



Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

April 14, 2013
Fourth Sunday of Great Lent
St. John of the Ladder

ARCHPASTORAL LETTER OF BISHOP MATTHIAS

Dear Clergy and Faithful in Christ,

Christ is in our midst!

It is with great sadness that I write this final Archpastoral Letter to the Diocese of the Midwest to which God called me, elected me and consecrated me to serve. After a great deal of prayer and consultation with personal advisors, I have chosen to step down as Bishop of Chicago and the Diocese of the Midwest in obedience to the wishes of the Holy Synod, effective April 15, 2013. It is my hope that my stepping down will end the ordeal allowing the diocese to move toward healing. I plan to move from Chicago sometime in mid-May 2013. I understand the mistakes that I have made in all of this and take responsibility and blame for the part that I have played in this.

I cannot thank enough the clergy and faithful of this diocese for their support through cards, emails, phone calls and prayers. I will never forget the love, loyalty and support that have been shown to me these last eight months.

My father, stepmother, and mother-in-law are all in poor health. With these events, I have been given the opportunity to minister to them in their last days and be closer to my own children and grandchildren. I have now been given the opportunity to live out my desire to be closer to family. I am considering this my move into retirement, and it frees me to minister in a variety of ways in which I have not been able in the past. What is most important to me is to continue to be obedient to God's will and to serve Him as fully as I am able.

In conclusion, I ask for everyone's forgiveness for my failings, my mistakes and sins. In turn, I assure everyone of my forgiveness. I love this diocese. I love all of the clergy and faithful of this diocese. All will be kept in my unworthy prayers. I place judgment on no one. I pray for all. Please remember me in your prayers. May God bless all!

Your unworthy servant in Christ,

Matthias
Bishop of Chicago and the Midwest

To be read aloud from the amvon after the Divine Liturgy on this day.