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## Closing Remarks

*His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, offered the following remarks during the closing Plenary Session, July 26, 2002*

Your Beatitude, Your Eminences, Your Graces, Venerable Clergy, Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:  
*Glory to Jesus Christ!*

As we bring this 13th All-American Council to a close, we recall the words of His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, in his report to the Council, wherein he called us to *Remember, Rejoice, and Renew*.

His Beatitude, together with the Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, Protopresbyter Robert Kondratick, eloquently reminded us of who we are, where we have come from and our many accomplishments since receiving our Autocephaly in 1970, as well as the direction that we should follow in the future.

Although the Autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America has not been recognized by all of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, we are in canonical communion with every one of them, and locally in the Americas and internationally the good accomplishments of our Church have been acknowledged.

We give thanks to Almighty God for the abundant blessings He has bestowed upon us, for the dedicated hierarchs, clergy and laity who over the years have labored well for the building up of the holy Orthodox Church in America.

To His Beatitude, Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, who with dedication and with much success served as Primate of our Church for the past 25 years, we offer our heartfelt thanks and appreciation and our best wishes in his retirement. We assure him of our continued love and prayerful remembrance and express our profound gratitude for his service to the Orthodox Church in America, and especially for the legacy that he received, cherished, protected and has now passed on.

Secondly, we rejoice that during the 13th All-American Council we have witnessed our maturity and rich diversity in living out the God-given vocation of the Orthodox Church in America. We rejoice in the leadership of our hierarchs to whom the care of our Church has been entrusted by Christ Himself.

We rejoice in the dedicated service of our Chancellor, those in the administration, the members of the Church Ministries Units and all who are part of the Chancery and commend them for a job well-done as revealed by the success of this Council.

We rejoice in the good work being done by the Seminaries in fulfilling their task of preparing candidates for the priesthood, choir directors and other laborers for the Vineyard of Our Lord.

We are grateful to our clergy for their dedication in offering spiritual instruction and direction to the faithful entrusted in their care.

We are grateful and rejoice for our laity who offer their support to the local parishes and the whole Orthodox Church - especially those who willingly serve on Parish Councils and those who share their talents in the education of our children.

We rejoice in our youth and especially those present at this Council, who through their good actions reveal their love for God and His Church.

Finally, Beloved in the Lord: having recalled the great gift that we received and rejoicing and giving thanks for all that by the Grace of God we were able to accomplish, in the words of St. Herman of Alaska, let us from this day, from this hour and from this very minute be renewed in the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in Whom and by Whom Our Heavenly Father has claimed us as His own Chosen People - a people renewed by the Holy Spirit, testifying to Jesus Christ, performing works of righteousness to His glory.

“May the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.” (2 Corinthians 13:14).