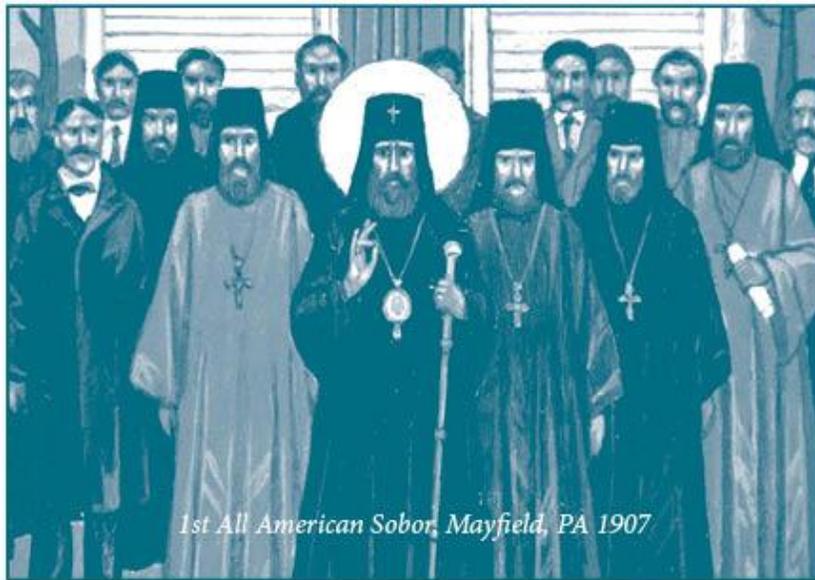


# THE 18TH ALL AMERICAN COUNCIL



## HOW TO EXPAND THE MISSION

JULY 20-24 2015 • ATLANTA, GA

### **DELEGATE HANDBOOK**

*BRING THIS HANDBOOK TO THE AAC  
AND PLACE IT IN THE NOTEBOOK  
PROVIDED AT REGISTRATION*

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The Preconciliar Commission has prepared this Handbook to help you to understand the role, structure, procedures and special features of the Eighteenth All-American Council of The Orthodox Church in America, to be held in Atlanta, GA from July 20 to July 24, 2015. It also outlines your responsibilities as a delegate and the procedures related to your preparation for and participation at the 18th All-American Council.

In anticipation, we welcome you to the Council, and prayerfully hope that it will be a meaningful and productive gathering for The Orthodox Church in America.

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### Orthodox Church in America

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Metropolitan of All America and  
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#### His Grace Bishop Mark

Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern  
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#### Local Committee

#### Archpriest Alexander Fecanin

Clergy Chair

#### Michaela Staskiewicz

Co-Lay Chair

#### Barbara Massoudi

Co-Lay Chair

All American Website  
<http://18aac.oca.org>

May 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

As we gather in July in Council we are reminded that it is the Holy Spirit who has assembled us here today not to do the work of the Orthodox Church in America, not to do the work of our diocese or parish, but rather we are brought together to do the work of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As we deliberate let us take up our work with the knowledge that we are gathered here to seek and discern the will of God in our all endeavors.

During this, the Eighteenth All American Council, and the thirty-first conciliar gathering of the Orthodox Church here in America, we are brought together not only to consider, but to act on the challenge to "Expand the Mission" as given by Saint Tikhon at the first All American Sobor in 1908. While our week will be full of reports, Statue revisions, motions, resolutions and all the necessary actions to insure the continued maintenance and growth of our Orthodox Church in America, we must keep our focus on the mission of the Orthodox Church. As Orthodox Christians our way in the world is simple. It is not always easy, but it is simple. We are charged to do but a few things: love one another and spread the Word of God. I pray that this week will give us the opportunity to listen to one another, share our stories and leave this Council with new ideas, with a renewed zeal, and with a focus on Christ and the salvation that is offered through Him and His holy Church.

Each All American Council is a significant event in the life of the Orthodox Church in America, but I believe very strongly that this particular Council will be a turning point in the life of the Orthodox Church in America. A Council from which a new zeal and a renewed vision will be launched carried by the work and prayers of Saints Herman and Innocent and all the other countless saints known and unknown who came before us to make our Orthodox presence and witness here in America a reality.

As we gather in Council, as family, we are given this opportunity to grow together in fellowship and worship; to get to know one another better, and to meet new friends and fellow members of our Orthodox Church in America. We gather together as any family does, in reunion so that we may support each other as we answer the calling to which we all have been called; as we continue to bear each other with love, and as we, "*endeavor to keep the spirit of unity in the bond of peace*". Eph. 4:3.

Assuring you of my archpastoral prayers, I remain,

Yours in Christ

TIKHON

Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All-America and Canada

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#### Barbara Massoudi

Co-Lay Chair

All American Website  
<http://18cac.oca.org>

May 2015

Your Beatitude, Your Eminences, Your Graces, V. Rev. Clergy, Rev. Clergy,  
Matushki and faithful,

Christ is in our midst!

On behalf of the Preconciliar Commission, we anticipate welcoming all the delegates and observers to Atlanta and the 18<sup>th</sup> All American Council. We ask God's blessing upon our work there and that He direct us in the building up of His Body of the Church. Planning an event of this magnitude requires time, energy, patience and coordination of efforts. The Preconciliar Commission is most grateful to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon for his presence and contributions in the PCC meetings and the Holy Synod of Bishops for their guidance and approval.

We began this process close to two years ago as we explored sites to hold the 18<sup>th</sup> AAC and began preparing an agenda. One of the highlights of leading such a project is the opportunity to meet so many of our remarkable faithful in the OCA who give so freely of their time and effort. As with any project of such magnitude, we develop a working relationship with so many people through our long hours of deliberation, planning and discussions. Perhaps this is the real treasure in working with such a talented group. I am very thankful to all of the volunteers both on the PCC and the local committee who have given so much to make this Council happen.

We are deeply indebted to the labors of the PCC, Protopresbyter Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky, V. Rev. Fr. Myron Manzuk, V. Rev. Fr. John Jillions, V. Rev. Eric Tosi, Fr. Benjamin Tucci, Carol Deerson, Elizabeth Mikhalevsky, Melanie Ringa, Peter Ilchuk, Barbara Massoudi, and Michaela Staskiewicz. Each brought their own gifts and talents the process and made significant contributions to planning this All American Council. It has been a joy working with them through the months of planning.

Additionally, we are most grateful for the various committee chairs who have labored and continue to labor for us to have a blessed and enjoyable Council. Our thanks to: Carol Vien, Chair, Bishops' Welcome Committee; Alexandra Ghetie, Key, Bishops' Welcome Committee; Jeff Condra, Chair, Exhibits and Displays Committee; Reader James Gordon, Chair, Workbook Committee; Matushka Angela Alessandroni, Chair, Credentials and Registration Committee; Fr. Thomas Alessandroni, Chair, Liturgical Appointments Committee; Deacon Gabriel Aldridge, Chair, Public Relations Committee; Gregory Carageorge, Key, Public Relations Committee; Larice Nescott, Chair, Secretarial Committee; Julie Moricz, Key, Youth Committee and all the volunteers who have labored and continue to labor for this event to be prayerful and productive to the glory of God.

We looking forward to greeting you all in Atlanta and pray that God will continue to bless us as we gather in Council as the Orthodox Church in America.

Yours in Christ,

Mark

Archbishop of Philadelphia  
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

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May 2015

Your Beatitude, Reverend Hierarchs, Clergy, and Faithful!

The Diocese of the South, the youngest Diocese of the OCA, welcomes our Hierarchs, Clergy, Monastics, Delegates and Observers to the God-protected city of Atlanta. The Diocese of the South is an integral member of an Autocephalous Church that identifies itself as an Indigenous Orthodox Church in North America. Our Orthodox identity has been forged here in the American South by hierarchs, priests, and missionaries, both clergy and lay.

Our Orthodox identity flows from the liturgical and sacramental life of the Orthodox Church in America. The Diocese of the South is the fruit not only of the original Valaam Mission to Alaska, but it is also the fruit of the faith brought by immigrants from Eastern Europe to the continental United States. The first converts to the Orthodox faith in the United States sought union with the Orthodox Church during the early days of the Virginia Commonwealth. One of our newest missions, located in Edenton, North Carolina, is in a town that once functioned as the largest port on the Eastern seaboard; in that same town lived three men who signed the Declaration of Independence. The Mission of the OCA is the Mission of the Diocese of the South.

We welcome you to a Diocese in which the faithful have always identified themselves as citizens of this land rather than immigrants, merely waiting to return to their homeland. While you are in Atlanta you will engage with delegates from parishes in large cities such as Atlanta, Miami, and Dallas, but you will also meet delegates from small towns you have never visited or about which you have never heard, such as Alpine, TX, Weatherford, OK, Cleveland, TN, and Anniston, AL. You will meet many steadfast parishioners in our parishes that come from well-established Orthodox parishes in the northeastern U.S. These parishioners bring stability, continuity, and know-how to our parishes. While you are here in Atlanta you will also encounter a renewed perspective on mission, so essential to the identity and future of the OCA, originally fostered in our faithful by Archpriest George Gladky, the first Chancellor of the Diocese, and by the Ever-memorable Archbishop Dmitri, its founding hierarch. We invite you to enjoy Southern hospitality and warmth.

We encourage you to form bonds with representatives of our parishes and missions with the hope that the life of your parish or mission will impact the life of our parishes.

We look forward to shaping together with you a strategy for the Orthodox Church in America as it faces the challenges that arise on our path of the proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

In Christ,

Archimandrite Gerasim (Eliel)  
Administrator  
Diocese of the South

# INTRODUCTION

Every three years, the bishops, clergy and lay delegates of the Orthodox Church in America gather together in Council. The Church assembles for various reasons: to pray together, to discuss the state of the Church, to share experiences and thoughts, and then to deliberate and to make decisions affecting her life. Historically, the Church has gathered to elect the primate, revise the statutes, hear reports on all aspects of the Church's life and work and thus, set priorities for that work. Just as importantly, we gather to pray, to learn from one another and have fellowship. This year's Council is a critical one as the Church builds upon the work of the past four years which were, in part, guided by the Strategic Plan developed at the 16<sup>th</sup> All-American Council in Seattle. The highlight of the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council will be two vitally important considerations. The first consideration is how we will support the work of the Church which will shift the Church towards proportionate giving and integrate a more equitable funding program for the Church. The second, and perhaps most critical, consideration is the Revised Statute of the Orthodox Church in America. This Revised Statute has been in the works for many years and has reached its current status through the work of the Statute Commission. While there are some changes found in the Revised Statute as well as some new Articles, the guiding notion in the work of the Revision is to accurately reflect the reality of the functioning of the Orthodox Church in America. The Holy Synod has blessed this Revised Statute and now places it before the Church for approval.

The theme of the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council was taken from the 1<sup>st</sup> All-American Sobor presided over by St. Tikhon (Belavin). The Sobor had convened in Mayfield, PA from March 5 to 7, 1907 and was one of the first gatherings of the Church in North America. St. Tikhon had been the ruling bishop since 1898 and had overseen some remarkable developments. He had received his recall to a new See in Russia just a few weeks before the Sobor and his replacement Archbishop Platon had not yet arrived so St. Tikhon presided at the Sobor. The theme that was developed "How to Expand the Mission" was adopted and discussed among the clergy and laypeople. What was also remarkable was that four clergy who would eventually be canonized were present at that Sobor (St. Tikhon, St. Alexis, St. Alexander and St. John). The Council established the precedence of conciliarity and mission that has come to characterize the Orthodox Church in America.

The Council will also integrate one afternoon of symposiums (Monday afternoon) and two afternoons of workshops (Wednesday and Thursday afternoon). The symposiums are voluntary information sessions which range from the Pension Plan to insurance questions to different ministry possibilities. The workshops are in-depth opportunities for delegates to reflect on the theme of the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council and its application to parish ministry. There are ten workshops which will be repeated each day so each delegate will have the chance to attend two at the Council. It is strongly recommended to take advantage of this unique opportunity and to bring back the material to the parish.

The Holy Synod had directed the Preconciliar Committee to specifically have a Youth Program at the Council as had been done in the past. There has been much planning that has gone into the Youth Program so that it mirrors the theme of the Council. It is strongly recommended that all delegates attend the final Plenary Session on Friday as the Youth of the Church will present their reflection on the theme of the Council. **Please note that the Youth Delegate area is off limits to delegates unless they have specific approved business or a youth in the program.**

Another highlight is that the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians (FOCA) will be holding its annual convention in conjunction with the Council. This is the first time that it is doing this and there will be much information on their good work in supporting the mission of the Orthodox Church in America as well as new opportunities for individuals and parishes to participate in FOCA. All delegates are invited to attend FOCA events on the weekend before the Council. For more information see the FOCA website at <http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org>.

An addition to the All-American Council is the Diocesan report. The Holy Synod has requested that the Council take on some more Diocesan character while maintaining the unity of the Orthodox Church in America. As such each diocese of the OCA will have an opportunity to reflect before the Council how their own diocese is working to “expand the Mission” in practical ways so that these could be shared and utilized throughout the Church. Other Church-wide departments, institutions and programs will be addressing the Council with the Council theme as the foundation of their reports.

There will also be numerous opportunities for fellowship during the Council which includes receptions, the formal dinner and other outings. Please take advantage of all that this Council has to offer. It is difficult to fit in everything into a five day program as well as address all the concerns and issues in the Church. However, this Council has made a balance between the work that needs to be done, the work that can be done and the work that should be done. Participation in the many facets of the Council will make such a balance successful.

Being a delegate to the All-American Council is an honor and responsibility. You have been chosen by your parish or institution to act on their behalf at the deliberations that will occur. However, you will also function as the representative of the Council to your parish or institution. The conciliar process of arriving at decisions, made in truth and love, can only come about when we are open, honest and respectful with each other, and also willing to accept the “will of the Holy Spirit,” as it becomes manifest at the Council. For this to happen, you are encouraged to spend time in quiet prayer and reflection before the Council. Please also spend some time in preparation for it by learning about how the Council works and what will occur during its sessions. For this purpose, the Preconciliar Commission has prepared this handbook as well as the Report Book. It will help you understand our roles and responsibilities as delegates as well as ensure you come to the Council as informed as possible. Please spend some time reading it before your arrival in Atlanta and ensure that any question you may have are already addressed. We look forward to a successful 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council.

# ROLE OF THE ALL-AMERICAN COUNCIL

According to the Statute of The Orthodox Church in America, "*the highest legislative and administrative authority within the Church is the All-American Council*" (Art. III, Sec. 1). All parishes are required to send delegates to the All-American Council.

Composed of the bishops, the parish clergy and an equal number of lay delegates, with limited provision for representation from Church-related institutions, the purpose of the Council is to represent, to make present the local Orthodox Church, which is in communion with other local Churches worldwide.

Every Council agenda is packed. This is a reality of gathering together and trying to fit as many programs and pieces together as possible. This does not mean that everyone has to participate in every event. However, it was decided that by offering as much as we can at this Council, we will give a positive picture of the OCA and also allow as many interests and special concerns as possible to be addressed. By going to the Symposiums, Workshops and receptions, you will be able to experience the lively and broad activity of the Church.

As preparation for the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, participants and parishes are specifically asked to:

- ✓ Prepare through prayer for the All-American Council and ask for wisdom and guidance for all participants.
- ✓ Reflect on the theme of "How to Expand the Mission" as it will guide our discussions before, during and after the Council.
- ✓ Read the reflections on the theme of "How to Expand the Mission" found on the 18<sup>th</sup> AAC website <http://18aac.oca.org/category/reflections> as they represent an informed cross section of the Orthodox Church in America.
- ✓ Participate in the Workshops and specifically read the Proposed Revised Statute, the Proposed Funding Resolution as well as all of the submitted resolutions.
- ✓ Share insights, concerns, and hopes on a variety of issues affecting the life of the Church not only on a continental level but also on a local and individual level.
- ✓ Explore and propose concrete plans and actions by which the Orthodox Church in America can actualize the theme on a local level.
- ✓ Contribute to an open, honest and transparent dialogue between clergy, laity, parishes, diocese and the Church.

✓ With your fellow parishioners and in your personal life, determine to pray for and support the work of the All-American Council.

It is not the goal of this All-American Council to resolve all the issues that we face as a Church but rather to set a clear path that we will all follow as we move forward for the next three years. The dialogue, initiatives, resolutions and information that are gathered from the Council will be utilized and implemented over the next three years to ensure a healthy future. We also pray that the discussions and results will enable us as a Church to expand the mission of the Orthodox Church in America, the autocephalous Orthodox Church in this land.

## **FEATURES AND STRUCTURES OF THE 18<sup>TH</sup> ALL-AMERICAN COUNCIL**

The 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council will try to address as many required reports as possible while still allowing for a thorough discussion of such initiatives as the Proposed Revised Statute, the Proposed Resolution to Support the Work of the Church as well as the other concerns from the delegates at large. But it also seeks to allow for smaller discussion in the workshops on practical aspects of parish operation. Thus, there will be less time for reports and more time for small group discussion. It is hoped that this will give the Council a different feel. There are a few agenda items that need to be accomplished such as the reports on the work of the Central Administration and Departments, budgetary issues and the election to Church-wide offices. But it is also hoped that more issues will be dealt with in a positive and proactive manner through discussions and resolutions. Especially after hearing comments from many people, the Preconciliar Commission was committed to planning a more open feel to this Council. Some people also felt that reports took too much time and that there was little opportunity for discussion. This AAC will see a mixture of limited reports being presented with other reports being the responsibility of the delegates to read beforehand to allow more time for discussions. There will be plenty of time provided for initiatives and resolutions to be debated.

As a note, special arrangements have been made with Ancient Faith Radio to podcast the sessions over the Internet so that the faithful in the Church may follow the Council. There will also be interviews and discussions on the events featured on the OCA website and Ancient Faith Radio. The entire Council will also be video and audio taped.

# SYMPOSIUMS AND WORKSHOPS

There will be six symposiums and ten workshops during the Council. The symposiums will be on Monday afternoon before the Council begins and will go from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM. It is recommended that you arrive early on Monday if you would like to participate in the symposiums. They are free and open to anyone. Their locations will be posted on the electronic boards located throughout the hotel. The symposiums are as follows:

- Orthodox Christian Mission Center (**The Work of OCMC**) hosted by members of the staff of OCMC
- Pension Board (**On Your Pension**) hosted by the members of the Pension Board
- Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (**Establishing Prison Ministry in Parish**) hosted by local members of the Prison Ministry
- Russian Brotherhood Organization (**Insuring Your Future**) hosted by member of the RBO
- Insurance Systems (**Insuring Your Parish**) hosted by the staff of Insurance Systems
- Diaconal Vocations Program (**Parish Deacon: Service and Leadership**) a training session for parish deacons hosted by Archdeacon Kyrill Sokolov

There are ten workshops to be held during the Council. They will be held on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:30 PM to 4:30 PM in various posted locations found on the electronic boards throughout the hotel. The same workshop will be held on Wednesday and Thursday so delegates will have an opportunity to attend two workshops during the course of the Council. The workshops are open to delegates and they should register for their choice during the registration process. The workshops count for credit towards the continuing education initiative. The workshops are as follows:

- **Mission Possible: Renewing the Vision in My Local Parish** hosted by Fr. David Rucker of the Mission School of the Orthodox Church in America
- **35 Ideas for a Mission Minded Church** hosted by Fr. John Parker of the Department of Evangelization
- **Preaching the Gospel in a Campus Setting** hosted by Andrew Boyd of the Youth and Young Adult Department

- **Protecting the Youth** hosted by Cindy Heise and Bernie Wilson of ORSMA
- **“Send Me, O Lord”: Expanding the Mission through Matthew 25 Ministries** hosted by Donna Karabin of the Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid Department
- **Making Yourself Visible on the Web** hosted by Ryan Platte of the Communications Team of the OCA
- **Creating Vibrant Orthodox Parishes** hosted by Joe Kormos of the Parish Development Ministry
- **Teach Them the Way They Should Go (Proverbs 22:6): Raising Orthodox Christian Children** hosted by Valerie Zaharsky and the Department of Christian Education
- **Clergy Self Help** hosted by Fr. Steven Voytovich, Dean of St. Tikhon Seminary
- **Best Practices to Parish Finance** hosted by Kh. Irene Khoury, CPA

## LITURGICAL SERVICES

The Liturgical services are at the heart of the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council as we gather together in Council. To honor the local region, many parishes will close for the weekend prior to Council for a joyful Hierarchical Liturgy at the hotel. This year, His Eminence Metropolitan Alexios, Metropolitan of Atlanta and the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta will be hosting a Pan Orthodox Great Vespers at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation located in Atlanta on Saturday, July 18 at 6:30 PM. Transportation will be provided from the hotel. The first Hierarchical Liturgy will be in the Grand Ballroom of the hotel on Sunday, July 19 at 9:00 AM. All local clergy and faithful are encouraged to attend the Liturgy with the Holy Synod of Bishops. Serving clergy will be by invitation.

The Council will be integrating a number of services into its agenda. All services, unless indicated, are at the Grand Ballroom. There will be daily Vespers on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 5:00 PM. There will be an Akathist on Tuesday morning at 7:30 AM dedicated to the Wonderworking Icon of Our Lady of Sitka who will be present. On Wednesday morning there will be an Akathist at 7:30 AM to the Wonderworking icon of St. Anne which will also be present. On Thursday morning there will be the Hierarchical Liturgy at 7:00 AM. Finally on Friday morning at 7:30 AM there will an Akathist to All the Saints of North America. There will be daily compline for the youth each evening at 10:30 PM in which delegates are invited to attend. The monastic communities may be holding various daily services during the Council and these

services' times and locations will be posted. We will also have the relics of the different North American saints present for veneration

All delegates should attend the liturgical services. Singers are encouraged to help sing the services with the mixed choir. The Council will also afford us the opportunity to hear sermons and scriptural reflections from various clergy in the OCA. Time will be set aside in the evenings for confession in the Chapel.

All clergy who will be asked to serve are requested to bring gold vestments. Those clergy who desire to receive communion are asked to bring gold cuffs and stoles. Deacons will wear a full set of gold vestments when either serving or receiving communion. Clergy are asked to wear black cassock, black riassa and pectoral cross for all sessions, other ranks of clergy are asked to wear black cassock and black riassa (if appropriate) or black cassocks alone during the sessions. Lay people are asked to dress conservatively to all services and sessions as is appropriate for Church occasions.

## **PROPOSED REVISED STATUTE PRESENTATION AND RESOLUTIONS**

As provided in the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, the All-American Council provides the opportunity to consider Statute Amendments and Resolutions for the Church. The Proposed Revised Statute will be taken into consideration during the Second Plenary Session on Tuesday morning. The Proposed Finance Resolution will be taken into consideration at the Third Plenary Session on Tuesday afternoon. Other resolutions will be assigned a place during all of the plenary sessions by the Resolution Committee for consideration by the Council.

Statute Amendments have a specific procedure as determined in both the Charter of the Orthodox Church in America which was passed by the New York State Senate on May 24, 1972 (Laws of the State of New York, Chapter 519 of the Laws of 1972) and the current Statute of the Orthodox Church in America adopted in October, 1971 (Article XIII, Sections 1 and 2). These instruments specifically require that “[p]roposed amendments must be submitted to the Church 90 days prior to an All-American Council. The parishes must have all proposed amendments to be acted upon by the All-American Church Council in their possession 60 days prior to the Council.” The Charter of the Orthodox Church in America further requires a two-thirds vote by the Council to alter, amend or repeal the Statute. In addition, general rules of parliamentary law typically stipulate that in the case of formerly adopted bylaws which are the subject of extensive proposed amendments, these may be considered a single amendment with a vote for or against adoption as a whole. As a consequence, the Holy Synod has adopted this procedure for the adoption of the Proposed Revised Statute, i.e., that it will be considered a single amendment with a single vote of adoption of the whole and must be adopted with a two-thirds vote in favor.

According to the present Statute there can be no Statute Amendments from the floor or otherwise considered for this Council since such floor amendments could by definition not meet the mandatory requirements of the current Statute. The Revised Statute has been reviewed by the appointed Statute Commission, thereafter submitted in timely fashion and then approved by the Holy Synod and have been publicized according to the procedures outlined in the present Statute. The proposed revisions to the Statute have been posted online at the AAC website and are included in the Appendix.

Resolutions on other matters may be submitted prior to and during the Council itself. Those resolutions that have been submitted, signed by the Diocesan hierarch and reviewed by the Resolutions Committee are included in the Appendix. Other resolutions may be submitted on the floor but must be first cleared by the Resolutions Committee. This committee will be appointed at the First Plenary Session. These resolutions must be submitted to a Committee member on the official form, signed by a hierarch, reviewed by the Resolution Committee and approved by the Holy Synod. There will be opportunities at every session of the Council to offer and to vote on resolutions. The procedures are found later in this handbook. The resolutions will be printed and distributed prior to any vote by the Council and will be posted on the large screens in the plenary hall during the actual vote on the resolution.

