

Resolution of Diocesan Assembly, Oct 2-6, 2022

As representatives of the community of prayer which is our Diocese and buttressed here by daily participation in the Life-Giving Divine Services of the Holy Orthodox Church, we the delegates of the Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America, with the blessing, and under the guidance of His Eminence Archbishop Peter, give thanks to God for the many blessings He has poured out upon our Diocese in the past four years:

- By the election of our Council of Bishops, we have a new First Hierarch, His Eminence Nicholas, Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York;
- New missions have opened in Lubbock, TX; McHenry, IL; Madison, WI; Portage, WI; Traverse City, MI; Corpus Christi, TX; Lockhart, TX; and Marquette, MI.
- New Church buildings have been built or purchased in Austin, TX; San Antonio, TX; Minneapolis, MN; Ft. Wayne, IN; and Kansas City, KS.
- Nineteen new priests and eight new deacons now serve in our diocese;
- The Pastoral School continues training candidates to serve the Church both in our diocese and other dioceses throughout the world. Of the 49 graduates since its inception, 19 finished their studies in the last four years. More than 100 students are currently enrolled in the Pastoral School;
- Our Diocesan Youth Committee annually sponsors St. Herman conferences and coordinates resources for Church School programs. This year's conference will be hosted by Sts. Peter and Fevronia parish in Kansas City, KS, December 26-30, 2022.
- Our Diocesan Music Committee has been effectively supporting the liturgical singing in our parishes through in-person workshops, remote instruction, participation in St. Herman Conferences and valuable online resources;
- We have passed through the trial of COVID-19 as communities strengthened and unified in Christ;
- The Supreme Court of the United States overturned Roe v. Wade, reducing the presence of the sin of abortion in many of our communities, a legal decision which spurs us to remember our Christian responsibility to serve Christ through care for our neighbors in need, mothers and their children, born and unborn;

We have prayed that the All-Merciful Lord give rest to the soul of our recently-reposed First Hierarch, His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion, and to our previous Ruling Hierarch, Archbishop Alippy, and urge the continued prayers of our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ for them and for the clergy of our diocese who have reposed since we last gathered in 2018: Archpriest Martin Swanson, Hieromonk Nicholas (Chebotar), and priest Vasily Melnyk.

Echoes of the mourning, fear and lament arising from the current fratricidal war in Ukraine reverberate within our parishes, spurring us to prayers for peace and labors of mercy for those displaced and in hardship. We listened with interest to the report of His Eminence, Archbishop Gabriel, on the conflict and appreciate his participation and responses to our questions. We are grateful to God to learn from Archbishop Peter that the parishioners of our diocese have gathered more than \$88,000 to aid Ukrainian refugees and those suffering in Ukraine, and encourage such efforts to continue on the local and international level. We

learned of the current trials of the Church in Latvia and exhort the faithful to pray for Met. Alexander and his flock.

Aware of our great responsibility for the talents collectively entrusted to us by the Lord, we have resolved to attend to pressing needs within our diocese:

- We rededicate ourselves to supporting, nurturing, and investing in the youth of our diocese. On a parish level, this commitment primarily manifests itself in parish church schools, youth groups and choirs. Within the diocese, the annual St. Herman Conferences and ORPR Camp most visibly carry this torch. We urge each parish to welcome families to worship and to invite youth to serve the church – be it in the altar, the choir, the candle stand or some other way. The support of the spiritual formation of the youth within parish communities must be a conscious and creative act.
- Having been reminded that the Body of Christ as it exists within our diocese is manifest within each local liturgical community, the parishes, and that together these communities support our bishop as well as the diocese as a whole and that the diocese further supports our Metropolitan and the Synod of Bishops, love for God and for our neighbor prompts us to share the gifts generously bestowed to each of us through ungrudging, regular and liberal payment of diocesan dues.
- We have charged the Diocesan Council to review the annual parish assessments, which have not increased since 2018 as well as Archbishop Peter's salary, which has not changed since 2011.
- We appeal to our brothers and sisters in Christ to also donate to the St. John Kochurov Society since it funds the particular needs of the youth, mission parishes and monastic communities.

We rejoice at the presence of Lord's Most Pure Mother with us through the miracle-working, myrrh-streaming Hawaiian Iveron Icon of the Mother of God at the patronal feast of our host parish, the Holy Mother of God Orthodox Church in Austin (Georgetown), TX. Our Assembly concluded with the festal vigil and hierarchical liturgy, including ordinations to the priesthood of deacon Gregory Solis and to the diaconate of Christopher Morgan.

We are grateful to and appreciate that Presbytera Eugenia Constantinou, Ph.D., has instructed us about the Orthodox *phronema*, the mindset which Christ imparted to the Apostles and which they passed on to their disciples and ultimately has come down to us. Just as it has through the centuries, this spring of living water sustains the faithful and has been palpably present in the warm fellowship of our Assembly, for which we earnestly give thanks to Christ the Good Shepherd.