



Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST
Office of the Archbishop

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Martyr Kalliope
No. 124

His Beatitude, The Most Blessed HERMAN
Archbishop of Washington and New York,
Metropolitan of All American and Canada
PO Box 675
Syosset, NY. 11791

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Archbishop of Washington & New York, Metropolitan of All America & Canada

Your Beatitude and dear Vladyka HERMAN,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Last evening I attended an informal gathering of concerned parishioners of one of my parishes here in the Chicago area, along with the parish clergy. The purpose of the gathering was to discuss the ongoing crisis which plagues the Orthodox Church in America. This was the second of such gatherings there, the first being convened in October of last year. Some of the participants were present at the first meeting; others were "new faces." Some were "cradle Orthodox," some converts, also recent converts; some were young, others not as young. In short, they were representative of the Diocese of the Midwest, and in reality, of the entire Orthodox Church in America. The gathering produced conversation, "give and take," which was open and honest and, as expected, it illustrated their sorrow, frustration, pain, lack of confidence, and, I report regretfully, their near despair. Their collective question which continued to haunt me as I returned to Chicago was, "Where is the Holy Synod?" I had not been able to reply to that challenge, but all had perceived that my silence provided the obvious answer.

Your Beatitude, I make this question my own: Where is the Holy Synod in all of this ?

Today I received a letter from which I now quote:

*"The Faithful of the OCA are left to believe that nothing has changed or will change, **that our hierarchs do not care how the OCA operates** (emphasis mine), that good stewardship is not important, and that theft is acceptable. In the meantime, the prayers, letters, and other public expressions of concern for the OCA are ignored. This seemingly oblivious*

behavior must stop because it is wrong, immoral, and is destroying the OCA."

Dear Vladyka, the sentiments of that letter were the same as those expressed by my good people last night. They feel that the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church in America have abandoned them, being uncaring, oblivious, ineffectual and impotent with regard to governance of the Church.

Your Beatitude, with respect I submit that the Holy Synod is collectively failing the people entrusted to its spiritual care by our failure to address the needs of the Church. We cannot appear to be indifferent to the pain and suffering of the people of God. We must become pro-active rather than reactive.

Your Beatitude, kindly allow your brother bishops to assist you in forming a plan of action to resolve speedily this affliction of our Orthodox Church in America and facilitate its immediate implementation in order to set our beloved Church on the path to recovery.

In accordance with Article II Section 4 of the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, I humbly request that Your Beatitude convene an extraordinary session of the Holy Synod during the month of July.

I am seeking the concurrence of our brother bishops to support this endeavor.

Dear Vladyka Herman, our people are counting on us; we cannot let them down again.

Asking Your Beatitude's holy prayers for my unworthiness, and with every good wish, I remain

Your Beatitude's brother and concelebrant,



†JOB
Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

cc:

The Most Reverend KYRILL, Archbishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania

The Most Reverend DMITRI, Archbishop of Dallas and the South

The Most Reverend NATHANIEL, Archbishop of Detroit and the Romanian
Episcopate

The Most Reverend SERAPHIM, Archbishop of Ottawa and Canada

The Right Reverend NIKOLAI, Bishop of Sitka, Anchorage, and Alaska

The Right Reverend NIKON, Bishop of Boston, New England, and the Albanian
Archdiocese

The Right Reverend TIKHON, Bishop of Philadelphia and of Eastern Pennsylvania

The Right Reverend BENJAMIN, Bishop of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the
West

The Right Reverend IRINEU, Bishop of Dearborn Heights, Auxiliary of the Romanian
Episcopate

The Right Reverend ALEJO, Bishop of Mexico City, Auxiliary to the Metropolitan