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His All-Holiness Bartholomaios, Archbishop of Constantinople New Rome
and Ecumenical Patriarch
Rum Patrikligi,
Halic-Fener
Istanbul 34220
Turkey

Your All-Holiness,

Christ is Risen!

Having given much thought to the conflict that has disturbed the life of the Diocese of Sourozh for the past few years, and having spoken, as you know, with Archbishop Gabriel of Comana, I have concluded that the way to resolve our difficulties is for me to ask to be received under the *omoforion* of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, together with those clergy and parishes that wish to follow me.

Knowing that as Ecumenical Patriarch you have a special concern for the well being of the whole of the Orthodox Church, and that the Archdiocese of Russian Parishes in Western Europe is the ecclesial entity most like us in its history and internal governance, I humbly ask that you accept me with my clergy into your jurisdiction as a separate diocese alongside the Archdiocese of Western Europe. I am confident that we would all be able to work together fruitfully for the good of our Holy Church.

Meanwhile I have written to His Holiness Patriarch Alexis of Moscow and All Russia, petitioning to be released from the Patriarchate of Moscow and allowed to move to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. A copy of my letter is enclosed, together with a copy of a letter I have written to the clergy of the Diocese and to the members of the Diocesan Assembly, and an 'information sheet' that they have also received. These will make clear the situation that has prompted my request.

Although I make this move with some sadness, having lived for many years within the Patriarchate of Moscow, nevertheless it seems to me and to many others in the Diocese to be a very positive way forward that will enable us to consolidate and continue the work begun by the late Metropolitan Anthony.

Archbishop Gabriel, head of the Archdiocese of Russian Orthodox Parishes in Western Europe within the Ecumenical Patriarchate, is fully aware of my situation and of what I have done.

Asking for your holy prayers, I am

Your humble servant in Christ,

BISHOP OF SERGIEVO
Administrator
Diocese of Sourozh