



Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Wednesday, 26 June 2024
Appearance of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God
№. 105

**ARCHPASTORAL DECREE
PROCLAIMING THE CELEBRATION OF
THE APPEARANCE OF THE *TIKHVIN ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD***

AS A VIGIL-RANK FEAST

**TO BE OBSERVED AT ALL CATHEDRALS,
CHURCHES, CHAPELS, MONASTERIES AND MISSIONS
OF THE DIOCESE OF CHICAGO AND THE MIDWEST**

*O people, let us hasten to the Virgin Theotokos and Queen, giving thanks to Christ our God,
And looking upon her miraculous image with contrition, let us fall down and cry out to her:
O Mary, our Sovereign Lady, who visits this land in the miraculous appearance of thy precious image,
save all the Christians in peace and prosperity, showing us as heirs of the heavenly life.
For to thee do we cry out with faith: Rejoice, O Virgin, the salvation of the world!
(Kontakion, Tone 8)*

WHEREAS in the Gospel of Saint Luke, we read of the visitation of the Virgin Mary to her kinswoman Elizabeth immediately after the Annunciation, where Elizabeth greets her with the words: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (*Luke* 1:42-43); and

WHEREAS our Lord Jesus Christ entrusted His Church to the maternal care of His own Mother when, upon the Cross, He spoke to His Beloved Disciple and Apostle John, saying: “Behold your Mother!” (*John* 19:27); and

WHEREAS the Holy Church has always sought the prayers and intercessions of the Mother of its Lord, honored Her as “Blessed Among Women,” and venerated her in the Holy Icons; and

WHEREAS the Icon of the Mother of God, the One Who Shows the Way, of *TIKHVIN* has been venerated by the faithful throughout the centuries of its recorded history, first in Jerusalem, then in Constantinople, Tikhvin, Riga, the war-torn counties of Europe, Chicago and the Midwest; and

WHEREAS in July 2004, being kept for over five decades in America, the Icon was returned to its Shrine within the Monastery of the Holy Dormition in Tikhvin, Russia; and

WHEREAS an Icon of the Mother of God of Tikhvin, made as a true copy and then blessed upon the original in the Tikhvin Monastery Church, was presented to Holy Trinity Cathedral and the Diocese of the Midwest by His Grace Bishop Mstislav of Tikhvin in 2015, during the Archpastoral Ministry of the ever-memorable Archbishop Paul; and

WHEREAS this Icon has been enshrined within the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity, the Mother Church and Diocesan Cathedral of the Diocese of the Midwest, resulting in an increasing knowledge and veneration to the Mother of God invoked in Her Tikhvin Icon; and

WHEREAS the Mother of God of *TIK̇HVIN* was proclaimed, on the fourth day of October in the year of Our Lord 2023, to be honored and venerated as the Sovereign Lady, Queen, and Protectress of the Clergy and Faithful of this God-protected Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest; and

WHEREAS the God-protected Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest continues to be blessed through the presence of the Chicago-Tikhvin Icon and has invited the diocesan Clergy and Faithful, and others, to prayerfully turn to the Most Pure Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, seeking her prayers and protection, asking her help in times of need and glorifying the All-Holy Trinity and recalling Her own words: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior” (*Luke 1:46-47*); and

WHEREAS the Holy Church continues to turn to the Most Holy Mother of God, invoked in Her wonderworking and miraculous Icon, as a source of heavenly blessing and graces; and

WHEREAS this love and devotion to the Mother of God of *TIK̇HVIN* is to be cultivated and promoted throughout the Diocese of the Midwest, in its parish and mission communities, and in the hearts of all the Faithful People of God:

IHEREBY PROCLAIM that on the twenty-sixth day of every month of June, the celebration of the APPEARANCE OF THE TIKHVIN ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD, is to be observed at all Cathedrals, Churches, Monasteries and Missions of the God-protected Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest, as a VIGIL-RANK FEAST.

Given on this twenty-sixth day of June in the Year of Our Lord 2024, in the presence of His Beatitude, the esteemed Metropolitan Tikhon, and my brother Hierarchs, the Clergy and Faithful gathered in prayerful assembly in the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Chicago, Illinois.

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May our Most Holy, Most Pure, Most Blessed and Glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, our Mother and Queen, invoked in her Holy Icon of *TIKHVIN*, ever intercede for us before the Throne of Her Son, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, to Whom be the power and the glory, now and forever. Amen.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel". The letter 'D' is large and stylized, with a crossbar that extends to the left and loops around the top of the 'D'. The rest of the name is written in a cursive, flowing script.

DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest