

OUTLINE OF *FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD*

I. Introduction

It is time to serve the Lord

- Lays out the theological foundation for the document, in short: Humans are created by God and are made for freely-chosen and loving communion with God. Through loving communion with God, we are called into loving communion with our neighbor and the whole cosmos.

II. THE CHURCH IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Let us commend our whole life unto Christ our God

- Addresses the Orthodox Church's thinking about the relationship between church and state; addresses public sphere issues such as racism, nationalism, pluralism.

III. THE COURSE OF HUMAN LIFE

Sanctify our souls and bodies, and grant that we may worship you in holiness all the days of our lives

- The section broadly follows human life, from the womb to the grave, addressing all manner of both enduring and uniquely contemporary issue facing the faithful. It recognizes three paths in adult life (marriage, monasticism, and single life) and affirms the possibility of love of God and neighbor in each.
- It contains a strong statement on sexual abuse of children (§16) as well as clear statements on the role of women (§29), the reality of divorce (§22), the issue of abortion (§25), and the challenge of reproductive technology (§24).
- No offense against God is worse than is the sexual abuse of children, and none more intolerable to the conscience of the Church (§16).

IV. POVERTY, WEALTH, AND CIVIL JUSTICE

Remember, Lord, those who are mindful of the poor

- This section stresses that the Church must follow Christ and place “this absolute concern for the poor and disadvantaged at the very center of its moral, religious and spiritual life (33).” It examines several facets of the contemporary global economy and suggests ways that the Church might express this concern in the world today (§§37–41).

V. WAR, PEACE, VIOLENCE

For the peace of the whole world...

- This section articulates an Orthodox understanding of peace as “the true ‘grammar’ of creation as God has uttered it in his eternal Word” (§42), in contrast to one of violence as “the most terrible manifestation of the reign of sin and death in all things (§42).” It also calls for the abolition of the death penalty (§48).

VI. ECUMENICAL RELATIONS AND RELATIONS WITH OTHER FAITHS

Let us pray for the unity of all

- This section describes the Orthodox Church’s self-understanding as apostolic and complete (50–56) and its commitment to relationships with other Christian churches and other religious communities. It also clearly condemns anti-Semitism (§57).

VII. ORTHODOXY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

You have created us in your own image and likeness

- This section acknowledges that while the language of human rights is, in many ways, a minimal language, it is helpful to shape and secure rules of charity, mercy, and justice, and so the Church supports its use in the modern world (§§63–64). It also contains a condemnation of modern forms of slavery and defends the dignity of refugees (§§66–67).

VIII. SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE NATURAL WORLD

Your own of your own we offer to you

- In this section, the Church celebrates the sciences and arts, while cautioning discernment regarding the integration of technology into human life (§§70–72). The document also champions a devout care of the earth in all its dimensions (§§74–75).

IX. CONCLUSION

Let us the faithful rejoice, having this anchor of hope

- This section concludes the document on a note of hope and joy, stating the document’s limited nature and offering it up for discussion and for the benefit of congregations.