## STATE OF THE CHURCH

The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America states that the reports of the Church must be distributed thirty days prior to the Council. These will be posted on the OCA website. These are no longer mailed due to cost saving measures. It is strongly recommended that each delegate download the reports and print them. A notebook with dividers will be provided for all delegates at the Council. The reports are divided into a number of sections. There are the reports of the Central Church officers as well as from each of the departments, committees, commissions and institutions. The oral reports from a number of these will be spread throughout the Plenary Sessions. The written reports should be read beforehand. The Metropolitan will give an opening address. The officers will give a short oral report at the Council and then open the floor for discussion. There will also be a report by members of the Metropolitan Council on their work and a report from the different department chairpersons.

Each Diocese has been asked to present a report on the work in their respective diocese. This may be done by the diocesan hierarch or a designated person. Other reports will be presented which have been blessed by the Holy Synod as in the interest of the Church. Among such are reports on different Church-wide initiatives such as the Strategic Plan and Mission School as well as reports by experts in certain fields such as Alexei Krindatch.

The Treasurer and financial team will present their reports during the Third Plenary Session as these will relate to the Proposed Funding Resolution. The written reports will be distributed with the other reports. Incorporated in these reports are the financial

statements to date, the proposed budgetary considerations and the report of the Internal and External Auditors. There will also be a report by the Pension Board. There will be a opportunity for questions and discussions about these reports with the financial team. Integral to the reports will be the adoption of a resolution regarding the assessments to support the work of the Church. It is recommended that any resolutions relating to the financial aspect of the Church be held until the end of the financial report.

## FORMAL DINNER/RECEPTIONS

There are two scheduled receptions to be held during the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council. This first reception will be on Tuesday evening at 8:00 PM in the Crystal Ballroom. This reception is in honor of the three OCA Seminaries and opportunity to hear about their good work and to participate in their plans for the future. The reception is open to everyone and is funded by the Orthodox Church in America. Each Seminary will also have a booth in the display area that may be visited at any time. Alumni groups may hold a separate meeting which will be announced.

The second reception will be held on Wednesday evening at 8:00 PM in the Crystal Ballroom. This reception is to honor those supporters of the Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America and to elicit new support for the programs and initiatives of the Church. The reception is open to everyone and people are encouraged to attend and become a Steward of the Church.

There are two special breakfasts provided for at the Council. The first is on Tuesday morning at 8:00 AM where all clergy wives (of our Priests and Deacons) are invited to have breakfast with the Holy Synod in the Crystal Ballroom. Attendance should be noted on the registration.

The other breakfast is on Thursday morning after the Hierarchical Liturgy. The Youth Delegates and Volunteers will have breakfast with the Holy Synod also in the Crystal Ballroom.

A Formal Dinner will be held on Thursday evening in the Grand Ballroom at 7:00 PM. It will be preceded by a reception at 6:30 PM. There will be a special program provided for the formal dinner. The dress code for the dinner will be black cassock, black riassa and pectoral cross for clergy and business attire for lay people. All delegates are strongly encouraged to attend the formal dinner, as it was included in the assessments. The procedure for the dinner reservation is that after you register for the Council then proceed to the formal dinner reservation table to make your seating selection. Your meal choice should have been chosen when you registered. You will receive a ticket which should be brought to the formal dinner itself. There will be a reception prior to the formal dinner with a cash bar. The dinner reservations table will be open until Tuesday in order to facilitate preparation. Any special dietary needs or requests will be honored if submitted in due time prior to the Council and the dinner itself.

# DISPLAYS AND VENDORS

The Salon Ballroom has been designated for vendors and displayers for the delegates and observers to visit. It is located in the Grand Ballroom Pre-Function area. It is open to the public. There may also be displays located throughout the area. Displayers will normally be departments and institutions of The Orthodox Church in America that highlight the work being done in the Church. The exhibit area will normally be open daily from 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM beginning on Sunday and ending on Friday morning. Vendors from different companies will be offering items for sale to the delegates. St. Tikhon's and St. Vladimir's bookstores will each be present. There will also be special displays of selected Assembly of Bishops organizations.

A highlight of this All-American Council will be the presence of artifacts and displays from the Museum at St. Tikhon's Monastery as well as other collections from around the country. It will be located in a designated room which will be announced.

There will also be a portrait booth so that clergy (priests and deacons) can have their formal portrait taken for inclusion in the clergy directory of the website. Every clergyman is encouraged to participate and the booth will be located outside of the main ball room.

There will be plenty of time to peruse the exhibitors and they will normally be open between sessions. A map and guide to the exhibits will be available upon registration.

# FELLOWSHIP OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

FOCA will be holding its annual convention beginning on Saturday, July 18 through Monday, July 20. There will be numerous events that FOCA will be sponsoring that weekend including a golf tournament, excursions to Atlanta and a dinner dance on Sunday evening. Delegates are invited to participate in these events and learn about the good work of FOCA. The Plenary Session for FOCA will be held on Monday afternoon and is for FOCA delegates. There will also be an information booth in the display area to learn more about their work and how to open a FOCA chapter in your area. For more information go to their website at <http://www.orthodoxfellowship.org/conventions.html>.

# YOUTH PROGRAM

The Youth Program will be an exciting part of the 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council. It will gather youth from around the Church in fellowship and education. A dedicated team of Youth Program Volunteers have put together an exciting program which combines outings to the sites of Atlanta such as the Georgia Aquarium and the Atlanta Zoo. The

program is open to all youth from Pre-School to 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. For information on the program and how to register, go to <http://oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2015/2015-0402-youth-news-events-18aac.pdf>. The cost for the youth program has been kept low in order to facilitate participation. Youth Delegates are responsible for their own travel and hotel rooms.

All of the youth activities will take place on the third floor of hotel and is off limits to delegates. All Youth Program Volunteers have been screened and trained in Youth Protection Policies. The Youth Delegates will be signed in at the beginning of the day and signed out when the day is complete. Only approved parents or guardian will be able to sign the youth in or out of the sessions. Preschool children must be accompanied with at least one of their parents/guardians. For those sessions which are outside of the hotel, there will be a number of chaperones to ensure a proper ratio of chaperone to youth. All participants in the Youth Program will have specially designated shirts for the program.

The Youth Delegates will also have a special breakfast with the Holy Synod on Thursday, July 23 after the Hierarchical Liturgy. They will have a chance to talk to the Synod and ask questions.

The evenings of the Program will be dedicated to movies, activities, or sports. The Teens will have a special and supervised “crash room” for them to relax. The program will end each day for the older youth with Compline in the Chapel at 10:30 PM. The Sixth and final Plenary Session of the Council will have a special presentation by the Youth on how they understand “How to Expand the Mission.”

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS**

Every parish and institution of the Orthodox Church in America is to be represented at the All-American Council. Each parish is allowed by the Statute to send its rector and a lay delegate to the Council. Assigned associate priests and corresponding laypersons are also permitted to attend as delegates. Church institutions and monasteries are represented as well. Attached clergy or deacons cannot be considered delegates with a right to vote. If there is a question on the voting status of a clergyman, please speak to your diocesan bishop for clarification. All delegates are expected to register for the Council at the 18<sup>th</sup> AAC website at <http://18aac.oca.org>. The registrations are reviewed and approved by email from the parish rector (for lay persons) or the Preconciliar Commission for special delegates. Once approved the names are forwarded to the appropriate bishop for approval. Any problems with registrations should be addressed as soon as possible. According to the Statute, each parish and institution sending delegates must be current on their assessments in order to have voting privileges. Again, any questions on assessments should be addressed as soon as possible to the OCA Treasurer. Once the delegates and

observers are approved and financial status is confirmed, an email will be sent approving their attendance and participation. Delegates are responsible for their own hotel and travel arrangements unless otherwise indicated. There are special rates available from the Hilton Atlanta that will extend for three days prior to and three days before and after the Council. The individual delegates must handle any special requirements or needs including extended stay time at the hotel.

Upon arrival at the Council, the delegates need to register for the Council. Registration can be found in the lobby outside the Grand Ballroom on the second floor. Registration will begin on Saturday, July 18 at 4:00 PM and continue into the evening. Registration will be open every day. For those arriving late, registration will be moved to the secretarial room located in Room 212 on Tuesday. Registration for Youth and FOCA members will be at separate booths apart from the AAC registration.

Registration Booths will be set up alphabetically according to last name. Upon registration, you will be given a badge with a bar code. This badge will serve as your entry into all events. The Badge will be scanned upon entrance. **There will be no Plenary Session tickets.** Volunteers will be stationed at the entrance doors to the Grand Ballroom. Each type of delegate (clergy, lay and observer) will enter by the marked doors. There will be special passes issued for guests, VIPs or special observers but these do not have voting privileges.

Each delegate will receive a bag containing a notebook with additional material including maps, agendas, local information and items to assist at the plenary sessions. **It is vital that delegates bring the reports downloaded from the website as they will not be available at the Council.** Each delegate must also register for their dinner seating.

Any special requests or needs can be addressed to the Secretarial Room (Room 212) during the Council. Minutes of the plenary sessions will be approved by the bishops each day and distributed at the next plenary session. Other documents to include resolutions, reports, and election material will be made available in a timely manner to each delegate at the sessions.

Each delegate is asked to come to the sessions in a timely manner prior to the session beginning and to dress appropriately. There will be signs posted throughout the hotel directing people to different locations as well as an electronic bulletin board to assist in finding different locations and to post important messages.

There are many places in the adjacent Peachtree Center and Peachtree Street for meals in all price ranges. You will have to walk either through the tunnel on the second floor through the adjacent Marriott Marquis (it can be a little confusing, but air conditioned, as you need to then go to the third floor to get to the Mall) or simply exit the hotel and walk west for two blocks. There are three restaurants of various prices in the hotel itself. We have provided longer meal breaks so that people can move to any of the locations to eat. Delegates and paid observers will receive tickets for the Formal Dinner on Thursday

evening. All other meals are on one's own. A list of the many easily accessible restaurants in the area will be included in the registration packet.

# DELEGATE PARTICIPATION

In order to have delegates seated at the Council, parishes must have:

- ✓ Remitted all financial obligations to The Orthodox Church in America, including the All-American Council assessment, and
- ✓ Filed the necessary registration information with the Preconciliar Commission.

When you arrive at the Council, you must register to verify that your credentials are in order. You will receive voting cards, an official folder for your Council papers, and other information. As a delegate you are expected to be present at all plenary sessions of the Council and participate in as many workshops as you can. In addition, there are Church Ministries' displays, diocesan displays, bookstores, vendors and fellowship activities for you to take part in.

# PLENARY SESSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS OF RESOLUTIONS

Two vice-chairpersons assist the Metropolitan as presiding officer and Chair of the Council, one vice chairperson from the clergy and one vice chairperson from the laity, in conducting the proceedings of the Council in an orderly manner. This Council will have an external professional parliamentarian to advise the Chair and vice-chairpersons on questions of procedure. The parliamentarian is a consultant with whom the Chair and vice-chairpersons can consult as necessary for clarification and guidance on matters of procedure and order. Decisions on such procedural matters are the responsibility solely of the Chair and vice-chairpersons. Any appeal of any decision by a vice-chairperson on such matters will be determined by the Chair, i.e., the Metropolitan. As with all other actions taken by the Council, the ultimate and final blessing and approval of the Holy Synod will be required. There will be a secretariat that will take the official minutes of the Council.

As provided by the current Statute, a simple majority vote shall determine most decisions of the All-American Council. Voting is usually done by a show of cards, but certain matters, including elections, will be decided by secret ballot.

The Proposed Statute Revision must be adopted by a 2/3 majority according to the Charter of the Orthodox Church in America. The Charter of the Orthodox Church in America which was passed by the New State Senate on May 24, 1972 (Laws of the State of New York, Chapter 519 of the Laws of 1972) so mandates. The current Statute of the Orthodox Church in America adopted in October 1971 (Article XIII, Sections 1 and 2) explicitly requires that “[p]roposed amendments [to the Statute] must be submitted to the Church 90 days prior to an All-American Council. The parishes must have all proposed amendments to be acted upon by the All-American Church Council in their possession 60 days prior to the Council.” In addition, general rules of parliamentary law typically stipulate that in the case of formerly adopted bylaws which are the subject of extensive proposed amendments, these may be considered a single amendment with a vote for or against adoption as a whole. As a consequence, the Holy Synod has adopted this procedure for the adoption of the Proposed Revised Statute, i.e., that it will be considered a single amendment with a single vote of adoption of the whole and must be adopted with a two-thirds vote in favor.

