

PREFACE

Due to the gracious kindness of the authorities of the University in Bialystok, on March 5th, 1999, in the Auditorium of the Economy Section, of the university, in an atmosphere of jubilation, the Chair of Orthodox Theology of the University in Bialystok inaugurated its activity. This is the result of the efforts of the hierarchy of our Church to increase the opportunities in our society to come to know the theology, history and spirituality of the Orthodox Church.

The Section of Orthodox Theology, of the Christian Academy of Theology in Warsaw, which was called into being in 1957, was the continuation of the College of Orthodox Theology of the University of Warsaw. The Chair of Orthodox Theology of the University in Bialystok is a continuation and expansion of the process of education of the University of Warsaw in the area of theology. The University in Bialystok was, after all, the filia of the University of Warsaw for forty years. „No one is like unto God”. God, the most high Wisdom, in His Providence, guides His Church and all who believe. The presence of yet another unit of education in our Church, is for us a sign of Divine Providence, and we accept it as an expression of the Will of God, for which we are profoundly grateful to the Most High.

The College of Orthodox Theology of the University of Warsaw used to publish an annual theological journal, called „Elpis” („Hope”). It published the scholarly papers of the professors and teachers of the College. In total there were thirteen editions of the journal.

After the war, the publication of „Elpis” was not resumed. At its first working meeting, the staff of the Chair of Orthodox Theology of the University in Bialystok, ratified the decision, that the Chair of Orthodox Theology, being the continuation of the College, will resume the publication of „Elpis”, as well as the other publicational activities of the College.

In 1931 edition of „Elpis”, the Metropolitan of Warsaw and All of Poland, Dionisios, wrote, in the preface, „The title („Elpis”) had symbolic meaning for several reasons, foremost of which was, our conviction that Orthodox Theological Science, in our conditions, in and under the care of the University of Warsaw, is going to develop and with time will truly blossom, due to the faithful work of the College of Orthodox Theology.”

Resuming the publication of „Elpis”, by the Chair of Orthodox Theology, our desire is that the words of Metropolitan Dionisios, of holy memory, will also be a reflection of our own intentions.

We hope, that the present annual publication of „Elpis” (in the future bi-annual or even quarterly), will be a worthy continuation of the previous issues of this journal. We shall maintain a double numeration: the new numeration beginning with „1” and the numeration of the College’s „Elpis”, being „14”; in this way demonstrating the continuation of the publication of the former editions.

Furthermore, in order to assist the reader in becoming familiar with the previous editions of „Elpis”, in the present edition, we are including a complete bibliography of the positions published in the previous editions.

In June of 1999, the Chair of Orthodox Theology of the University in Białystok, in conjunction with the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodios organized an academic conference, in Białystok and at Supraśl, on the theme: „The Orthodox Church in the Commonwealth of Poland”. The papers, from this conference, are published in the present edition. In future editions, we shall publish the papers of our faculty, as well as other works written by Orthodox theologians, with the intention of making the Orthodox Church known to those who would intend to come to know it.

May Almighty God grant His abundant blessings on those who will work toward the publication of „Elpis”, in the hope that this endeavor will be beneficent to many, and will be gratefully received by the reading public.

I would like, here, in this place, to express my most heartfelt and sincere gratitude to His Magnificence, Professor Adam Jamróz, Rector of the University in Białystok, and to the High Senate of the University in Białystok, for their willingness and assistance in organizing the Chair

of Orthodox Theology, as well as their permission, granted for the publication of this autonomous journal.

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Orthodox Metropolitan of Warsaw and All of Poland
Dean of the Chair of Orthodox Theology
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