

28 July 2022

**Communication of the Holy Community of Mt Athos\***

On the occasion of recent public appearances and positions taken by members of the clergy of the Church, including hierarchs, who have created the impression that it is possible for the Church to accept any other form of family, apart from the one established by the Holy Gospel, the Holy Community of Mt Athos wishes to respond publicly.

The Holy Mountain, as a place of prayer and asceticism, in an unbroken liturgical and spiritual continuity, humbly prays for the entire world, and for all people without distinction.

The sacrament of baptism, by which a person becomes a member of the Church and receives the grace of the Holy Spirit, is undoubtedly the visible expression of God's infinite love.

The effort to live according to the Holy Gospel and the law of God ensures the conditions for participation in the sacraments of the Church.

In light of the above, we cannot but express our regret for the above public appearances and positions of persons of the Church, which have given reason for the faithful to be scandalized.

It is clearly foreign to the teaching of the Gospel and the Orthodox ethos to allow it to be understood that a "same-sex couple" can be considered as a family and to recognize the right of such a couple to adopt children, since any such form of adoption or adoptive child-guardianship is contrary to the teaching of the Gospel, human nature, and also to the ethos and traditions of our people. At the same time, it violates the elementary rights of innocent defenseless children, who do not have the possibility to choose a normal family environment.

We express the above as a voice of sincere interest in the course of our country, and indeed at such a critical period for it.

May the Patroness of our country and of the Holy Mountain, the All-Holy Theotokos, intercede with our Lord Jesus Christ to lead everyone to repentance and to life according to the light of the Gospel and its teaching.

**All the Representatives and Abbots  
of the Twenty Holy Monasteries of the Holy Mountain of Athos.**

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\* The "Holy Community" (Ἱερά Ἐπιστοασία) is the highest governing body of Mt Athos, and officially represents all the monks and monasteries on the Holy Mountain.