the very least, he's simply not doing his job. One would think that such a “conversion,” from a radical to a traditionalist group, would cause a flurry of writings about this radical change and the error of groups like the UAOC. Nothing can be found.

Bishop Joseph's financial support of the synod is the only explanation that ties all the above together. It is the simplest account that explains all variables. Thus, in the absence of any denial, I have to assume it is true.

Unfortunately, since Bishop Joseph is an ideological chameleon, Hieromonk Enoch and Deacon

---

1 A brief analysis of this nonsense can be found here: (<http://www.rusjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/BpLetter.pdf>).

2 “1921” refers to the false synod that consecrated Metropolitan Vasyl Lypynsky without bishops participating. The Polish church and the Lubny Sobor condemned this in 1924 and many times afterwards. Ivan Tedorevich was the “1921” group's representative in the USA. The canonical weirdness of that group forced Ivan to finally fix the issue and come under Mstislav. The “Western Rite” group is an offshoot of that UAOC from 1921.

3 Some of the history is summarized here:

[http://orthodoxcanada.ca/Edmonton\\_AB\\_Church\\_of\\_All\\_Saints\\_1963-1998](http://orthodoxcanada.ca/Edmonton_AB_Church_of_All_Saints_1963-1998) and his connection to the UAOC is mentioned here: <http://www.brama.com/news/press/2004/06/040609orthodoxchurchcanada.html>

4 I refer to it as the “Ohiychuk Schism” because he's the man who committed this soul-destroying act.

Joseph Suaiden will find him an unpleasant boss. He does not share their theology or ecclesiology and likely cannot even articulate a rational position on these matters. I do not hold Joseph Suaiden, Metropolitan John and Fr. Enoch entirely blameless, but they were not the prime movers here. The last I spoke with Joseph or Enoch, we were on good terms. I have not changed since then. If there have been changes about which I am ignorant, than it would have been incumbent on them to call me. They did not, which thereby makes it not my problem.

Unfortunately, the ignorance as to the functions of an ecclesiastical court is apparently widespread. Yet again, I am forced to act in the position of teacher. The errors thus far are many. Here, I use the statutes of the Russian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate, a church whose juridical usages are largely unchanged and accepted by all the Orthodox world regardless of background. Now, since I've not been made aware of any procedural standard at all, which of course, invalidates this whole circus, I will use this one. The ROCOR uses the same standard. Most of it is common sense.<sup>5</sup>

Article 18(1): Names and addresses of all witnesses. **I've been sent nothing. Who is testifying against me? What are their qualifications? Are there conflicts of interest?**

Article 21(1-2): Article 21. Expert opinions.

Questions in the process of review might require special knowledge, a church court appoints an expert. This expert can perform as person who has special knowledge in matters which are considered in an ecclesiastical court. The expert gives a reasoned written opinion on the questions put before him and sends it to the church court. Expert opinion must contain a detailed description of the research made as a result of its findings and answers to questions posed by the ecclesiastical court. The expert may be invited to a meeting of the ecclesiastical court, to be joined in receiving, inspecting and research material and other evidence.

**Where has this been done?**

**This certainly requires specialized knowledge. Who are the experts? Dare I ask? Unless the bishops are extremely knowledgeable about these issues to a man, or an expert witness has been appointed. If the former, then I needed to be made aware; if the latter, I need to be told who it is.**

Article 25(2): [The initial summons contains]: The circumstances upon which the applicant bases its allegations and the evidence confirming these circumstances; [and also to include] a list of documents attached to the application.

**None exist. Its one badly written sheet of paper. The Summons is invalid.**

Article 38: 1. Preparing the case for review must:

clarify the relevant circumstances;

prepare of a reference work containing the canonical (with the application of the rules of canon law) and the analysis of the circumstances related to the case;

determining the composition of the persons involved in the case;

collect the necessary evidence, including (if necessary) a survey of the parties and other persons involved in the case. . .

**Not been done. It was thrown together at the last minute.**

If this trial is to be had, then it must be delayed and these errors rectified. If they are not rectified, then no trial can be had.

Sincerely,

*Matthew Raphael Johnson*

---

5 The MP's trial methods are here: (<http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/428440.html>). All translations are mine.

