



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

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

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4/17 January, 2010
Synaxis of the 70 Apostles

Rectors of the Diocese:

Christ is amongst us!

As all are no doubt aware, on January 12, 2010 a devastating earthquake struck Haiti – the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. With the blessing of His Grace Bishop Peter, Deacon Matthew Williams, a cleric of St. John Chrysostom Church in House Springs, MO, has traveled to the Dominican Republic with a medical relief team and will soon be entering Haiti. Fr. Matthew is reporting his progress to His Grace daily, and we hope that very soon he will be able to provide a full report on the status of our clergymen, faithful, and properties in Haiti. As of today we are aware that two of our priests there, Fr. Gregoire and Fr. Jean, have survived. We know nothing about the other clergymen, their families, the faithful, or our properties.

In recent disasters much of the aid money sent was wasted or lost to local corruption. Bishop Peter intends that the funds collected in our diocese as a response to this disaster will not be lost to such a fate. Rather, once Fr. Matthew's reports have been assessed a detailed plan for disbursement of funds collected in our parishes will be sent to the Rectors so that the faithful may be appropriately urged to give from their abundance to those suffering in Haiti. We hope to be able to help our Mission there directly, either by supporting the family of one of the clergymen if need be, or perhaps helping them to erect a new temple, again if need be.

In the mean time, Rectors are hereby informed to take up collections on all Sundays until further notice for the Diocesan Fund for those in Need of Assistance. These funds will be used directly for support of the Orthodox Christians in Haiti once we have been made aware of their needs by Fr. Matthew. Funds gathered at these weekly collections are to be sent to Andrei Urtiew, Diocesan Treasurer, at the address above.

With Love in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rev. Fr. Gregory Joyce
Secretary of the Diocesan Council