According to the present Statute there can be no Statute Amendments from the floor or considered for this Council. The current Proposed Revised Statute has been reviewed by the appointed Statute Commission, submitted and approved by the Holy Synod and has been publicized according to the procedures determined in the Statute. They are posted online at the AAC website and are included in the Appendix.

Resolutions can be submitted prior to and at the Council itself. Those resolutions that have been submitted, signed by the Diocesan hierarch and reviewed by the Resolutions Committee are included in the Appendix. Other resolutions may be submitted on the floor but must first be approved by the Resolutions Committee. This committee will be appointed at the First Plenary Session. These resolutions must be submitted to a Committee member on the official form, signed by a hierarch, reviewed by the Resolution Committee and ultimately approved by the Holy Synod. There will be opportunities at every session to offer and to vote on resolutions. The resolutions will be printed and distributed prior to the vote and will be posted on the large screens in the plenary hall during the actual vote on the resolution.

The adoption of the Proposed Funding Resolution and all other resolutions and matters before the Council will be by a simple majority vote as provided for in the Statute, Article III, Section 14 which states that “[a] majority vote shall determine the decisions of the All-American Council. The Pre-Conciliar Commission, or the Council itself, may determine that voting in certain matters shall be by secret ballot.”

Both "round table" discussion and floor debate can be employed at the discretion of the presiding Chair or vice-chairperson during plenary sessions. With such a large number of people participating, round table discussion enables everyone to speak freely, while floor debate moves a resolution to a decision. For self-evident reasons, floor debate must be reasonable, respectful and focused in terms of both content and duration. Presumptively, the following guidelines for consideration of a resolution will be used:

- ✓ Delegates to the Council may submit resolutions prior to the Council or at the Council. A resolution must be submitted in writing on the official form, signed by a bishop and must first go to the Resolutions Committee.
- ✓ The Resolutions Committee will assess the propriety of the resolution and, if they deem it appropriate, will recommend it to the Holy Synod. The Resolutions Committee may also deem it appropriate to consolidate resolutions and redraft them if necessary. If the Holy Synod deems the resolution appropriate for consideration by the Council, it will be brought to the floor of the Council.
- ✓ During the appropriate Plenary Session, the Resolutions Committee will present the proposed resolution(s) related to the topic of that session. The introduction will serve to give background information, to explain the development of the resolution, and formally to place the resolution before the Council.
- ✓ Once before the Council, all resolutions will be open for general debate and possible amendment. Such proposed amendments must be presented to the presiding Chair or vice-chairperson in writing but need not be submitted to the Resolutions Committee in advance; they must be germane. The requirement for the submission of written proposed amendments to a resolution made from the floor shall not be waived.
- ✓ The debate on resolutions shall be strictly limited to no more than ten speakers, five in favor, and five in opposition, speaking alternately, as recognized by the presiding Chair or vice-chairpersons. Each speaker shall have up to but not more than three minutes to discuss the resolution. If deemed necessary, additional speakers may, in the sole discretion of the presiding Chair or vice-chairpersons, be invited to speak.
- ✓ Debate on any amendments to resolutions shall be subject to the same limitations as for resolutions; when an amendment is the pending order of business, the delegates shall speak to the merits of the amendment only.
- ✓ A delegate may speak on a resolution or proposed amendment thereto only once. Any delegate who has already spoken to any main motion will not thereafter be permitted to speak from the floor as to any amendments to that motion.
- ✓ If, during the consideration of a resolution or an amendment, it appears to the presiding Chair or vice chairpersons that a period of informal discussion would be appropriate, he may propose such. If the Council verbally agrees, then a five-minute period of round table discussions will take place.
- ✓ Once an amendment has been disposed of (i.e., adopted or rejected), debate shall resume where it left off on the proposed resolution, as (possibly) amended.
- ✓ If appropriate, the presiding Chair or vice chairperson may call upon qualified persons to speak to technical points of a resolution or amendment; these interjections shall not be considered as part of the ten-person debate.

✓ In compliance with the Statute, the resolutions of each session are examined by the Holy Synod at the end of the session and voted upon. No resolution shall be valid unless approved by a vote of at least a majority of the bishops attending the Council. Their approval, or reason for disapproval, is then reported to the Council at the beginning of the following plenary session.

General principles of parliamentary law will be followed during all sessions of the Council where these will reasonably aid and expedite the accomplishment of the work of the Council. Any appeal from the ruling of a vice chairperson will be directed to and resolved by the presiding Chair (i.e., the Metropolitan). As is the case with all other actions taken by the Council, the ultimate approval of the Holy Synod is required.

The following rules have been determined by the Holy Synod to pertain to the consideration of the Proposed Revised Statutes.

✓ The Proposed Statute Amendment will be considered as a whole and not *seriatim* (i.e. line by line or article by article). It has been determined by the Holy Synod that this matter constitutes an amendment to the existing Statute and thus this procedure is required in compliance with the existing provisions of the OCA Statute.

✓ There will be no amendments or changes allowed to the Proposed Statute from the floor due to the interconnected nature of the document as well as the terms of the existing OCA Statute regarding amendments to that Statute. Small changes such as scrivener's errors in spelling or grammar or clear editorial mistakes may be proposed.

✓ Any proposed amendments of any kind or character to the Proposed Revised Statute may, if that Revised Statute is adopted by the Council and approved by the Holy Synod, be considered at a future All-American Council in accordance with the amendment procedures as set forth in the Revised Statute..

✓ Debate from the floor of the Council on the Proposed Revised Statute must be on the merits of the Statute, including questions relating to inaccuracy or confusion relating to language or phrasing, or questions of clarification. Discussion must be addressed to reasons on the merits to adopt or reject the Proposed Statute.

✓ Due to the important nature of the Proposed Revised Statute, the debate on the motion to adopt the Proposed Revised Statute shall be extended to twenty speakers, ten in favor, and ten in opposition, speaking alternately, as recognized by the presiding Chair or vice-chairperson. Each speaker shall have up to three minutes to discuss the resolution. If deemed necessary in the discretion of the Presiding Chair or vice-chairperson, additional speakers may be invited to speak.

✓ The final vote on the Proposed Statute will be a simple vote of approval or disapproval. There will need to be 2/3 majority for approval. That number will be determined and announced prior to the vote.

## OTHER BUSINESS

Any other matters may be brought up to the assembly during the time allotted for "Other Business." However, these matters may not be resolved by the enactment of impromptu resolutions. Those concerns will be minuted and referred to the appropriate office or department for further study or action.

## NOMINATIONS TO CHURCH-WIDE POSITIONS

In accordance with the Statute and resolutions of former All-American Councils, delegates of the Eighteenth All-American Council will elect people to positions on the:

✓ Metropolitan Council (1 clergy position for a six year term, 1 clergy position for a three year term, 1 clergy alternate, 1 layperson position for a six year term, 1 layperson position for a three year term and 1 layperson alternate). The persons with the highest vote total will receive a six-year term, the next highest will receive the three year term and the third highest will be the alternate.

✓ Pension Board (1 clergy positions for a six year term, 1 clergy to a three year term and 1 clergy alternate, 1 layperson position for a six year term, 1 layperson position for a three year term and 1 layperson alternate). The persons with the highest vote total will receive a six-year term, the next highest will receive the three year term and the third will be designated as alternate.

✓ Due to the Statute Amendment passed at the Fifteenth All-American Council, Article III, Section 15 is no longer in effect. There will be no election for an Auditing Committee which is now appointed by the Metropolitan Council of qualified professionals. See the OCA Statute for exact wording of this amendment.

**Only delegates present at the All-American Council may be nominated for election. Delegates who have reached the statutory limitation of their service in a Church-wide office are not eligible to be nominated or elected. See the Statute for these limitations.**

Following each Plenary Session on Tuesday and Wednesday, nominations can be submitted to the Nomination Committee for possible candidates (who are Council delegates) for Church-wide positions. Nominations must be submitted on the official form each member of the Nomination Committee will carry and returned to them as soon as possible. If the nominee accepts the nomination, he or she will complete and submit a biographical information form to the Nominations Committee by the end of Wednesday's sessions.

The Nominations Committee will meet Wednesday and review the resumes of the nominees. Based upon this review, the Committee will then prepare a slate of candidates and present the slate to the Council during the 5<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session to be held on Thursday morning.

During this plenary session, each delegate will receive a voting form. This form will include the names and resumes of all those who were nominated by the end of day on Wednesday. Election results will be announced at the 5<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session on Thursday morning, with the installation of members to the Metropolitan Council and Pension Board at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session on Friday.

## **AFTER THE COUNCIL**

As a delegate to the All-American Council, you represent your parish to the entire body of The Orthodox Church in America giving account for your parish's life and witness, its stewardship of resources and vision for the future. Likewise, you represent The Orthodox Church in America to your parish. Most of your fellow parishioners will never have the opportunity to witness a Council at work. Your impressions, as much as the details of the decisions and resolutions, are important to share with others when you return home.

Set aside some time when parishioners can look over your materials, can hear about the Council actions which affect them, can even re-debate some of the issues based on the direction decided upon at the Council. Help your parishioners understand the implications of the Council's decisions for their own spiritual life and ministry, and for the parish community's life and witness. Bring home the message that the diocese and the Orthodox Church in America support the mission of the parish. Continue to call attention to the fruitfulness of the Council as you see articles that indicate progress and accountability on the OCA website. Your positive attitude can serve as an example to others and help The Orthodox Church in America fulfill its mission.

Not only do you have the responsibility to share what you have seen and heard and done at the Council, but having participated in the passage of the All-American Council decisions, you also bear some responsibility for their being understood and implemented by your parish. Whether you personally voted for or against a matter, once it is enacted by the Council and approved by the bishops, it represents the "mind of the Church" on the matter and thus deserves your support as you present it to your parish and follow its implementation. At that point you are, in effect, a spokesperson for The Orthodox Church in America to your parish, bearing witness to its conciliar decision-making process.

## **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS**

Any questions or concerns about the Council can be brought to the attention of the Holy Synod of Bishops, Central Church Administration, Metropolitan Council, the Preconciliar Commission or the Local Committee. If there are concerns or issues during the Council, they may be addressed to members of the Preconciliar Commission who will meet each evening during the Council itself. Other immediate issues should be brought to the attention of the Local Committee or the Central Church Administration.

THE 18<sup>TH</sup>  
ALL AMERICAN  
COUNCIL



HOW TO EXPAND  
THE MISSION  
JULY 20-24 2015 • ATLANTA, GA

18<sup>TH</sup> ALL-AMERICAN  
COUNCIL  
JULY 20-JULY 21, 2015  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA  
*“HOW TO EXPAND THE  
MISSION”*

**PROJECTED AGENDA**

**Friday, July 17 (Pre-Council)**

Time	Event	Room
All Day	Arrival of Council Team	
All Day	Unload Truck	
4:00 PM	Meet with Hotel Staff	Executive Boardroom
6:30 PM	Meet with Executive Committee	Executive Boardroom

**Saturday, July 18 (Pre-Council/FOCA)**

Time	Event	Room
All Day	AAC/FOCA Delegate Arrival	
8:00 AM - 1:00 PM	FOCA Outing/FOCA Golf Outing	Offsite
3:00 PM	FOCA Registration	Grand Ballroom Pre-Function area
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Holy Synod Arrival	Lobby and Grand Ballroom Pre-Function area
4:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal	Room 203
6:00 PM	Transport to GOA Cathedral	Lobby
6:30 PM	Great Vespers followed by a reception	Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation
7:00 PM	Move-In and Set-up	Grand Ballroom and Hotel
8:00 PM – 11:00 PM	FOCA Welcome Reception and Youth Event	Crystal Ballroom

**Sunday, July 19 (Pre-Council)**

Time	Event	Room
All Day	Set-Up	Hotel
8:00 AM	Vesting for Liturgy	Clergy - Room 206 Hierarchs - Room 207

9:00 AM	Procession	Grand Ballroom
9:30 AM	Hierarchical Liturgy with Local Clergy	Grand Ballroom
12:30 PM	Holy Synod Brunch/Meeting	Room 211
1:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Registration Open FOCA Registration Open Baba's Auction Youth Office Open Exhibits Open	Grand Ballroom Pre-Function area Grand Ballroom Pre-Function area Room 209 Room 301 Salon Ballroom
2:30 PM	Synod Outing to MLK Center	Lobby
4:00 PM - 5:30 PM	Youth Program Meetings with Staff and Parents	Rooms 302-305
6:00 PM 7:00 PM	FOCA Dinner Dance Youth Meet and Greet	Grand Ballroom Rooms 303-305
6:30 PM	Organizational Meetings	Rooms 201, 202, 214
9:00 PM	Youth Staff Training	Rooms 302-303
All Day	Friends of Bill W	Room 410

