

**VOLOS ACADEMY FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDIES**  
**RESEARCH CENTER**

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Address of Dr. Pantelis Kalaitzidis

Director of the Volos Academy for Theological Studies

in Response to the Award of the Sankt Ignatios Order Prize

Södertälje, Stockholm, Sweden, December 10, 2024

Esteemed President Yusuf Aydin, and Members of the Board of Directors of Sankt Ignatios Foundation,

Dear Dean of Sankt Ignatios, Dr. Michael Hjälms,

Your Grace,

Dear Co-Laureate of 2023 Sankt Ignatios Order Prize, Rev. Dr. Jacob Thekeparambil

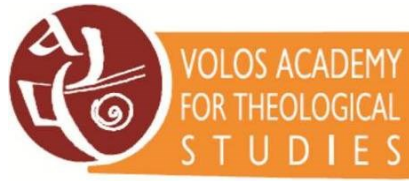
Dear Professors,

Dear Fr. Milutin Janjic,

Rev. Fathers, Dear students, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to warmly thank the Sankt Ignatios Foundation for making the effort to select me for the 2024 Order of Sankt Ignatios Foundation Prize. I am delighted to receive this prize during the international conference “Crises in Global Orthodoxy.” I am greatly pleased and privileged that the highly esteemed Sankt Ignatios Foundation has assessed and evaluated my contribution to the Church and theology, as well as my efforts “of creating an independent institution based on critical research in Orthodox theology maintaining academic integrity and academic freedom in a turbulent changing world,” and that the “very freedom of the academy and the church” has been considered at the core of my work, “making critique a vehicle of progression.”

This very exceptional award honors not just me, but also the theological institution I have been in charge for the past 24 years, i.e., the Volos Academy for Theological Studies in Greece. An institution that since 2000 has served as an open forum for thought and dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the global scholarly community of intellectuals, and has been recognized in 2014 as a Research Center by the



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Hellenic Ministry of Education, making thus the city of Volos and the Diocese of Demetrias a place for encounter and dialogue. Volos Academy's work, which focuses on eschatology, ecclesiology, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, religious nationalism, political theology, and an Orthodox theological encounter with modernity/postmodernity, has laid the groundwork for new independent theological institutions, transmitting the spiritual and scholarly legacy to future generations and has the privilege to creatively cooperate with other Orthodox theological institutions such as Sankt Ignatios.

Allow me to express once more my deep admiration for the groundbreaking work done at Sankt Ignatios, and my genuine gratitude for this distinguished recognition, as well as my great enjoyment for my participation in the international conference and the opportunity to get to know in person the people of your institution. I am happy to extend my thanks to the President Yusuf Aydin, to the Members of the Board of Directors and the Dean of Sankt Ignatios Dr. Michael Hjälm, with whom I have the privilege to work for many years already. It is also my pleasure and duty to thank my colleagues at the Volos Academy for a creative and fruitful cooperation along all these years, as well as the members of our Board of Directors and its Chairman, Metropolitan Ignatios of Demetrias for their trust and support during the last 24 years.

I look forward to further cooperating with your institution, as I look forward to cooperating with the Saint Ephrem Research Ecumenical Institute directed by Rev. Dr. Jacob Thekeparambil. I heartily wish the Sankt Ignatios Foundation success in its rich and innovative academic, theological, and ecclesial work, and to all of you, my prayerful wishes for a blessed Advent and a joyful Christmas celebration!