

## UNION WITH ROME?



St. Raphael of Brooklyn

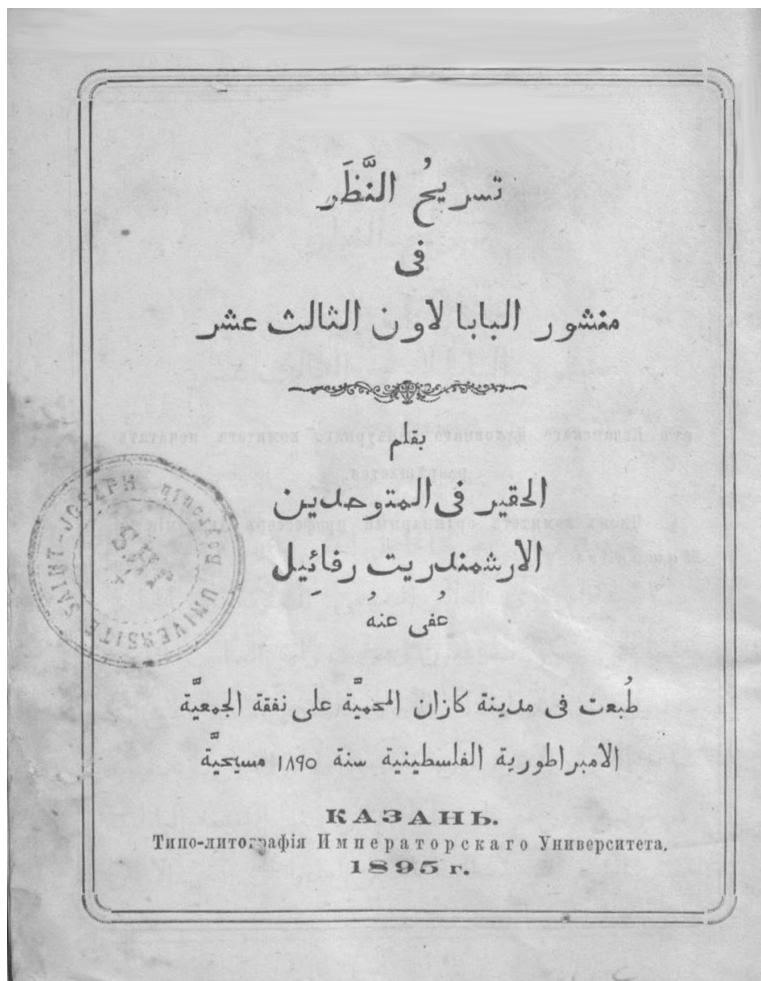
The Works  
of Saint Raphael of Brooklyn

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Volume 1: In Defense of Saint Cyprian

Volume 2: On the Steadfastness of the  
Orthodox Church

Volume 3: Union with Rome?



Original cover reads:

Setting our Sights on the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII by the humble among the Monastics: Archimandrite Raphael. May he be forgiven. Printed in the protected city of Kazan at the expense of the Imperial Palestinian Organization in the year 1895 A.D.

KAZAN. Typo-lithography of the Imperial University. 1895.

# **Union With Rome?**

## Refuting the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII

Saint Raphael (Hawaweeny)  
Bishop of Brooklyn



Uncut Mountain Press

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## Refuting the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII

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Scriptural quotations are emended to better reflect the original text.

Saint Raphael (Hawaweeny) of Brooklyn, 1860–1915.

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II. Orthodox Christian Ecclesiology

“Let no one imagine that we hold the spirit of fanaticism or the hatred of peace toward the divided Christian churches and their union. On the contrary, the spirit of peace, love, and unity is the spirit of the Orthodox Church, and it spreads it in the hearts and minds of its children from their youth through its Christian teachings and daily and nightly prayers. But we cannot accept a false union such as the one presented to us by Pope Leo XIII...”

— From Part 9



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St. Raphael of Brooklyn



# INTRODUCTION

## From the Translator

### THE WRITINGS OF SAINT RAPHAEL

The Arabic writings of St. Raphael of Brooklyn are not well known to the English reader. Hundreds of pages of articles and sermons written by St. Raphael were published in the *Word* magazine since it was founded by him in 1905 until his repose in 1915, along with many articles published posthumously. They cover a large variety of dogmatic, scriptural, historical, spiritual, liturgical and pastoral topics. We have been translating selections of these articles at Uncut Mountain Press. Saint Raphael also has writings and translations in Arabic of Church history, apologetics and liturgics, as listed in his life published by Archdeacon Emmanuel Abu Hatab.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See “The Affections of the Children toward the Most Benevolent among Hierarchs and most Affectionate among Fathers” (A’watif al abnaa’ nah’wa khayr al roo’assaa’ wa a’ataf al ‘abaa’ - عواطف الأبناء نحو خير الرؤساء وأعطف الآباء), Archdeacon Emmanuel Abou Hatab, 1915.