### Monday, July 20 (Day 1)

Time	Event	Room
8:00 AM	Holy Synod Breakfast/Meeting	Room 211
9:00 AM – 10:00 PM	Council Registration Secretarial Room Exhibits	Grand Ballroom Pre-Function area Room 212 Salon Ballroom
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Religious Ed/Playgroup	Rooms 302-314
9:00 AM – 12:30 PM	DoMW Assembly	Crystal Ballroom C-D
9:00 AM – 12:30 PM	DoS Assembly	Crystal Ballroom A-F
9:00 AM – 12:30 PM	DoW Assembly	Grand Ballroom B
9:00 AM	FOCA Outing	Lobby
10:30 AM – 4:00 PM	Youth Outing to Georgia Aquarium/CocaCola/CNN	Lobby
1:00 PM	Holy Synod Lunch/Meeting	Room 211
1:30 PM – 4:30 PM	FOCA Plenary Session	Grand Ballroom A
1:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Symposiums:	
	OCMC	Room 206
	Pension Board	Room 214
	Prison Ministry	Room 204
	RBO	Room 202
	Insurance Systems	Room 203
	Diaconal Training	Room 201
4:30 PM	Committee Meetings	Rooms 201, 202, 214

5:30 PM	Vespers	Grand Ballroom
6:00 PM	Holy Synod/Met Council Dinner Meeting	Rooms 201-211
7:30 PM – 9:30 PM	Movie Night for Youth Crash Room for Teens	Rooms 309-310
<b>7:30 PM - 10:00 PM</b>	<b>Plenary Session I</b>	<b>Grand Ballroom</b>
	<i>Opening Molieben</i>	
	<i>Call to Order</i>	
	<i>Welcome/Organization</i>	
	<i>PCC Bishop Welcome</i>	
	<i>Local Committee Welcome</i>	
	<i>Metropolitan's Address Questions</i>	
	<i>Chancellor/Secretary Reports</i>	
	<i>Questions</i>	
	<i>Housekeeping</i>	
10:30 PM	Youth Compline	Grand Ballroom
All Day	Friends of Bill W	Room 410

**Tuesday, July 21 (Day 2)**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Room</b>
7:30 AM	Akathist to Sitka Icon	Grand Ballroom
8:00 AM	Clergy Wives Breakfast	Crystal Ballroom
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Religious Ed/Playgroup	Rooms 302-314
9:00 AM - 10:00 PM	Secretarial Room Exhibits	Room 212 Salon Ballroom
<b>9:30 AM - 12:30 PM</b>	<b>Plenary Session II</b>	<b>Grand Ballroom</b>
	<i>Opening Prayer</i>	
	<i>Diocesan Reports</i>	
	<i>Metropolitan Council Report</i>	
	<i>Proposed Revised Statute Presentation</i>	
	<i>Nominations Procedures</i>	
	<i>Resolutions</i>	
	<i>Housekeeping</i>	
10:30 AM – 4:00 PM	Youth Outing to Georgia Aquarium/Coca Cola/CNN	Lobby
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Lunch Recess	Local Sites
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Holy Synod Lunch/Meeting	Room 211
<b>2:30 PM - 4:30 PM</b>	<b>Plenary Session III</b>	<b>Grand Ballroom</b>
	<i>Diocesan Reports</i>	
	<i>Treasurer's Report</i>	

	<i>Auditor's Report</i>	
	<i>Pension Board Report</i>	
	<i>Finance Resolution</i>	
	<i>Resolutions</i>	
	<i>Housekeeping</i>	
5:00 PM	Vespers	Grand Ballroom
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Dinner	Local Sites
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Holy Synod Dinner/Meeting	Room 211
7:00 PM	Committee Meetings	Rooms 201, 202, 214
7:30 PM – 9:30 PM	Crash Room for Teens	Rooms 309-310
8:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Joint Seminary Reception	Crystal Ballroom
9:30 PM	Youth Compline	Grand Ballroom
All Day	Friends of Bill W	Room 410

### Wednesday, July 22 (Day 3)

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Room</b>
7:30 AM	Akathist to St. Anne Icon	Grand Ballroom
8:00 AM	Holy Synod Breakfast	Room 211
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Religious Ed/Playgroup	Rooms 302-314
9:00 AM - 10:00 PM	Secretarial Room Exhibits	Room 212 Salon Ballroom
<b>9:30 AM - 12:30 PM</b>	<b>Plenary Session IV</b>	<b>Grand Ballroom</b>
	<i>Opening Prayer</i>	
	<i>Diocesan Reports</i>	
	<i>Strategic Plan Report</i>	
	<i>External Affairs Report</i>	
	<i>Military Chaplain Report</i>	
	<i>Institutional Chaplain Report</i>	
	<i>Departments Report</i>	
	<i>Resolutions</i>	
	<i>Housekeeping</i>	
10:30 AM – 4:00 PM	Youth Outing to Zoo Atlanta	Lobby
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Lunch Recess	Local Sites
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Holy Synod Lunch/Meeting	Room 211
<b>1:30 PM - 4:30 PM</b>	<b>Workshops I:</b>	
	<i>Mission Possible</i>	<i>Room 211</i>
	<i>35 Ideas</i>	<i>Room 201</i>
	<i>Preaching on Campus</i>	<i>Room 202</i>
	<i>Protecting Youth</i>	<i>Room 203</i>
	<i>Matthew 25 Ministry</i>	<i>Room 204</i>
	<i>Visible on Web</i>	<i>Room 205</i>
	<i>Vibrant Parishes</i>	<i>Room 206</i>
	<i>Raising Children</i>	<i>Room 210</i>

	<i>Clergy Self Help</i>	<i>Room 207</i>
	<i>Parish Finances</i>	<i>Room 214</i>
5:00 PM	Great Vespers/ Confessions	Grand Ballroom
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Dinner	Local Sites
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Holy Synod Dinner/Meeting	Room 211
7:00 PM	Committee Meetings	Rooms 201, 202, 214
7:30 PM – 9:30 PM	Crash Room for Teens Pool Party	Rooms 309-310
8:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Stewards of the OCA Reception	Crystal Ballroom
9:30 PM	Youth Compline/ Confessions	Grand Ballroom
All Day	Friends of Bill W	Room 410

**Thursday, July 23 (Day 4)**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Room</b>
6:30 AM	Vesting for Liturgy	Clergy – Room 206 Hierarchs – Room 207
7:00 AM	Divine Liturgy	Grand Ballroom
9:00 AM - 10:00 PM	Secretarial Room Exhibits	Room 212 Salon Ballroom
9:00 AM	Holy Synod Breakfast with Youth	Crystal Ballroom
<b>9:30 AM - 12:30 PM</b>	<b>Plenary Session V</b>	<b>Grand Ballroom</b>
	<i>Opening Prayer</i>	
	<i>Elections</i>	
	<i>Diocesan Reports</i>	
	<i>Mission School Report</i>	
	<i>Assembly of Bishop Report</i>	
	<i>Krindatch Presentation</i>	
	<i>Election Results</i>	
	<i>Resolutions</i>	
	<i>Housekeeping</i>	
10:30 PM – 4:00 PM	Youth Outing to 6 Flags Waterpark	Lobby
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Lunch Recess	Local Sites
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Holy Synod Lunch/Meeting	Room 211
<b>1:30 PM - 4:30 PM</b>	<b>Workshops II:</b>	
	<i>Mission Possible</i>	<i>Room 211</i>
	<i>35 Ideas</i>	<i>Room 201</i>
	<i>Preaching on Campus</i>	<i>Room 202</i>
	<i>Protecting Youth</i>	<i>Room 203</i>
	<i>Matthew 25 Ministry</i>	<i>Room 204</i>

	<i>Visible on Web</i>	<i>Room 205</i>
	<i>Vibrant Parishes</i>	<i>Room 206</i>
	<i>Raising Children</i>	<i>Room 210</i>
	<i>Clergy Self Help</i>	<i>Room 207</i>
	<i>Parish Finances</i>	<i>Room 214</i>
6:00 PM – 10:30 PM	Youth Banquet at Greek Metropolis	Lobby
6:30 PM	Reception	Grand Ballroom Pre-Function area
7:30 PM – 10:00 PM	Formal Dinner	Grand Ballroom
7:30 PM	Exhibit Tear-Down	Salon Ballroom
10:30 PM	Youth Compline	Grand Ballroom
All Day	Friends of Bill W	Room 410

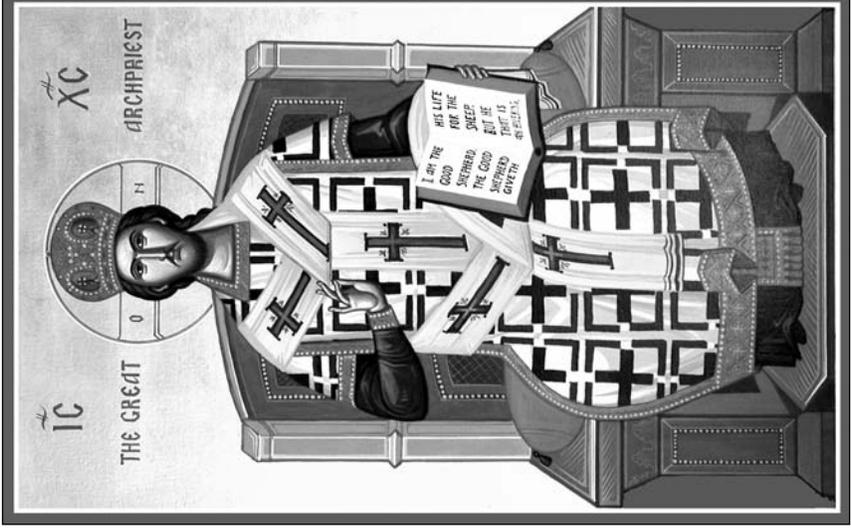
**Friday, July 24 (Day 5)**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Room</b>
7:30 AM	Akathist to All Saints of North America	Grand Ballroom
8:00 AM	Holy Synod Breakfast	Room 211
9:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Prep for AAC Presentation	Rooms 302-314
9:00 AM - 10:00 PM	Secretarial Room	Room 212
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Exhibitor Area Load-out	Salon Ballroom
<b>9:30 AM – 12:30 PM</b>	<b>Plenary Session VI</b>	<b>Grand Ballroom</b>
	<i>Opening Prayer</i>	
	<i>Installation of Council</i>	
	<i>Diocesan Reports</i>	
	<i>Monastery Report</i>	
	<i>Seminary Report</i>	
	<i>Youth Presentation</i>	
	<i>Other Business</i>	
	<i>Open Discussion</i>	
	<i>Final Resolutions</i>	
	<i>Closing Molieben</i>	
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	Holy Synod/ Metropolitan Council/ PCC Luncheon	Rooms 210-211
2:00 PM	Breakdown of Council and Departure	Grand Ballroom
Until 1:00 PM	Friends of Bill W	Room 410

# Service of Prayer at the Opening of a Sacred Council

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# Service of Prayer at the Closing of a Sacred Council



# A Service of Prayer at the Opening of a Sacred Council

**Deacon:** Bless, Most Blessed Master.

**Hierarch:** Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:**

Tone 6

Common Chant  
arr. from Lvov-Bakhtmetev

A - men. O Heav - en - ly King, the Comforter the Spi - rit

of Truth, who art everywhere and fill - est all things;

Treasury of bless - ings and Gi - ver of Life:

Come and a - bide in us, and cleanse us from every

im - pur - i - ty, and save our souls, O Good - One!

## GREAT LITANY

- Deacon:** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** For our Metropolitan \_\_\_\_\_, for the Holy Synod of Bishops, for the honorable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy, and people, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** For the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** For this city, for every city and country, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** For seasonable weather, for the abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** For travelers by land, by sea, and by air, for the sick and the suffering, for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** That He will hear the voice of petition of the members of the Sacred Council and fulfill all of their good desires and intentions, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** That He will send down the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding upon the members of this Sacred Council, opening their minds and lips and enlightening their hearts, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** That He will grant them the Wisdom which stands by His Throne, making it abide in their hearts and teaching them what is for the good of His Holy Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** That they may wisely remain constant in the Orthodox Faith and in all good works, a joy and comfort to all people and a strengthening of the Holy Church, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** That He will look down with His merciful eye on His Church and upon this Sacred Council, bestowing the grace of wisdom upon its endeavors in the successful building up of the life of the Church of our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- People:** Lord, have mercy.
- Deacon:** For the members of this Sacred Council gathered from throughout this continent, awaiting the Grace of the Holy Spirit, and needful of God's help and protection, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** That He will instill in the members of this Sacred Council oneness of mind, harmony of spirit, good intentions and wise action for the benefit of His Holy Church, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Deacon:** Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

**People:** To Thee, O Lord.

**Hierarch:** For to Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

## GOD IS THE LORD

**Deacon:** In the 8th Tone: God is the Lord and has revealed Himself unto us! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good: for His mercy endures forever.

