

Archimandrite Dr Athenagoras (Alexandros) Soupourtzis

Professor of Ecclesiastical and Canon Law
Department of Humanities and Practical Disciplines

ACADEMIC PROFILE

Archimandrite Dr Athenagoras (Alexandros) Soupourtzis is Professor in the Department of Humanities and Practical Disciplines at the Volyn Orthodox Theological Academy, where his teaching and research field is Ecclesiastical and Canon Law, Church-State Relations and Religious Freedom. His principal fields of teaching and research are Ecclesiastical Law, Law and Religion, Church-State relations, constitutional and European religious freedom, and Orthodox Canon Law. His work focuses particularly on the legal status and institutional organisation of the Orthodox Church, ecclesiastical justice, episcopal jurisdiction, the legal status of clergy and religious communities, and the interaction between ecclesiastical autonomy and the State legal order.

His research combines the methods of public, constitutional and human-rights law with the historical and normative study of Orthodox Canon Law. Particular attention is given to the legal interaction between internal Church governance, ecclesiastical jurisdiction and the constitutional order of the State. In the field of Canon Law, his work also takes account of its theological and ecclesiological foundations within the Orthodox tradition.

EDUCATION

- PhD in Theology (Canon Law), Department of Theology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA), 2024. Doctoral dissertation: The Bishop as Judge in Ecclesiastical Courts according to the Sacred Canons and the Acts of the Ecumenical Councils.
- Master of Laws (LL.M.), University of Sunderland, United Kingdom, 2022.
- Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.), University of Sunderland, United Kingdom, 2018.
- Master of Arts in Historical Theology, Department of Theology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA), 2017.
- Master of Laws (LL.M.), Law School, Democritus University of Thrace, Greece, 2009.
- Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.), Department of Theology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA), 2005.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor, Department of Humanities and Practical Disciplines, Volyn Orthodox Theological Academy (appointed to the position of Professor on 31 October 2024, Ref. No. 84). Teaching and research field: Ecclesiastical and Canon Law, Church-State Relations and Religious Freedom.
- Visiting Professor, Supreme Ecclesiastical Academy of Athens (academic years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026).

REGULAR TEACHING AT THE VOLYN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL ACADEMY

Regular teaching responsibilities include the following semester courses:
As Professor of Ecclesiastical and Canon Law, he has autonomous responsibility for the teaching, examination and grading of the courses assigned to him.

Semester	Course	Weekly teaching	Semester schedule
Winter	Canon Law	4 hours/week	13 teaching weeks
Winter	Criminal Law of the Orthodox Church	4 hours/week	13 teaching weeks
Summer	Religious Freedom	4 hours/week	13 teaching weeks

This teaching portfolio combines the internal canonical and disciplinary order of the Orthodox Church with the constitutional and legal dimensions of religious freedom.

REGULAR TEACHING AT THE SUPREME ECCLESIASTICAL ACADEMY OF ATHENS

As Visiting Professor, he has undertaken autonomous teaching, examination and grading over 13-week semesters during the academic years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026. The weekly teaching load is as follows:

Semester	Course	Weekly teaching	Semester schedule
Winter	Parish Administration and Organisation	4 hours/week	13 weeks
Winter	Law of Clergy and Monastics	2 hours/week	13 weeks
Spring	Ecclesiastical Protocol	3 hours/week	13 weeks
Spring	Canon and Ecclesiastical Law	4 hours/week	13 weeks

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Ecclesiastical Law and Law & Religion
- Church-State relations and ecclesiastical autonomy
- Constitutional and European protection of religious freedom
- Ecclesiastical justice, ecclesiastical procedural law and episcopal jurisdiction
- Legal status of Churches, clergy and religious communities
- Ecclesiastical autonomy and the limits of State jurisdiction
- Orthodox Canon Law and ecclesiastical governance
- Ecclesiastical criminal and disciplinary law
- Canonical marriage law, impediments to marriage, akribeia and ecclesiastical oikonomia
- Byzantine and Byzantine-Roman legal tradition
- Comparative Orthodox ecclesiastical law; inter-Orthodox and inter-Christian relations
- Legal and canonical protection of ecclesiastical cultural heritage

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

The Bishop as Judge in Ecclesiastical Courts according to the Sacred Canons and the Acts of the Ecumenical Councils. Athens: Elikranon, 2024. ISBN 978-960-652-199-7. Second, revised and expanded edition forthcoming under the title Ecclesiastical Justice: The Bishop as Judge in Canon and Ecclesiastical Law. Athens: Ant. N. Sakkoulas Publishers, forthcoming.

