

**Resolution of the Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America
March 18/31, 2009
St. Cyril of Jerusalem**

We the delegates of the Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America, meeting in the presence of the miraculous Kursk Icon of the Mother of God, give thanks to God for His providence in bringing about the recent All-Russian Church Council in which the united Russian Church elected His Holiness Patriarch Kyrill, whom we congratulate, and heartily pray that God strengthen him to take up the mantle of the ever-memorable Patriarch Alexei II, rightly dividing the word of truth and standing firm for the purity of the Orthodox Faith.

We also give thanks to God for the continued growth and strengthening of our diocese under the leadership of His Grace Bishop Peter, and by the prayers of their Eminences Metropolitan Hilarion and Archbishop Alypy. We pray that our diocese will continue to grow through its missionary endeavors, both as we reach out to those who have not heard the truth of Orthodoxy as well as to our own sheep who have strayed from the flock, seeking first that God would grant our own spiritual renewal during this holy season of Lent as we prepare to meet our resurrected Savior.

We ask our bishops for their archpastoral guidance on the many contemporary moral challenges we face in our time, and especially that they would speak forcefully to both our flock and to the world on the issues of the sanctity of marriage and the sanctity of life, and in opposition to abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, and fetal experimentation – including human embryonic stem cell research – which blasphemously seek to usurp God's role as the Lord and Master of our lives.

We call upon our pastors to encourage clerical and monastic vocations. We ask that those whom God may call to these vocations among our flock will answer in obedience. We thank God for the work of our diocesan Pastoral School in providing an avenue for the preparation of our clergy. We also pray that God will in due time bring about the establishment of an English speaking convent in our diocese, to provide both a field for our sisters and daughters who are called to live the monastic life, and to be a spiritual beacon and a place of pilgrimage for our diocese. We have the location to provide the field, but ask that God would send the laborers to work in His vineyard.

We wish to emphasize the importance of the instruction of our children in the faith, which is a responsibility first and foremost of their families, and is a responsibility that all share as the extended parish family. It is important that our church schools are not treated as if they were an optional feature of parish life, or as a matter of secondary importance, but instead as the key to the preservation, strengthening, and growth of our Church. To this end, we are establishing a committee composed mostly of church school teachers to review the various curricula that exist and to make recommendations to our parishes, and we hope that we will be able to work with other dioceses in this effort.

We call upon the faithful to support with their time, treasure, and talents their parishes as cheerful givers and as faithful stewards of all that God has given them. In turn, we call upon our

parishes to support the diocese and the Synod of Bishops, so that our bishops may better devote themselves *“to prayer and to the ministry of the word”*. (Acts 6:4)

We call for the development of a strategic plan that will lay out the mission and vision of our diocese, the short and long term goals that support that mission, as well as the practical steps necessary to achieve those goals. Furthermore, we encourage each parish to do likewise on a parish level.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

Passed unanimously by the gathered delegates of the Diocesan Assembly