



Епархія Чикагская и Средне-Американская
Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей

Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America
Russian Orthodox Church Abroad

Tel: (847) 298-5383
Fax: (847) 298-5380

P.O. Box 1367
Des Plaines, IL 60017

June 18/July 1, 2016
Martyr Leontius

St. John Chrysostom Community
House Springs, MO

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

At the request of Bishop Peter and I am writing this letter to expand on his Ukase 10/16.

As you no doubt recall, His Grace Bishop Peter had made a commitment to keep the St. John Chrysostom parish church open as long as Fr. Christopher is able to serve. Vladyka felt that it would have been simply unfair, and even cruel, to deprive Fr. Christopher of the comfort of serving in the temple that he has become accustomed to as his mental state deteriorated.

Although it has been difficult to find priests to serve the parish regularly since Fr. Michael departed, we have done our best and will continue to do so.

In order to comply with the Canons of the Holy Church, in that the St. John Chrysostom community was founded as a monastic community, as of **June 18/July 1, 2016**, the St. John Chrysostom parish has been reassigned as the Holy Archangels monastic community. This has been confirmed by a decision of the Synod of Bishops. It is important to note that this is in accordance with the 24th Canon of Chalcedon:

As for monasteries which have once been consecrated with the consent of the Bishop, they are to remain monasteries perpetually, and the property owned by them is to be kept safe.

It is also important to recall the 38th Canon of the Apostles:

Let the bishop have the care of all ecclesiastical matters and let him manage them, on the understanding that God is overseeing and supervising.

And the 41st Canon of the Apostles:

We ordain that the bishop have authority over the property of the Church: for if he is to be entrusted with the precious souls of men, much more are temporal possessions to be entrusted to him. He is therefore to administer them all of his own authority, and supply those who need, through the presbyters and deacons, in the fear of God, and with all reverence. He may also, if need be, take what is required for his own necessary wants, and for the brethren to whom he has to show hospitality, so that he may not be in any want. For the law of God has ordained that they

who serve at the altar should be nourished of the altar. Neither does any soldier bear arms against an enemy at his own cost.

As is clear from the above, reassigning the property as a monastery is in accordance with the Canons of the Holy Church, and it is within the bishop's purview to make this decision.

Several nuns will be moving to the property in the very near future. As a monastery, the material and spiritual management of the property will rest with the Spiritual Council of the monastery. That being said, the community of laity that has gathered in and around House Springs will be welcome at the Divine Services, and the monastery will provide social opportunities for the community, including the opportunity to have meals on Sundays and feast days. Bishop Peter is committed to seeing to it that the monastery be a place that welcomes the lay community of the area, even as the day to day management of the property rests with the monastic community. The biggest change that the community will experience is that we will transition parts of the monastery property to other use, and no longer be renting to tenants. We intend to treat the existing tenants with Christian compassion and understanding. Out of respect for their privacy, we will not discuss the specifics of anyone's situation publicly.

With this decision Bishop Peter has in fact far exceeded his promise to keep the St. John Chrysostom temple open until Fr. Christopher can no longer serve there. Effectively, God willing, the St. John Chrysostom temple should remain open, with regular Divine Services, indefinitely. And laity will always be welcome at the Divine Services.

On behalf of the Diocesan Council I congratulate you all on this newfound stability for your community! We hope that the laity will assist and support the monastery materially, just as the monastery will, by Bishop Peter's ukase, assist and support the local laity spiritually. With God's help this cooperation between the laity and the monastics will provide a safe, stable, prayerful haven for many to save their souls.

With Love in our Lord Jesus Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Very Rev. Fr. Gregory Joyce". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Very Rev. Fr. Gregory Joyce
Secretary of the Diocesan Council

CC: Very Rev. Fr. Martin Swanson, Dean