

The Zalkin Law Firm, LLP

Seven Times Square. New York. NY 10036. tel 212-889-1300

Irwin M. Zalkin, Esq. Licensed NY

www.zalkin.com

Devin M. Storey, Esq. Licensed NY

Michael J. Kinslow, Esq.

January 10, 2011

His All Holiness Bartholomew,
Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch

Via U.S. Mail & Facsimile

The Holy and Sacred Synod
of the Ecumenical Patriarchate

Your Holiness and Holy Fathers:

This letter is written on behalf of Andrew Georgiou, a survivor of repeated acts of childhood sexual abuse inflicted by your brother and servant Metropolitan Paisios Loulourgas. Andrew has already shared the details of the abuse in a letter to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I. Andrew also met with the Patriarchal Exarchy team headed by Metropolitan Nikitas that was sent to New York to investigate allegations against Metropolitan Paisios. There is no need to repeat the details of the abuse in this letter. As you must be aware, the acts inflicted upon Andrew resulted in substantial damage. Andrew must be provided a remedy for what he endured.

Our office has substantial experience representing survivors of childhood sexual abuse, including people abused by clergymen. In this case, our preliminary investigation has revealed allegations that Metropolitan Paisios routinely crossed the physical boundaries of others and inflicted great harm upon the faithful of all ages and genders. It is also alleged that other clergymen and servants of the Church were either aware of the abusive conduct, or aware of facts that would have put any reasonable person on notice that abuse was being inflicted.

While fear and embracement may have previously silenced the victims of Metropolitan Paisios, that moment has passed. In our experience, the sooner you respond compassionately to the survivors of the wrongfulness wrought by Metropolitan Paisios the sooner the healing process for victims and the Church can begin. Avoidance and delay serves only to squander your own moral authority

Press reports indicated that the Ecumenical Patriarch ordered Metropolitan Paisios to leave the United States. It has also been reported that the Patriarchate is planning to reorganize the Monastery in Astoria and its Dependencies in the U.S. administratively, financially and legally. Yet nothing has been done to respond to the human suffering. It is fair to infer from these reports that the Church to date has been more worried about the possibility of scandal than responding to survivors and their families.

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At this time, we invite you to enter into a dialogue with us that will lead to a compassionate response to Andrew and others harmed by Metropolitan Paisios. Should you have any question or concerns, feel free to contact us directly, at 212-889-1300. We look forward to your prompt response.

Very truly yours,

THE ZALKIN LAW FIRM, P.C.


Irwin M. Zalkin

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- cc. The Deuterevon Andreas (via e-mail)
Chief Secretary: Archimandrite Elpidophoros Lambriniadis (via e-mail)
Theoliptos of Iconium (via e-mail)
Legal Department: St. Irene Chrysovalantou Monastery in Astoria