

**The History of the "filioque" Controversy**  
**Biblical, Theological and Patristic Aspects of the Procession of the Holy Spirit**  
**The Addition of the Formula "Filioque" to the Text of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed"**

**The International Joint Commission between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church**

April 27, 1990

**Report**

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, Amen.

The International Joint Commission between the Catholic Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church held its regular study meeting from April 23rd to 27th, 1990 in the Monastery of St. Bishoy. The main theme of discussion was the procession of the Holy Spirit and the controversy over the "Filioque" in the text of the Creed.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, after welcoming the members of the commission, presented a general view of the subject and indicated the points which His Holiness felt needed discussion and solution.

Papers were presented to consider both Churches' views concerning (1) the history of the "Filioque" Controversy; (2) Biblical, Theological and Patristic Aspects of the procession of the Holy Spirit, and (3) the addition of the formula "Filioque — and the Son" to the text of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.

The work of this meeting of the commission was primarily concerned with clarifying each side's understanding of the other's positions. For the Coptic Orthodox Church the "Filioque" should not be in the Creed or in the Liturgy or in the theological teaching for doctrinal and canonical reasons. The Catholic Church believes that this addition is admissible for both reasons. There was a full discussion of the terminology used by both Churches and the principal official declarations made by the Catholic Church in this matter.

While each side expressed and clarified what its Church considers to be its own authentic belief, it is the unanimous conviction of the members of the Commission that further studies must be made in each of the three areas mentioned above. These studies will be prepared for distribution and reflexion before the next meeting of the Commission, scheduled for April 15th to 19th, 1991.

The intensive work of the commission could not have been carried out without the prayers and fraternal concern of many people at the Monastery of St. Bishoy. Strongly encouraged by His Holiness, Pope Shenouda, the bishops, monks and staff, clerical and lay, showed a spirit of Christian love and dedication which impressed those coming from outside and helped inspire the members of the commission in their search for that light and strength of the Holy Spirit which will lead both Churches to the fullness of communion in faith and love.

April 27, 1990

## **Members of the Commission**

### **Coptic Orthodox Members**

His Grace Amba Bishoi (Bishop of Damiet, General Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Orthodox Church)

His Grace Amba Athanasios (Bishop of Beni Suef and El Bahnesa, Bishop of Menoufeya (Middle Delta))

His Grace Amba Moussa (Bishop for Youth, Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate)

His Grace Amba Petros (General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate)

His Grace Amba Abraam (Bishop of Fayourn)

Rev. Father Tadros Malaty

Dr. Emile Maher Ishak

### **Catholic Members**

His Excellency Monsignor Pierre Duprey (Secretary, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity)

His Excellency Monsignor Antonios Naguib (Coptic Catholic Bishop of Minia)

Rev. Father Iskander Iskander (Rector, Coptic Catholic Mission in France)

His Excellency Monsignor Athanasios Abadir (Coptic Catholic Bishop of Ismailia)

His Excellency Monsignor Hanna Golta (Auxiliary Bishop to the Coptic Catholic Patriarchate)

Rev. Father Emmanuel Lanne, osb (Monastère bénédictin de la Sainte-Croix)

Rev. Father Prof. André De Halleux, ofm

Rev. Father Prof. John F. Long, sj (Vice-Rector, Pontificio Istituto Orientale)

Rev. Father Maurice Martin, sj (Collège de la Sainte Famille)

Lawyer Amin Fahim (Chairman-Director, Upper-Egypt Christian Association for Schools and Social Promotion)

Monsignor Gérard Daucourt (Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity)

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