**People:**

Tone 8

Soprano Alto

Tenor Bass

Obikhod  
N. Bakimtev

God is the Lord and has re - vealed Him - self to us.

Bles - sed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.

**Deacon:** All nations surrounded me; in the Name of the Lord I withstood them!

**People:** Repeats “God is the Lord.”

**Deacon:** I shall not die, but shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord!

**People:** Repeats “God is the Lord.”

**Deacon:** The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing; and it is marvelous in our eyes!

**People:** Repeats “God is the Lord.” then sings the troparions.

# TROPARIONS

**Tone 8**

Soprano Alto

Tenor Bass

Obikhod  
N. Bakimtev

Bles - sed art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast

re - vealed the fish - er - men as most wise by send - ing

down up - on them the Ho - ly Spir - it; through them

Thou didst draw the world in - to Thy net, O

Low - er of man - glo - ry to Thee.

# Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**Tone 4**

Soprano Alto

Tenor Bass

Alaskan Melody

O blessed Father Herman of A - las - - ka,

North Star of Christ's ho - ly Church; the light of

your holy life and great deeds guides those

who follow the Orth - o - dox way. Together we lift

high the Ho - ly Cross you planted firmly

in A - mer - i - ca. Let all behold and glo - ri - fy  
 Je - sus Christ singing His Holy Re - sur - rec - - - tion.

**Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

**Tone 6**  
 Soprano Alto Obikhod N. Bakhtmetev  
 Tenor Bass  
 Steadfast protectress of Christ - - - ians, con - stant  
 advocate before the Cre - a - - tor: do not despise  
 the cry of us sin - - - ners, but in your

goodness come speedily to help us who call on  
 you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and  
 to intercede for us, O The - o - - to - kos,  
 for you always protect those who ho - nor you.

**PROKEMENON / EPISTLE / GOSPEL**

- Deacon:** Let us attend!
- Hierarch:** Peace be unto all.
- Reader:** And to your spirit.
- Deacon:** Wisdom!
- Reader:** The Prokeimenon in the 4th Tone: Let the radiance of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands!

**Reader:** Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations!

**People:** Repeats the Prokeimenon

**Reader:** Let the radiance of the Lord our God be upon us

**People:** Finishes the Prokeimenon

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** The Reading is from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Ephesians.

**Deacon:** Let us Attend!

**People:**

Soprano Alto  
Tenor Bass

Tone 4

Znamenny Chant

Let the radiance of the Lord our God be up - on us,  
and es - tab - lish the work of our hands.

**Reader:** Brethren, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power in us who believe, according to the working of His great might which He has accomplished in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and

made Him sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come; and He has put all things under His feet and has made Him the head over all things for the Church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him Who fills all in all.

**Hierarch:** Peace be unto you, reader.

**Reader:** And to your spirit, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

**People:**

Soprano Alto  
Tenor Bass

Tone 4

Znamenny Chant

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia.

**Deacon:** Wisdom! Let us attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

**Hierarch:** Peace be unto all!

**People:** And to your spirit.

**Hierarch:** The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint John.

**People:** Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee!

**Deacon:** Let us attend!

**Hierarch:** At that time Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven and said: "Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son that the Son may glorify Thee, since Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on earth having accomplished the work which Thou

## LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATIONS

gavest Me to do; and now, Father glorify Thou Me in Thine own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made. I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word. Now they know that everything that Thou hast given Me is from Thee; for I have given them the words which Thou gavest Me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from Thee; and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom Thou gavest Me, for they are Thine; all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are one. While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name, which Thou hast given Me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. As Thou didst send Me into the world so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate Myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. The glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them, that they may be one even as We are one.'

**People:** Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

**Deacon:** Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great goodness, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** Again we pray for His Beatitude, Metropolitan \_\_\_\_\_, for the Holy Synod of Bishops, for priests, deacons, monastics; and for all our brethren in Christ.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** Again we pray for the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for our armed forces everywhere.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** Again we pray to the Lord our God, that He will look with mercy upon the members of this Sacred Council, and will send down into their hearts, their minds, and their lips the spirit of wisdom, of understanding, of godliness and of His fear; enlightening their minds with the light of His gracious understanding, that they may be adorned with all good works for the glory of His most holy name; for the benefit of His Holy Church; let us say: O Lord, hearken and mercifully have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Hierarch:** Hear us, O God our Savior, the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those who are far off upon the sea; and show mercy, show mercy, O Master, upon us sinners, and be merciful unto us. For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

## THE DISMISSAL

**Deacon:** Again and again, falling down on our knees before our Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Hierarch:** O God, our God! Thou hast adorned us with Thine image and given us a free will. When Thou didst enter into the Temple in the middle of the feast, O most compassionate Master, Thou didst teach the people who were amazed at Thy doctrine, for David says: Come to me, children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

Thou didst also teach wisdom to Solomon. Look down even now, O Maker and Creator, upon the members of this Sacred Council, and grant them wisdom and understanding that they may learn Thy holy will; warm their hearts in love for Thee and for their neighbors; guide them on the way of truth and righteousness, keeping their hearts from all evil; unite them in one mind and in one heart, and let mutual brotherly love abide in their midst; bless them for the doing of good and useful things. We pray Thee, O most merciful Lord our God, the God of every compassion and consolation: Do not turn away Thy face from them, nor deny them their longing, for they have set their hope on Thee. Grant them peace and serenity, a unity of spirit, concord and fruitful action, and all those things needful for their temporal and eternal life. Thou knowest our needs, and dost grant and fulfill our requests even before we make them.

For Thou art the God powerful in mercy and gracious in strength, and to Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Hierarch:** Most Holy Theotokos, save us!

**People:** More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without defilement you gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos we magnify You!

**Hierarch:** Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our sure hope, glory to Thee!

**People:** Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen!

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Most Blessed Master, Bless!

**Hierarch:** May He Who sent the most Holy Spirit from heaven upon His holy disciples and apostles, in the form of fiery tongues, Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure Mother; of the holy glorious, and all-laudable apostles; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints; have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and lovest mankind.

**People:** Amen. Eis polla eti Despota!

# A Service of Prayer at the Closing of a Sacred Council

**Deacon:** Bless, Most Blessed Master.

**Hierarch:** Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto  
ages of ages.

**Reader:** Amen. Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!

**People:**

Tone 6

Common Chant  
arr. from Lvov-Bakhmetiev

O Heav - en - ly King, the Comforter the Spi - rit

of Truth, who art everywhere and fill - est all things;

Treasury of bless - ings and Gi - ver of Life:

Come and a - bide in us, and cleanse us from every

im - pur - i - ty, and save our souls, O Good - One!

**Reader:**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us!  
(3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us! Lord, cleanse us from  
our sins! Master, pardon our transgressions! Holy One, visit  
and heal our infirmities, for Thy name's sake!

Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy  
Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heav-  
en. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our tres-  
passes, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and  
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**Hierarch:**

For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory: of  
the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and  
ever and unto ages of ages.

**Reader:**

Amen.

## GOD IS THE LORD

**Deacon:** In the 4th Tone: God is the Lord and has revealed Himself  
unto us! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!  
O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good: for His mercy  
endures forever.

**People:**

**Tone 4**

**Soprano Alto**      **Obikhod N. Bakhterev**

God is the Lord and has re vealed Him-self to us.

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.

**Deacon:** All nations surrounded me; in the Name of the Lord I with-  
stood them!

**People:** Repeats “God is the Lord.”

**Deacon:** I shall not die, but shall live, and recount the deeds of the  
Lord!

**People:** Repeats “God is the Lord.”

**Deacon:** The stone which the builders rejected has become the head  
of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing; and it is marvelous  
in our eyes!

**People:** Repeats “God is the Lord.” then sings the troparions.

# TROPARIONS

Tone 4

Obikhod  
N. Bakhmev

Soprano Alto Tenor Bass

We Thine unworthy ser - vants, O Lord, grateful for

the blessings Thou hast giv - en to us, always praise, bless,

and thankfully glorify Thy loving - kind - ness, crying to Thee with

love and humble sub - mis - sive-ness: O Savior and Benefactor, glo - ry to Thee.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.**

Tone 3

Obikhod  
N. Bakhmev

Soprano Alto Tenor Bass

Freely Thou dost grant us rich bless - ings, O Mas - ter,

though we are unprofitable ser - vants, in all

our needs we run to Thee; Thou dost shower us with

man - y gifts! Now we thank Thee with all our heart.

We glorify Thee, our Creator and De - fend - er!

We cry to Thee from the depths of our soul:

Glory to Thee, O God, most boun - - - ti - full!

**Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

Tone 3

Obikhod  
N. Bakhtmetev

Soprano  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

O Mother of God help of Christ - ians, you have favored

us with your pro - tec - tion! We your ser - vant

grate - ful - ly cry out to you: Hail, Most Pure Virgin

The - o - to - kos! By your prayers deliver us from

every ca - la - mi - ty, for you are a speedy

help - er in times of trou - ble.

## LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATIONS

**Deacon:** Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great goodness, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** Furthermore we pray for His Beatitude Metropolitan \_\_\_\_\_, for the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, for priests, deacons, and for all our brethren in Christ.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** We Thine unprofitable servants, give thanks to Thee with fear and trembling, O Lord, our Savior and Master, for Thou hast poured Thy blessings upon us abundantly. We fall down in worship before Thy loving mercy and praise Thee as our God, fervently crying to Thee: Deliver Thy servants from all calamities, and in Thy mercy, grant all our requests which are unto salvation, we beg Thee, O Lord: hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** Thou hast mercifully listened to the prayers of Thy servants, O Lord; Thou hast shown us Thy tender compassion and love for man. Do not forsake us in the days to come, but fulfill all the good desires of Thy faithful people. Reveal Thy rich mercy to us, disregard our sins, and attain glory for Thy name, we beg Thee, O Lord: hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** May our thanksgiving be as sweet-smelling incense before Thy majesty, most merciful Master. In Thy love for mankind, always send down Thy rich blessings upon Thy servants. Deliver us from the assaults of our visible and invisible enemies; preserve Thy Holy Church; and grant all Thy people health, virtue, and length of days, we beg Thee,

most bountiful King; incline Thine ear to our prayer, and speedily show mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Deacon:** O Lord, who didst accompany Luke and Cleopas on the road to Emmaus, and didst make them to return to Jerusalem with their hearts burning with the joy of Thy Resurrection; send Thy grace and divine blessing to accompany Thy servants, all the participants in this All-American Council, as they return to their homes and guide them in every good work, to the glory of Thy Holy Name. Preserve them in health and bring them safely to their destinations, we beg Thee, our merciful protector, hear us and have mercy.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Hierarch:** Hear us, O God our Savior, the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of those who are far off upon the sea; and show mercy, show mercy, O Master, upon us sinners, and be merciful unto us.

For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy. (3x)

**Hierarch:** O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, the God of all mercies and bounties, Whose mercy cannot be measured, and Whose love for man is an unfathomable deep; with fear and trembling, we fall down in adoration before Thy majesty, unprofitable servants that we are. We humbly thank Thee for the blessings Thou hast given Thy servants who have participated in this All-American Council. We glorify Thee, we praise Thee, we sing to Thee, our Lord and Master and

Defender; we fall down before Thee and beg Thy boundless mercy. As Thou hast graciously received Thy servants' prayers and granted them, so also deliver Thy Church and preserve us from every hostile assault. Grant us peace and tranquility, that Thy faithful people may grow in virtue and love for Thee, and may partake of Thy benefits, and so we will always offer thanksgiving to Thee, together with Thine Unoriginate Father, and Thy Most Holy, and Good and Life-Giving Spirit, God glorified in Three Persons, and will joyfully sing to Thee: Glory to Thee, O God our Savior, unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

## THE DISMISSAL

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Hierarch:** Most Holy Theotokos, save us!

**People:** More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, without defilement you gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos we magnify You!

**Hierarch:** Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our sure hope, glory to Thee!

**People:** Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages, Amen!

Lord, have mercy. (3x)  
Most Blessed, Master Bless!

