

PATRIARCHAL AND SYNODAL TOME OF THE
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
(APRIL 1937)

**Tome of the blessing of the
Autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in Albania**

† Benjamin by the Grace of God Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical
Patriarch

Prot. No. 609.

Having inherent providence and care, which the Holy Church of Christ, as an affectionate Mother incessantly offers to the all the devout and shows it in various ways, whose aid, as appropriate each time to a specific time and in any place when necessary, and certainly according to the paramount way, when there is a greater need, as its gifts to heal the presented needs, which require a solution and therapy, as is its holy duty to care as to seamlessly always correct and solve their ecclesiastical matters in the best manner so as to progress and to spiritually blossom with the Grace of the Lord, something that is always the best result of ecclesiastical care for the governing of the flock of the Church.

Thus, and now, because the pious Orthodox Christians, who live in the God-blessed new State of Albania, addressed the Holy Apostolic and Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne of Constantinople, from which they received its absolute and affectionate care many centuries ago and until today and through the Grace of Christ were preserved in His Vineyard, which they consider as their affectionate Mother and with courage they reported their present ecclesiastical needs and submitted their fervent supplication and request to bequest to them its blessing and to proclaim the ecclesiastical area in which they lived and live today as a particular, independent and autocephalous Church. And this because only through this formation of hers could it be created under the new political conditions which were created in the new Albanian State to ensure their church life to operate and to have, as Orthodox Christians, the possibility to progress and to live in the blessed Albanian State with safety and progress. This, the God-saved Albanian State, as it ensured to undertake the responsibility for the entirely unimpeded and free diligence and progress of the Orthodox Christians therein, and they by themselves care and foresee for their Orthodox Church with absolute independence and freedom. With this certainty, our Humbleness together with their Excellencies the Metropolitans, with our beloved brothers and concelebrants through grace of the Holy Spirit, with great affection and attention to this filial request of theirs we deliberated and having as a guide that which defines the Holy Canons of our Church and the Ecclesiastical Act and custom, we ascertained a great temperament and accept this request of our

spiritual children, namely those Orthodox Christians who live in Albania and we bestow upon them our blessing and permit its independence and autocephalous organization of their Church.

Therefore, synodically, we decide in the Holy Spirit, define and proclaim in this blessed hour and moment, namely all the Orthodox Dioceses and communities which are located within the God-saved new Albanian State to belong united from hereon in to the one independent and autocephalous ecclesiastical organization with the title "Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania," the Church which is from now on our spiritual sister and is empowered to administer from now on to its flock independently and autocephaly according to the order and the sovereign rights which all the Holy Orthodox Autocephalous Churches enjoy. It will have and recognize as its highest administrative ecclesiastical authority its Holy Synod, which will consist of the canonical and Orthodox Hierarchs of Albania and will have as its President, His Eminence the current Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania. In this way it will demonstrate the sacred canonical union, as much with the Holy Apostolic and Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne of Constantinople, as with all the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches, with each His Eminence the Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania is required to proclaim, according to the order of the Holy Orthodox Church, his election and ascent of the Archbishop's throne of the Autocephalous Church of Albania through the distribution of Enthronement Letters to our Great Church of Christ and to all the sister Orthodox Autocephalous Churches and that they synchronously recognize the legality and canonicity of his election and confession and that he will assure himself and his confession to his Holy Church that he himself and the flock of the Church of Albania will unwaveringly adhere themselves to the Orthodox faith and piety and everything that the Holy and Sacred Canons and the Order of the Holy Orthodox Church designates and that he commemorates, according to the Order of the Diptychs the name of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the names of the remaining Holy Patriarchs and the Most Reverend Presidents of the Holy Orthodox Autocephalous Churches. Furthermore, we designate that our Holy sister Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania will receive the Holy Myron from the Great Church of Christ of Constantinople.

Furthermore, we recommend that when it comes to issues or questions of general ecclesiastical nature, which surpass the boundaries of the individual Autocephalous Churches, that His Eminence the Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania address the Holy Patriarchal and Ecumenical Throne through which the communion of each Orthodox Church rightly teaches the word of truth, and thus seeks the valid outlook and view of the sister Churches.

This, therefore, as we have synodically decided according to the regular Synodal session on 12 April of the current year and as we have consented, we confirm the permanent observance and through our present Patriarchal and Synodal Tome, which we record and sign into the Records of our Great Church of Christ, and through an exact and identical copy that we sent to His Eminence the Archbishop of Tirana and All Albania, our beloved brother and concelebrant in Christ, Christopher, the President of the Holy Synod of the Holy Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania. Lord, God, through the grace and compassion of your First and Great Hierarch and Shepard of Christ our God, sustain it according to this manner with a praiseworthy ending of the instituted sister Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania and to promote its life through His

grace and blessing to the glory of his Holy Name and beneficially to its pious fullness, concurrently with grace of all the sister Autocephalous Churches.

*In the year of the Lord 1937, on the 12th of the month of April,
Year 5 of the Indiction*

*Patriarch Benjamin of Constantinople
presiding*

*† Maximos of Chalcedon
† Polykarpos of Bursa
† Germanos of Sardis and Pisidia
† Leontios of Theodoroupolis
† Meletios of Christoupolis
† Joachim of Derka
† Thomas of the Princes Islands
† Gennadios of Helioupolis
† Konstantinos of Eirinoupolis
† Dorotheos of Laodicea
† Germanos of Ainos*