One of these writings is a response by Saint Raphael to an encyclical by pope Leo XIII in 1894<sup>2</sup> where the pope calls the Orthodox Church to be united with Catholicism under his rule. Saint Raphael's response to that encyclical was one of several responses written by the Orthodox (the most important response being the one written by the Orthodox patriarchs of the East in 1895<sup>3</sup>—considered the last document defending the Orthodox Faith against papist heresies jointly written by all Eastern Orthodox patriarchs).

### **WHO WAS POPE LEO XIII?**

Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903) was the successor of Pope Pius IX. He was educated by the Jesuit order and ruled as pope from 1878–1903. He wrote several encyclicals aiming to start a dialogue with the non-Catholics as well as all the world. He is known to be against Freemasonry and secular Liberalism. It is said that he saw a terrifying vision of Satan's evil plans against his church. For instance, he complains in the encyclical about the rise of hatred and dissensions against the Roman church along with the turmoils of revolution in Europe. He claims that the union of the East and West is a way to face these dangers and also to prevent wars. Thus, he invites the churches of the East to be united under his rule. In the encyclical, he reiterates the usual papal claims of their primacy and authority over all the Church using the usual clever language to provide twisted and truncated truths.

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2 Praeclara Gratulationis Publicae, “The Reunion of Christendom,” Pope Leo XIII – 1894. Available here: <https://www.papalencyclicals.net/leo13/113praec.htm>

3 This response is available here: [http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/encyc\\_1895.aspx](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/encyc_1895.aspx)

**THE RESPONSE OF SAINT RAPHAEL OF BROOKLYN**

In contrast with the vague language of Pope Leo XIII, Saint Raphael provides clear and firm responses and rebuttals to the claims in the encyclical. No, says Saint Raphael, a union with Rome cannot be established based on falsehoods such as papal primacy and other heresies and fabrications. He focuses on refuting the papal claims of primacy and supremacy over the Church, as well as all arguments used by papal apologists to support these claims, such as the argument of the pope being the successor of Saint Peter the Apostle, and that Saint Peter had authority over all other Apostles. The citations provided by Saint Raphael from the Church Fathers, as well as both eastern and western historians, prove his vast knowledge of Church dogma and history. For instance, he cites historians such as Fleury and Pitzipios who, to our knowledge, have never been explored nor studied in other Orthodox books.

The second part of the response of Saint Raphael focuses on addressing the promises of Pope Leo XIII to the Eastern Orthodox Church should they accept uniting with him. Here, Saint Raphael reminds the pope and warns the Orthodox faithful of the horrific consequence of uniting with the pope. Unfortunately, experience has taught us that we cannot trust any type of assistance that the pope can grant to the Orthodox Church. The west, even before the days of pope Leo XIII, has been corrupted by different Christian-hating ideologies and sects, such as Freemasonry, Socialism, Anarchism, etc. A major reason for the formation of these ideologies is the terrible feudal system governing the papist administration and their legalist theology and indulgences. As for the material goods promised by the pope, these cannot be trusted either, given that the majority of the people in Europe at that time had been living in poverty.

But the greatest danger discussed by Saint Raphael is the creation of Uniatism (e.g. the so-called “Byzantine Catholics”) by the pope before the nineteenth century. This brought nothing but division and subjugation of these groups to the papist mentality and institution. Saint Raphael also alludes to the atmosphere of Ecumenism that was created within the Uniate circles in the east. The combination of the “Byzantine,” Syriac, Armenian, etc. denominations, who disagree on different matters of faith within themselves as well as with Catholicism, who were proselytized and united under the pope, is the first type of Ecumenism that infested the body of believers in the east and has been intensifying and spread in the west.

Throughout his response, Saint Raphael is eloquent and astute in his analysis and unraveling of the claims of Pope Leo XIII. The pope’s encyclical is impressive in its twisting of the facts by mixing truths and falsehoods, and providing half-truths, while using flattering language and words.

### **THE AUTHENTICITY OF SAINT RAPHAEL’S RESPONSE:**

The translator of this book has been interested in Orthodox writings published before the twentieth century. While reading the life of Saint Raphael referenced above, we came to learn about the titles of books written by Saint Raphael. One of them is the very famous Great Euchologion that Saint Raphael collected from several Greek and Russian resources and made available in Arabic. Another title that stood out is the current book which title rhymes in Arabic “tasree’h al nadh’ar fi manshoor al baba Lawon al th’aleth’ a’shar - تسريح النظر في منشور البابا لاون الثالث عشر, which literally translates into “Setting the sight in the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII.” This title seemed intriguing to us in the beginning, but after learning about the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII and the reaction to it of the Patriarchs of the East, we became quite

curious as to what a Saint of the Orthodox Church has to say about it.