**Hierarch:** Gives the dismissal of the day.

**People:** Amen. Eis polla eti Despota!

**“Many Years” is intoned by the deacon and sung by the people.**

# SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

## RESOLUTION 1: PROPOSED FUNDING FOR THE OCA

**Proposed Resolution for OCA Funding 2016-2018 as  
Recommended by the Holy Synod, March 19, 2015  
Amended May 5, 2015**

For the budget years 2016, 2017 and 2018, each territorial diocese of the Orthodox Church in America shall remit its annual diocesan financial obligation for the work of the central administration according to the following formula:

If your 2015 assessment at the \$90 per capita is greater than 46% of your diocesan operating budget, excluding restricted and designated funds (“*Net Operating Budget*”):

Your financial obligation in 2016 will be 46% of the 2016 “*net operating budget*”; in 2017 will be 40% of the “*net operating budget*”; and in 2018 will be 34% of your “*net operating budget*”. The “*net operating budget*” is intended to represent that which would previously been the diocesan assessment plus the OCA assessment.

If your 2015 assessment at the \$90 per capital is greater than 34% and equal to or less than 46% of your “*net operating budget*”,

Your financial obligation in 2016 will be the 2015 proportional rate; in 2017 will be the midpoint between the 2016 rate and 34% of the “*net operating budget*”; and in 2018 will be 34% of the “*net operating budget*”.

If your 2015 assessment at the \$90 per capita is less than or equal to 34% of your “*net operating budget*”:

Your financial obligation will be 34% of your “*net operating budgets*” in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

For the budget years 2016, 2017 and 2018, each non-territorial diocese (Archdiocese of Canada, Diocese of Alaska, Romanian Episcopate, Albanian Archdiocese, and Bulgarian Diocese) shall remit its annual diocesan financial obligation at the rate of 10% of its “*net operating budget*”.

## RESOLUTION 2: AAC PROPOSAL ON SPIRITUAL ABUSE

**Proposed by Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, State College, PA  
and Jennifer McClure, Ph.D.**

**Endorsed by His Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek  
Archbishop of Pittsburgh, Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania**

**Definition:** In the past decade, the OCA has taken considerable steps to address sexual and financial misconduct among clergy; it has not, however, addressed spiritual abuse, which is more subtle. Spiritual abuse entails using spiritual authority to: bring about undue emphasis and dependence on clergy; foster legalism and rigidity; manipulate others into doing one's bidding; intimidate people in order to prevent them asking questions or raising challenging discussions "for the good of the church;" distance oneself from healthy accountability/oversight; deny any wrongdoing and frame oneself as the victim (Johnson and Van Vonderen 1991). Clergy can use spiritual abuse (e.g., manipulation, intimidation, and distance from proper authorities) to create conditions that allow them to engage in financial and sexual misconduct.

**Call:** Spiritual abuse is not confined to theologically aberrant groups, such as cults and fringe religious movements. Because it is not based on the beliefs of a religious group, but on its *systems, structures, and methods* (Esther 2014:9), it can also occur in theologically orthodox churches. *If we tell ourselves that such a thing could never happen in an Orthodox church, we cannot protect people within our own churches from it.* The OCA needs to address spiritual abuse so that: 1) our parishes are healthy and safe; 2) clergy cannot use spiritually abusive tactics to create systems and situations where financial and sexual misconduct can occur.

**Rationale:** Spiritual abuse is damaging, even though the resulting wounds and scars—which include depression, anxiety, and PTSD—are often invisible. Many people who experience spiritual abuse leave the church and cannot fathom trusting God again. Those who stay in the church often experience difficulty during church services, due to intrusive memories, flashbacks, and panic attacks (Tracy 2005). Church leaders need education and guidelines on how to identify spiritual abuse, how to address it, how to prevent it, and how to minister to people who have been spiritually abused by clergy.

**Resolution:** The 18<sup>th</sup> All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America requests that:

- a) the Holy Synod recognize that there are spiritual forms of misconduct, not just financial and sexual;
- b) the Holy Synod oversee Church-wide education on spiritual abuse by developing guidelines on: 1) how to identify spiritual abuse; 2) how to address spiritual abuse; 3) how to prevent spiritual abuse; 4) how to minister to people who have been spiritually abused by their clergy. These guidelines should be developed, agreed upon and implemented within the next triennium.

### **References:**

Esther, Elizabeth. 2014. *Girl at the End of the World: My Escape from Fundamentalism in Search of Faith with a Future*. New York: Convergent Books.

Johnson, David and Jeff Van Vonderen. 1991. *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse: Recognizing and Escaping Spiritual Manipulation and False Spiritual Authority within the Church*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers.

Tracy, Steven R. 2005. *Mending the Soul: Understanding and Healing Abuse*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

### **Additional Addenda:**

A longer description and discussion of spiritual abuse  
Case studies of spiritual abuse

### **Addendum #1: A Note on Spiritual Abuse**

Jennifer McClure, Ph.D.

Spiritual abuse is defined as “the mistreatment of a person who is in need of help, support or greater spiritual empowerment, with the result of weakening, undermining, or decreasing that person’s spiritual empowerment” (Johnson and Van Vonderen 1991:20). Spiritual abuse is often subtle; there is not a clear red line, like there is with sexual or financial misconduct.

There are a number of occurrences that are signs of potential spiritual abuse:

- Undue emphasis on the minister—Abusive religious leaders put themselves on a high pedestal, where they cannot be questioned or held accountable.
- Image preoccupation—Abusive religious leaders focus more on having a good image than on facing unfortunate truths or seeking help for their troubles/struggles. Questioning whether something is appropriate or going to outside spiritual or civil authorities is tantamount to treason.
- Legalism and rigidity—Abusive religious leaders will often emphasize minor theological or moral teachings, while neglecting to focus on the main things that God calls us to do (loving Him and others).
- Manipulation and hypocrisy—Many abusive leaders heavily preach God’s love and grace, but they do not demonstrate in shepherding people. They will convince people that condemnation and punitive measures are *truly* God’s love and grace.
- The ends justify the means—Abusive leaders will often focus on a goal (whether it is related to a changing the culture of a congregation, a building project, theology, or another thing) and pursue it regardless of the cost, even if it means harming people along the way. Any harm to people is justified in the name of the greater goal or “for the good of the church.”
- Intimidation—Anyone who disagrees with or questions an abusive authority figure will be intimidated into staying silent, not going to the authorities, and not raising questions. This will be done in the name of not being divisive, critical, disrespectful, or unloving (i.e., those who raise questions will be shamed spiritually).
- Difficulty with authority figures—Abusive leaders will actively distance themselves from the spiritual authorities over them. They can manipulate their authorities into thinking that they do not need oversight or that proper oversight is too restrictive or burdensome to them. They will also pretend to be in submission without actually obeying the authorities

(creating the image but not the reality). Many abusive leaders discredit and disparage legitimate authority figures—even claiming that healthy oversight is “persecution.”

- Denial/Lack of repentance—Because spiritual abuse can be very subtle, abusive leaders will often deny their behavior or claim that it has been misconstrued.

Spiritual abuse is not confined to theologically aberrant groups, such as cults and fringe religious movements. Because it is not based on the beliefs of a religious group, but on its *systems, structures, and methods* (Esther 2014:9), it can also occur in theologically orthodox churches. *If we tell ourselves that such a thing could never happen in an Orthodox church, we cannot protect people within our own churches from it.*

Many people erroneously assume that only naïve or psychologically troubled people could be trapped in such a situation. This is not the case. Victims of spiritual abuse are often people who fervently love God and want to serve him. Spiritual abuse occurs through subtle shifts that many people do not notice—what social psychologists call the foot-in-the-door phenomenon. Spiritual abusers can “groom” people in the following ways:

- Encouraging people to trust them before they demonstrate that they are trustworthy (unquestioning trust)
- Encouraging people to become close friends with their family and inner circle
- Teaching people to rely on them for everything (learned helplessness)
- Shaming people who disagree with them, question them, or don’t live up to their standards
- Denying any accusations of wrongdoing, instead claiming that those who want to hold them accountable are too critical, too controlling, slandering them, or destroying their ministry. Many abusive leaders argue that they should not be criticized at all (“Touch not the Lord’s anointed”).
- Either under-relatedness (neglect) or over-relatedness (enmeshment)

Some people also assume that victims will leave once they realize that they are in an abusive situation. Many abuse victims remain in abusive situations, however, due to a lack of support, attachment to the abuser, and feelings of helplessness. Victims of spiritual abuse may continue to support the abusive leader because of their naïveté or loyalty to the leader. Even if an abusive religious leader has been removed from ministry and is no longer in contact with parishioners, some victims may feel uncomfortable questioning what happened because they internalized the abusive leader’s discouragement of healthy accountability.

Spiritual abuse is very damaging, even though the resulting wounds and scars are often invisible. Victims of spiritual abuse often struggle with their sense of personhood, self-esteem, and trusting anyone again—especially church people, ministers, and God. Many people who experience spiritual abuse leave the church and cannot fathom trusting God again. Those who stay face a difficult journey of learning to trust God and the church again. Victims can suffer from depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). They can also experience difficulty during church services, due to intrusive memories, flashbacks, and panic attacks (Tracy 2005).

This note relies extensively on:

- Esther, Elizabeth. 2014. *Girl at the End of the World: My Escape from Fundamentalism in Search of Faith with a Future*. New York: Convergent Books.
- Johnson, David and Jeff Van Vonderen. 1991. *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse: Recognizing and Escaping Spiritual Manipulation and False Spiritual Authority within the Church*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers.
- Tracy, Steven R. 2005. *Mending the Soul: Understanding and Healing Abuse*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

## **Addendum #2: Case Studies on Spiritual Abuse**

Jennifer M. McClure, Ph.D.

Many people are unfamiliar with the concept of spiritual abuse. In this addendum, I offer a number of case studies in which spiritual abuse occurs. I also highlight what warning signs are apparent in each case.

**Case #1:** Christy was a teenager in a youth group. The youth pastor developed a sexualized relationship with her and told Christy that this relationship was special and blessed by God. After some time and quite a bit of emotional turmoil, Christy told the senior pastor of the church about the youth pastor's actions. The senior pastor blamed Christy for what happened and told her never again to repeat the accusations. The abuse continued for many more years (Tracy 2005:30-32).

There are two forms of spiritual abuse in this case study. First, the youth pastor used his spiritual authority to manipulate Christy into a sexual relationship. Second, the senior pastor did not protect Christy, but rather blamed her and did not properly investigate her accusations.

**Case #2:** Cathy was married to a well-known lay leader at a large church. She had very little free time or personal money to spend for fun. This is because she had made a \$50 purchase without her husband's permission. Her husband disciplined her with "God's loving punishment"—making her working in her spare time (babysitting, etc.) in order to earn money to buy groceries and other household items (Tracy 2005:33-34).

There are multiple signs of spiritual abuse in this case: 1) unhealthy levels of control; 2) rigidity and legalism; 3) manipulating Cathy into thinking that the punishment was really Godly and loving.

**Case #3:** Bethany led a women's Bible study at a local church. She was impatient with women who struggled, seeing the struggle as a lack of faith. Bethany had an answer for every question and a fix for every struggle people faced. She would not let others question her, saying that God had called her to his ministry and that they should not challenge God's decisions (Van Vonderen, Ryan, and Ryan 2008:19-20).

Bethany shows many signs of being a spiritual abuser: 1) shaming people who did not agree with her or live up to her standards; 2) being rigid in the answers and fixes she gave to people; 3) using spiritual authority to intimidate others who questioned or challenged her.

**Case #4:** Jeff grew up in a church where people would be judged and told they were going to hell for very minor infractions. Christ was used as a threat to get people to behave. This environment affected him in a number of ways. He became very judgmental of others, and he focused more on appearing spiritually superior than on growing closer to God. Instead of loving God, Jeff was afraid of Him (Van Vonderen, Ryan, and Ryan 2008:21-22).

The following signs indicate that Jeff was a victim of spiritual abuse: 1) rigidity and legalism; 2) shaming; 3) focus on spiritual appearances; 4) intimidation.

**Case #5:** Josh\* was the leading pastor of a large church. He regularly made vulgar and misogynistic comments about women from the pulpit. He used his authority to coerce and intimidate other ministers into supporting his agenda and vision. He would not allow people who opposed or challenge him to rise in church leadership, creating a circle of “yes men” in which he had no accountability. Josh also used tithe money to buy hundreds of copies of his new book, so that it would make the New York Times bestseller list. Although Josh did resign under pressure, his resignation letter does not acknowledge any misconduct.

