



**Епархія Чикагская и Средне-Американская
Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей**

**Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America
Russian Orthodox Church Abroad**

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August 27/September 9, 2016
Venerable Poemen the Great

Dear Father Rectors,

Please find attached a heartfelt appeal by our Metropolitan Hilarion regarding the terrible humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and the merciful work being undertaken by the Svyatogorsk Dormition Lavra to serve the refugees of this crisis.

As the Metropolitan rightly states – we cannot stand on the sidelines during such a crisis. This is especially true of those of us living prosperous lives in the West. We have the ability to help the suffering – and it is our Christian duty to do so.

By God's providence I will be in Ukraine with Frs. Gregory Joyce and Victor Trotskyy October 16-29 of this year. Therefore, rather than sending money from our diocese to the Synod, it is my intention to deliver the alms that our diocese is able to gather in person to Metropolitan Arseny, the Superior of the monastery.

Thus, with this letter I am instructing that following take place in our diocese:

- A collection or collections shall be taken up in each temple of our diocese to support the monastery and its good works to support the suffering in Eastern Ukraine (it should be made clear that the monastery has never used any political litmus test to disperse aid – whoever asks is helped – no matter their “side” in the civil war) on a Sunday or Holiday that you, as Rector, deem most appropriate for your local community. If you feel that making multiple collections is helpful I leave that to your pastoral discretion, and extol you for your zeal to help the suffering.
- All funds should be sent via check to (include in the memo section: Svyatogorsk Lavra):

Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America
Subdeacon Andrei Urtiew, Treasurer
P.O. Box 1367
Des Plaines, IL 60017

- Funds should arrive in Des Plaines not later than October 10, 2016. This would allow ample time for everything to be arranged for my trip on October 16. Please schedule your collection(s) with these dates in mind.

Thank you for your diligent attention to this important issue. Often there are tragedies in the world when we are unable to provide material help. Our prayerful assistance is always needed and

appreciated, but here the Lord has given us an opportunity to materially support those in need – in addition to our prayers. Please do continue to prayer for the suffering in Ukraine, but please also ask your parishioners to be generous in their support of this special appeal.

With Love in our Lord Jesus Christ,

+ Archbishop Peter

Peter, Archbishop of Chicago & Mid-America



NEW YORK: September 8, 2016

Appeal by the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad on Aiding Refugees in Holy Dormition Lavra

Reverend Fathers, brothers and sisters,
all the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad,

It has been already three years since Ukraine is engrossed in terrible internecine strife. Civil people are dying, migrating, and becoming internally displaced. Many residents of the Donetsk region are being forced to seek refuge in the Holy Dormition Lavra in Svyatogorsk.

The Svyatogorsk Monastery has always been the spiritual heart of Eastern Ukraine, and nowadays, it is also a mercy center for all Donbass. As soon as the fighting broke out, the Svyatogorsk Lavra, with the blessing of the Father Superior of the monastery, Metropolitan Arseny, started taking in civilians whose lives were in danger. The Pilgrims' guesthouse was given over for housing refugees. In the midst of the warfare, up to 1,000 refugees have lived in the Lavra, the majority of which were also fed in the monastery for free.

At present, the Svyatogorsk Lavra hosts 200 people, who, due to various circumstances, find it impossible to return home. Among them are children with their mothers, elderly women, the disabled, and those who have nowhere to return – their houses have been destroyed or it is still very dangerous with continued fighting. The outskirts of Donetsk are a vivid example of that. Plenty of people have been living in the Lavra for two years already. In the beginning of the military conflict, the Svyatogorsk Lavra attracted generous donations: in cash, food, and clothing, but nowadays, the help is limited and extremely rare.

Dear brothers and sisters! At this sorrowful moment for our Ukrainian brothers and sisters, we can't remain on the sidelines. I urge you to intensify your prayers for peace in the long-suffering Ukrainian land, to provide all possible assistance, and collect donations for the Svyatogorsk Holy Dormition Lavra, which became home for many refugees. The deadline of the collection is the end of October. The parishes should send the collected funds to subdeacon George Schatiloff, the Treasurer of the Synod of Bishops.

I invoke on you all and on your work of mercy God's blessing!

+HILARION

Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York,
First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

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НЬЮ-ЙОРК: 8 сентября 2016 г.

Воззвание Первоиерарха Русской Зарубежной Церкви о помощи беженцам, проживающим в Святогорской Лавре

Всечестные отцы, братья и сестры,
верные чада Русской Зарубежной Церкви!

Вот уже третий год на Украине идет ужасная междоусобная брань. Мирные люди гибнут и становятся вынужденными беженцами. Многие жители Донецкой области вынуждены искать убежища в Свято-Успенской Святогорской Лавре.

Святогорская обитель, всегда бывшая духовным сердцем Востока Украины, теперь является еще и центром милосердия всего Донбасса. Как только начались боевые действия, по благословению наместника обители митрополита Арсения Святогорская Лавра стала принимать мирных жителей, жизни которых угрожала опасность. Паломническую гостиницу отдали под жилье вынужденным переселанцам. В разгар боевых действий в Лавре проживало до 1000 беженцев, многие из которых бесплатно питались в Лавре.

Сейчас на постоянном содержании Лавры находится 200 человек, которые в силу разных причин не могут вернуться домой. Это дети со своими матерями, пожилые женщины, инвалиды, которым либо некуда вернуться - их жилье разрушено, либо дома еще очень опасно и непрестанно идут бои, как, например, близ окраин Донецка. Многие уже почти два года живут в Лавре. В первое время военного конфликта в Святогорскую Лавру шли хорошие пожертвования: финансовые, продуктами, вещами, а сейчас помощь оказывают крайне редко.

Дорогие братья и сестры! В это скорбное для наших украинских братьев и сестер время мы не можем оставаться в стороне. Призываю вас усилить ваши молитвы о мире на многострадальной украинской земле, оказать посильную помощь и провести в период до конца октября сбор пожертвований в пользу Свято-Успенской Святогорской Лавры, ставшей домом для многочисленных беженцев. Собранные деньги приходам следует отправить в канцелярию Архиерейского Синода на имя его казначея иподиакона Георгия Владимировича Шатилова.

Призываю на всех вас и ваши труды милосердия Божие благословение!

+ ИЛАРИОН

Митрополит Восточно-Американский и Нью-Йоркский,
Первоиерарх Русской Зарубежной Церкви.

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