Our research for this book started with available online search engines. We discovered that it was actually a book, not a manuscript, and that a copy existed, ironically, in Saint Joseph University, a Jesuit institution in Lebanon. While such a book could be found in other libraries, we focused our efforts to access the old library of Saint Joseph University and obtain a copy. After several attempts, we were successful in obtaining a PDF copy with the help of faithful Orthodox friends in Lebanon.

As the Arabic text suggests, the text was composed in the Theological Academy of Kazan in Russia in December of 1894 and published in 1895, i.e., very soon after the publication of the papal encyclical and just before Saint Raphael arrived to North America. At that time, he was still an Archimandrite, as stated on the book's cover page. The text style and cited references prove that the response is written in Arabic by Saint Raphael himself, not in another language and then translated into Arabic. First, the style of the text matches the style used by Saint Raphael in his thesis at Halki Theological Academy. Some cited works are also the same in both Saint Raphael's thesis and response to Pope Leo XIII. Second, the Arabic text contains Arabic expressions and a verse of Arabic poetry suggesting that it is originally written in Arabic.

While translating the text, we encountered names of authors (historians, theologians, etc.) and of works of theology and history that were transcribed into Arabic. It was not an easy task to discover the names of these authors and works. But with the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions such as Copilot and Gemini, we were able to not only discover nearly all of these names, but also to find the original quotations. We were delighted in such an effective use of the rising AI engines and we pray that they will be

used in a constructive manner for the benefit of the Church and the spreading of the Orthodox Faith.

### **THE RELEVANCE OF SAINT RAPHAEL'S RESPONSE FOR OUR TIME:**

When working on this text, we were tempted to think that this response of Saint Raphael to the encyclical of pope Leo XIII in 1894 is nothing but a mere dwelling in the past and its glories, and that it is not applicable to our days. On the contrary, while examining the events of our days, it is apparent that we are facing many of the same challenges and circumstances of the late nineteenth century. As we say “history repeats itself.”<sup>4</sup> Indeed, efforts are likewise underway today that serve to subjugate the Orthodox Church and Faith to Papalism, but with much greater subtlety and refinement, with machinations ranging from political pressure to emotional sentimentality and cultural assimilation.

On one hand, the powers against Christianity are increasing in the world and we need to unite to be able to confront them—a major theme that is often raised. At first glance, one would logically reason that this is true. As we can see all over the world, there are real attempts to normalize practices that are against Christianity in our churches, such as sexual promiscuity and license, abortion, homosexuality, female priesthood, gender re-definition, and more. On the other hand, voices are demanding the union of the churches to face world poverty and other economical problems. Uniting with the pope seems a viable solution to all these challenges, given the influence and power that the

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4 As we reached the final editing stages of this book, Pope Leo XIV was elected. Is it a mere coincidence or providence that he is the Leo directly after Pope Leo XIII, the subject of this book?

pope has on the Western world. One can also reason that the pope and other voices encouraging such a union have good and honest intentions.

And yet, as Saint Raphael responded then to similar claims, we likewise respond today in the negative, as this is not how a true union could be accomplished. Even if the pope and others have good intentions, church union cannot be established under the pretext of “love” as it is preached today. Union cannot be established outside the truth of the One Holy, Catholic, Orthodox, and Apostolic Church, co-existing or being mixed up with the heretical teachings still clung to by the papacy.

An even more subtle and dangerous disease facing the Orthodox Church at this time is the danger of Ecumenism. As mentioned previously, Saint Raphael alludes to Ecumenism as it appeared among Uniates who sought to preserve their [eastern] beliefs and practices while uniting themselves to the pope (see Part 9). This is exactly the type of Ecumenism that we see nowadays. As Elder Athanasios Mitilinaios describes it: “What are you, Protestant? What am I, Orthodox? What are you, Roman Catholic? Look, let’s just forget our differences; let’s put them aside. Let’s just forget our histories and what brought us here. All that matters is the present and a peaceful future. ‘Love is what counts. Love is what’s important.’”<sup>5</sup> Specific to Papalism, the role of Uniatism in the bolstering of ecumenistic efforts is quite obvious today. Eastern Catholics, themselves, openly claim they are the “bridge” between Rome and Orthodoxy.<sup>6</sup> Our present publication refutes all these claims, hence, it is not a mere dwelling in the past but rather addresses

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5 Elder Athanasios Mitilinaios, *Revelation: The Seven Golden Lampstands*, trans. Constantine Zalalas (Dunlap, CA: Zoe Press, 2016), p. 137.