Impediments to Marriage: A Nomocanonical Approach in the Light of the Pre-Conciliar Conferences and the Decisions of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church. Athens: Elikranon, 2026. ISBN 978-960-652-255-0.

Impediments to Marriage in Canon and Byzantine-Roman Law: The Framework and Limits of Ecclesiastical Oikonomia. Athens: Elikranon, 2026. ISBN 978-960-652-254-3.

Scholarly articles and studies

“The Principle of the Natural Judge and the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Church of Greece: A Constitutional and Canonical Assessment of Law 5383/1932.” Accepted for publication; forthcoming in Synochi, scholarly electronic journal of the Church and Culture Laboratory, Department of Theology, NKUA (2026).

“The Bishop's Responsibility for the Administration of Ecclesiastical Property according to the Sacred Canons.” Accepted for publication; forthcoming in Synochi (NKUA, 2026).

“Prayer in Common with Non-Orthodox Christians and the Ecumenical Movement.” Accepted for publication; forthcoming in Synochi (NKUA, 2026).

Selected legal commentary and public scholarship

“The Monastery of St Catherine at Sinai as an International Legal Subject: Questions of Territorial Sovereignty and Religious Freedom.” Orthodoxia.info, 29 May 2025.

“Automatic Suspension and Deprivation of Clergy Remuneration Following Criminal Prosecution? Canonical and Legal Reflections on Article 347(14-16) of Law 4957/2022.” Dikastiko.gr, 3 November 2025.

“Baptism of a Child as a Means of Institutional Integration and Protection of Identity: Reflections on Greek Supreme Court Decision 42/2025.” Dikastiko.gr, 21 August 2025.

“Religious Symbols in Judicial Institutions in Light of Pending Applications before the European Court of Human Rights.” Lawspot.gr, 24 February 2026.

“The Protection of the Monastery of Sinai.” Ta Nea, 13 September 2025.

RESEARCH PROFILE AND FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

A broader selection of publications, research papers and working papers is available through his Academia.edu academic profile: Athenagoras Soupourtzis - Academia.edu. The profile provides access to work across Ecclesiastical Law, Canon Law, religious freedom, Church-State relations and related fields.

VISITING AND INVITED TEACHING

- Law School, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (9 February 2026): invited postgraduate lecture, at the invitation of Professor Konstantinos G. Papageorgiou, Professor of Ecclesiastical Law, entitled General Principles of Canon Law. The lecture addressed Canon Law as the *ius proprium Ecclesiae* and its distinction from State Ecclesiastical Law; canonical autonomy under Article 9 ECHR; the constitutional foundations of Canon Law under Article 3 of the Greek Constitution; the normative function of general canonical principles; and their application to ecclesiastical administration, ecclesiastical jurisdiction and the limits of State judicial review of canonical acts.
- St John of Damascus Institute of Theology, University of Balamand (2026): invited to teach Canon Law as Visiting Professor.
- School of National Security, Hellenic Police (interservice postgraduate school, P.D. 380/1996; awarding the Postgraduate Diploma in National Security Strategy and Policy), 2026–2027 (30th Educational Series, forthcoming): invited to serve as Adjunct Teaching Staff for supplementary lectures on religious freedom and national security, and on the protection of places of worship and religious cultural heritage, subject to completion of the formal appointment procedure.
- Hellenic Police Officers' Academy (Σχολή Αξιωματικών ΕΛ.ΑΣ.), 2026–2027 (forthcoming): Invited Lecturer (Διαλέκτης).

PROFESSIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

- Secretary of Synodal Committees of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece - Ecclesiastical Art and Music; Christian Monuments; and the Academy of Ecclesiastical Arts (since 2020).
- Collaborator, Chief Secretariat of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece (2016-2020).
- Collaborator of the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Church of Greece, serving at times as investigating officer and secretary under Law 5383/1932 (2014-2016).
- Parish Priest, Church of Agia Glykeria, Galatsi, Holy Archdiocese of Athens.

His institutional service has included work on matters of ecclesiastical administration, Canon and Ecclesiastical Law, ecclesiastical justice, sacred art and music, Christian monuments and the protection of ecclesiastical cultural heritage, together with scholarly and editorial work connected with conferences, exhibitions and publications undertaken within the institutional framework of the Church of Greece.

ADDITIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Executive Programme, Faith-Based Leadership in a Turbulent World, The Fletcher School, Tufts University (2022).
- Certified Adult Educator, national certification, Greece (2022).
- Diploma in Byzantine Music, with distinction, St Theodore the Byzantine School of Byzantine Music, Holy Metropolis of Mytilene.

LANGUAGES

- Greek (native); English; French.