

Holy Eparchial Synod Convenes Meeting

NEW YORK - The Holy Eparchial Synod of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America convened for its regular meeting in the Synodal Chamber at the Archdiocesan headquarters on October 15 and 16. His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America presided at the meeting, with the participation of the Members of the Synod.

The Synod deliberated extensively on many matters including the following:

1) **Liturgical Matters:** The Synod received the approval of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the English translation of the text of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and decided to proceed with its publication for the liturgical needs of parishes of the Archdiocese as well as a special publication with rubrics to be used by priests. The Synodal Committee on Liturgical Matters will continue its task of translating the texts of Vespers and Orthros into English.

2) **Canonical Matters:** a) The Synod deliberated on disciplinary matters regarding clergy, and the necessary decisions were made. In addition the Synod deliberated on the proper preparation of candidates to the priesthood and on the criteria for their ordination.

3) **Administrative Matters:** The Synod discussed a variety of administrative subjects regarding parishes and Holy Monasteries of the Holy Archdiocese.

4) **Pastoral Care Matters:** The Synod discussed at length matters regarding the youth and ways to reach out to them. The discussion included mention of the continuous efforts made in this direction by each of the Metropolises of the Holy Archdiocese, and relevant ideas were exchanged.

The institution of family and ways to strengthen it against the attacks of the negative influences of the modern society were also discussed.

5) **Education:** There was discussion on the efforts by parishes and Metropolises in regard to Day schools, Charter schools and

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Trakatellis Fellowship Fund Awards Scholarships

The Christos and Georgia Trakatellis Fellowship Fund was established in 2011 by Archbishop Demetrios and his brother, Professor Antonios Trakatellis, in memory of their parents, Christos and Georgia.

The Fund offers fellowships to graduates of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology to study Greek language, Hellenic culture and liturgical practice. These studies can take place in the United States or, preferably, in Greece or at the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The study could be part of an established academic program (doctoral or master levels) or part of a free program which should be well structured and clearly defined in view of the above stated purpose of the Fund.

Candidates shall be chosen based on merit and need. The amount of the fellowship is \$3,000 per semester for up to two semesters. One or more full or partial fellowships are awarded annually.

For the 2014-15 academic year, fellowships were awarded to Fr. Michael Varlamos (Grosse Pointe Woods, Mich.) and Michael and Anna Kallis (Brookline, Mass.). It is expected that the Fellowship will once again be available for the 2015-16 academic year. Applications will be available at the end of January 2015 on the website of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, www.goarch.org. Applications may also be requested in February 2015, by e-mailing scholarships@goarch.org



The Hierarchs of the Assembly of Bishops meeting in Dallas.

Dimitrios Panagos photo

Assembly of Bishops Renews Commitment to Greater Cooperation, Applauds Work of Its Agencies

DALLAS -- The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America convened for a series of meetings at Holy Trinity Church on Sept. 16-17 that also featured a video message from Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

The Assembly began the evening of Sept. 15 with a Doxology (service of thanksgiving) presided over by Assembly Chairman Archbishop Demetrios of America. He expressed his wish that the evening would make the faithful more aware of the sacred and great work that the Lord is doing through the Assembly.

Following the Doxology, a panel of bishops answered questions submitted by those in attendance.

Questions pertained to the work of the Assembly, including youth ministry, inter-church relations, evangelism and outreach, and challenges facing the Orthodox Church today, including questions of language, administrative reorganization, and the persecution of Christians in the Middle East.

Five bishops were on the panel: Archbishop Demetrios (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese); Bishop Basil (Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America); Bishop John (Russian Orthodox Church in the USA), Archbishop Nicolae (Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese); and Bishop Gregory (American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese).

The panel was moderated by Archimandrite Nathanael Symeonides, a member of the Assembly's Secretariat. The event was professionally videotaped and will be available on the Assembly's web site.

Holy Trinity Church hosted the event, with the participation of several Dallas-area Orthodox parishes.

Official deliberations began on Tuesday, Sept. 16, after a morning Divine Liturgy and memorial service for Metropolitan Philip of blessed memory, who passed away in March. Archbishop Demetrios officiated.

In opening remarks following the Divine Liturgy, the Archbishop said the Assembly's convening would "certainly send a clear message to the world that we, the members of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops are all one in Christ through His life, death and resurrection. We have begun our work with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, and the partaking of His One Body and Blood, thus constituting His One Holy, Undivided and Sacred Body."

His Eminence called on the Assembly to intensify its work in preparation for the Holy and Great Synod of the Orthodox

Church, which is scheduled to be held in spring 2016 in Constantinople.

The Assembly remains "prayerfully and painfully aware of developments" in the U.S. and abroad, said His Eminence, including the persecution of our brothers and sisters in the Middle East, the violence in Ukraine that has caused suffering for our Orthodox brethren, and attacks, both direct and indirect, on our Faith in various forms of atheism, agnosticism and perverse religiosity, including a constant attempt by society to redefine what is moral.

The Ecumenical Patriarch delivered his video message to the Assembly on Sept. 17.

"We are addressing you because the time has surely come for us to move beyond words to actions ... We are called to put our theory and theology into policy and practice. We are called to move beyond what is 'mine' and what is 'yours' to what is 'ours,'" said His All-Holiness. (The video can be viewed on the Ecumenical Patriarchate's website).

"All of the Primates of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches look to your Assembly with hope and optimism, recognizing with spiritual joy and pride that you comprise the largest in number and broadest in representation of our Churches," His All-Holiness continued. "As you gather in Dallas over the next days, remember that ... you are visibly and tangibly expressing both the unity and the diversity of our Church."

The Ecumenical Patriarch added: "Our brief greeting is not simply formal or conventional ... We are addressing you because the time has surely come for us to move beyond words to action ... We are called to put our theory and theology into policy and practice. We are called to move beyond what is 'mine' and what is 'yours' to what is 'ours.'"

The session featured presentations by the directors of the Assembly's seven agencies: International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), Orthodox Christian Network (OCN), Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF), Orthodox Christian Education Commission (OCEC), Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM), and the Eastern Orthodox Committee on Scouting (EOCS).

Each agency provided an overview of its history, current activities and challenges. The presentations underscored the fact that, through their pan-Orthodox ministries, the agencies are and have been for many years manifesting the love and unity of the Church "on the ground" - re-

sponding to emergencies, assisting those in need, spreading the Gospel, visiting the prisoner, and educating and ministering to the Church's youth.

In the afternoon session, the Committee for Canonical Regional Planning presented its report, which led to a discussion about the canonical anomaly of multiple bishops in one city. Hierarchs constructively shared their opinions, and after a candid and collegial discussion, agreed to continue working toward greater unity.

In anticipation of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, which is to convene in spring 2016, the hierarchs reaffirmed their commitment to actively prepare one or more proposals for its consideration, as has been requested by the Holy Autocephalous Churches.

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CLERGY UPDATE

Assignments

Fr. Jordan Brown - Sts. Peter & Paul Church, Boulder, Colo. 10/01/14

Fr. Thomas Cokotis - Holy Trinity Church, Holyoke, Mass. 10/01/14

Suspensions

Fr. Adam (Adamantios) Metropoulos 09/15/14

Change of Address

To submit a change of address:
Contact Soula Podaras
at 212.774.0235

e-mail: spodaras@goarch.org
fax: 212.774.0239.

Or regular mail to:

Orthodox Observer,
8 E. 79th St., New York, NY 10075-0192

Be sure to include old address,
new address and name of parish.