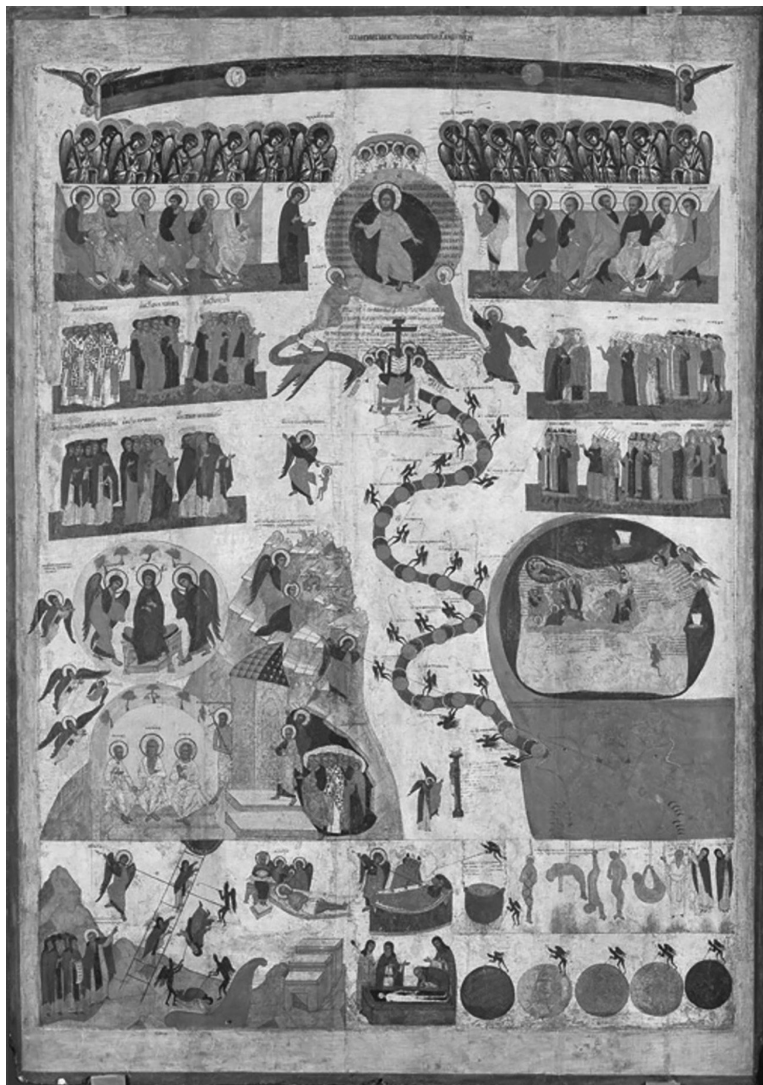
6 See for example: <https://melkite.org/faith/faith-worship/introduction>

contemporary dangers against which the Orthodox Church must stand firm, offering a clear exposition of the Faith.

By near-universal agreement, we are quickly approaching the *eschaton* and the fulfillment of the Lord's prophetic words for the last Christians. We can expect that the war waged by Ecumenism against the Orthodox Church and the Holy Fathers will intensify, becoming more refined and difficult to discern and confront. It is, thus, our hope that this confession of the Orthodox Faith will contribute to the sharpening of the faithful's discernment of spirits and watchfulness.

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have witnessed several unfortunate events and attempts to cause divisions in the Body of the Church. This should not cause us to fall into despair because Christ keeps sending us Saints and defenders of the Orthodox Faith, such as Saint Raphael of Brooklyn. May we stand steadfast in our Faith through their intercessions, and may we receive the Great Mercy of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, to Whom belongs all glory and worship, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.





Last Dreadful Judgment  
16th century, Novgorod (Russia)



St. Raphael of Brooklyn



## PART 1

### **The Autumn of Papal Glory**

There is no doubt that our current age, compared to all previous ages, is the one with the most need to unite the diffused powers of the Christian world and to associate them together, so that Christians, united under the banner of the glorious Holy Cross, are able to repel the vehement enemies of the Christian faith—by whom I mean the evil atheists: groups of materialists, socialists, nihilists, anarchists, and those like them, among the children of the papist church and all Protestant sects—who began in recent times spreading the teachings that God handed down with authority, not according to current scientific truths but according to weak imaginary assumptions. Thus, they began troubling, with their terrible teachings, the conscience of the simple faithful, and disturbed, by their horrible acts, the serene and healthy life of the people, especially in the West, where the papist church, being alienated from the remaining Eastern churches of Christ, became unable to repel the arrows of the enemies of the Christian religion. On the contrary, it brought hatred and abhorrence upon itself from many of its own children, let alone the remaining non-papist Christians, due to its several heresies, its many innovations, and the gross claims of its leaders that are at odds with the spirit

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## **UNION WITH ROME?**

REFUTING THE ENCYCLICAL OF POPE LEO XIII  
written by Saint Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn, typeset  
in Baskerville, and printed in this two thousand and  
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**GLORY BE TO GOD  
FOR ALL THINGS**

**AMEN.**