Josh engaged in spiritual abuse in a number of ways. He manipulated other ministers into supporting his agenda. He intimidated those who questioned or challenged him and distanced himself from proper accountability. He also used his spiritual authority to misuse church funds. Finally, he denied wrongdoing and did not show evidence of repentance.

\*This is a case that has come to light in the past year. I have changed the name of the minister but preserved details of his misconduct.

**References:**

- Tracy, Steven R. 2005. *Mending the Soul: Understanding and Healing Abuse*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Van Vonderen, Jeff, Dale Ryan, and Juanita Ryan. 2008. *Soul Repair: Rebuilding Your Spiritual Life*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books.

**THE STATUTE OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**FINAL DRAFT**

May 4, 2015

## **PREAMBLE**

+ IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

The Orthodox Church in America, as a local autocephalous Orthodox Church, belongs to the worldwide communion of Orthodox Churches. It unites in its fold Orthodox Christians of various national backgrounds and traditions. It grew from the Alaskan mission established in 1794 by the Church of Russia. Expanding across the United States and Canada, it became a Diocese of that Church. In 1924 this Diocese was reorganized as an autonomous Metropolitanate under the title “the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of North America.” On April 10, 1970, the Patriarch and the Holy Synod of the Church of Russia granted autocephaly to the Metropolitanate. The Metropolitanate accepted and affirmed its new status and reorganized under the title “The Orthodox Church in America” at sessions of the All-American Council held in October, 1970, at Saint Tikhon’s Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

The Orthodox Church in America is governed by Holy Tradition, that is, the whole body of teaching and practice of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. That Tradition is expressed first of all in Holy Scripture; in the dogmatic decisions and canons of the seven Ecumenical Councils, the canons of the local councils, the canons and writings of the Holy Fathers; in the liturgical life of the Church; and in this Statute of The Orthodox Church in America (hereafter, “the Statute”). The purpose of the Statute is to apply Holy Tradition to the organization and daily life of The Orthodox Church in America.

The Orthodox Church in general and The Orthodox Church in America in particular are hierarchical in structure.

The Statute consists of this Preamble and the Eighteen (18) Articles that follow.

## **ARTICLE I – THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA**

The Orthodox Church in America is an autocephalous Church with territorial jurisdiction in the United States of America and in Canada. The Orthodox Church in America also exercises jurisdiction over its Diocese within the United Mexican States.

The Statute of The Orthodox Church in America conforms to Holy Scripture, Holy Tradition, the Sacred Canons of the Ecumenical and Local Councils, those of the Holy Fathers, and the canonical tradition of the Orthodox Church.

In the Statute, The Orthodox Church in America is referred to as “the Church” unless otherwise noted.

## ARTICLE II – THE HOLY SYNOD

### *Section 1: Definition*

The Holy Synod is the supreme canonical authority in the Church. The full Holy Synod consists of all the Diocesan Bishops of the Church under the ex officio presidency of the Primate (hereafter, “the Metropolitan”). The Metropolitan shall preside at all regular and special sessions of the Holy Synod.

### *Section 2: Regular Sessions*

The Metropolitan shall convene regular sessions of the Holy Synod twice annually, in the autumn and in the spring.

### *Section 3: Special Sessions*

Special sessions may be called by the Metropolitan on his own initiative or at the written request of at least three Diocesan Bishops.

### *Section 4: Quorum*

The quorum required for a regular or special session of the Holy Synod is two-thirds of its membership.

### *Section 5: Competence*

The following matters are included within the jurisdiction and competence of the Holy Synod:

- a. All matters involving doctrine, canonical order, morals, and liturgical practice;
- b. All canonical matters pertaining to the declaration of a vacancy in the Office of a Diocesan Bishop, and to the election and ordination of a bishop as provided by Article VIII, Sections 5-7;
- c. The transfer of a bishop;
- d. The acceptance of a bishop from another Orthodox Church or the release of a bishop to another Orthodox Church;

- e. The reconciliation of a schismatic bishop;
- f. The grant of any leave of absence to a bishop;
- g. The bestowal of honors upon bishops and of Synodal Awards upon priests, deacons, and laity;
- h. The procedures and normative standards for retirement of the Metropolitan, Diocesan Bishops, and Auxiliary Bishops;
- i. Canonical matters pertaining to the discipline of a bishop;
- j. Initial consideration of any complaint or accusation involving a bishop;
- k. Acting as Court of first instance in all cases involving an accusation against a bishop in accordance with Article XV, Section 8, and as regular Court of final instance in matters involving bishops, clergy, and laity in accordance with Article XV, Sections 7-8;
- l. Deposition of clergy;
- m. Establishment of new Dioceses, the definition of Diocesan boundaries, and the acceptance of Dioceses into the jurisdiction of The Orthodox Church in America;
- n. Upon referral of the Metropolitan, resolution of problems arising within a Diocese that require the judgment of the Holy Synod;
- o. Examination of annual reports from the Metropolitan and the bishops on the fulfillment of their pastoral duties;
- p. Examination of regular reports from the Church Officers, Stavropegial Institutions, departments, commissions, committees, offices, and boards of the Church;
- q. Establishment of standards for ordination;
- r. Establishment of general policies regarding relations with other Orthodox Churches, non-Orthodox religious bodies, civil authorities, and secular entities;
- s. General oversight and guidance of:
  - i. Stavropegial Institutions;
  - ii. Monasteries and monastic life;
  - iii. Theological schools and programs of theological education;
  - iv. Military and institutional chaplaincies;
  - v. Organizations of the Church;
  - vi. Missionary, educational, and social programs of the Church; and
  - vii. Ecclesiastical arts, such as iconography, liturgical music, architecture, and other applied arts;

- t. Appointment and supervision of departments, commissions, committees, offices, and boards of the Church;
- u. Confirmation of the Metropolitan's nomination of the Chancellor, Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers of the Church whose competence or service extend beyond the boundaries of a single Diocese;
- v. Determination in consultation with the Metropolitan Council of the dates, location, and theme of the All-American Council;
- w. Appointment of a Preconciliar Commission upon nomination by the Metropolitan Council;
- x. Confirmation of agenda and rules of procedure for the All-American Council;
- y. Approval or rejection of legislation, resolutions, and initiatives of the All-American Council as provided for in Article III, Section 1:5;
- z. The glorification of saints of the local autocephalous Church; and
- aa. Establishment of rules and procedures as appropriate for the conduct of the operation of the Holy Synod.

The Holy Synod has authority necessary and proper to conduct matters within its competence.

### ***Section 6: Standing Synod***

The Holy Synod shall establish a Standing Synod which the Metropolitan convenes between sessions of the Holy Synod and over which he presides. It is composed of the Metropolitan and the Secretary of the Holy Synod, ex officio, and at least two additional Diocesan Bishops.

The Holy Synod shall delegate authority to the Standing Synod to make necessary decisions on specific matters that do not require the judgment of the full Holy Synod. The Holy Synod may also delegate authority to the Standing Synod to make provisional decisions on other matters subject to subsequent ratification by the Holy Synod. The Standing Synod may formulate proposals for consideration by the Holy Synod. All measures adopted by the Standing Synod shall be reported in writing by the Secretary of the Holy Synod to the members of the Holy Synod within thirty days, but in no event later than the next session of the Holy Synod.

### ***Section 7: Extraordinary Sessions***

In the absence of the Metropolitan, the Holy Synod may meet in Extraordinary Session in the following circumstances:

- a. If the absence of the Metropolitan arises from death, retirement or resignation accepted by the Holy Synod, deposition by canonical process, or medical incapacity accepted by the Holy Synod, the member of the Holy Synod senior by rank and date of episcopal ordination shall convene the Holy Synod, which shall proceed in accordance with the provisions of Article IV, Sections 3-4.
- b. If the Metropolitan is impeded from attending a Regular or Special Session of the Holy Synod because of temporary circumstances, such as a medical emergency or travel difficulties, and if he is able to communicate, he may authorize the Holy Synod to proceed in Extraordinary Session, under the presidency of a member of the Holy Synod whom he shall designate. In such circumstances, the Extraordinary Session of the Holy Synod has the authority to make necessary provisional decisions on matters that do not require the judgment of the full Holy Synod, subject to subsequent approval by the Metropolitan.
- c. If the Metropolitan is impeded from attending a Regular or Special Session of the Holy Synod because of grave circumstances that make it impossible for him to communicate, such as unconsciousness following a medical emergency, the Holy Synod shall meet in Extraordinary Session, under the presidency of the member of the Holy Synod senior by rank and date of episcopal ordination. In such circumstances, the Extraordinary Session of the Holy Synod has the authority to make necessary provisional decisions on matters that do not require the judgment of the full Holy Synod, subject to subsequent approval by the Metropolitan if he is able to consider them.
- d. If the Metropolitan is unable to fulfill his primatial and episcopal responsibilities, whether because of illness, injury, infirmity, or disabling condition, or because of some other grave circumstance, and if the prognosis for his recovery, recuperation, or return to active service is uncertain in outcome or indeterminate in duration, rather than declare the office of Metropolitan vacant, the Holy Synod meeting in Extraordinary Session may appoint a Temporary Administrator from among the bishops of the Church to assume the affected responsibilities. During a Temporary Administration there shall be no innovations in matters affecting the basic structures and administration of the Church. During a Temporary Administration the Holy Synod shall continue to monitor the condition and circumstances of the Metropolitan, so that appropriate measures may be taken to assure his personal well-being as well as the good estate of the Church. The Holy Synod may terminate a Temporary

Administration either by dissolving the Temporary Administration if the Metropolitan is able to return to active service, or by declaring the Office of the Metropolitan vacant in accordance with paragraph a of this section and Article IV, Sections 3-4.

## **ARTICLE III – THE ALL-AMERICAN COUNCIL**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

The All-American Council is the highest legislative and administrative authority within the Church. The Council brings together the various elements of the Church to bear witness to her identity, unity, and mission.

### ***Section 2: Composition***

Members of the All-American Council are delegates, observers, and guests. Delegates are:

- a. The Metropolitan and the other members of the Holy Synod;
- b. Auxiliary bishops;
- c. The Parish Priest and Associates Priests, if any, of each Parish and an equal number of lay delegates from that Parish;
- d. Military chaplains;
- e. One Assigned Deacon per Parish;
- f. One lay delegate from each Parish not having an assigned priest;
- g. The members and alternates of the Metropolitan Council;
- h. The members of the Auditing Committee of the Church;
- i. One priest or deacon and one layperson, from each theological institution;
- j. The superiors of monasteries, if accredited by their Bishop; and
- k. Members of the Preconciliar Commission.

Observers may be admitted to the Council following the registration procedures established by the Preconciliar Commission, without voice or the right to vote. An attached or retired priest or deacon, if accredited by his bishop, may be seated with delegates to the All-American Council, with voice but without the right to vote.

Additional persons may be invited by the Preconciliar Commission with the approval of the Metropolitan to attend one or more sessions of the All-American Council as guests, and, if requested, to address the Council, but without the right to vote.

### ***Section 3: Periodicity***

The All-American Council shall be convened periodically, normally at intervals of three years. In extraordinary circumstances, such as the unexpected vacancy in the office of the Metropolitan, for which provisions are made in Article IV, Section 3, an extraordinary All-American Council shall be summoned. The place and precise time of the next meeting of the All-American Council shall be determined by action of the Metropolitan Council with the approval of the Holy Synod.

### ***Section 4: Competence***

The following matters are within the competence of the All-American Council. The All-American Council shall:

- a. Adopt and amend the Statute;
- b. Nominate candidates for the Office of Metropolitan as outlined in the Statute (cf. Article IV, Section 4);
- c. Approve and implement Church-wide initiatives with regard to the missionary, educational, financial, and philanthropic activities of the Church;
- d. Provide for financial support of the Church;
- e. Consider and act upon resolutions properly brought before the All-American Council;
- f. Receive reports from the Metropolitan, Church Officers, Stavropegial Institutions, departments, commissions, committees, offices, and boards of the Church;
- g. Elect six (6) at-large members of the Metropolitan Council and two alternates; and
- h. Elect members of the Pension Board and alternates.

### ***Section 5: The Preconciliar Commission***

The Holy Synod shall appoint a Preconciliar Commission, nominated by the Metropolitan Council. The Preconciliar Commission shall:

- a. Recommend to the Metropolitan Council and Holy Synod, for their approval and confirmation, the dates, location, and theme of the All-American Council;
- b. Establish such committees as may be necessary for the proper operation of the All-American Council, such as a local functioning committee, a resolutions committee, a credentials committee, and a translations committee;

- c. Propose an agenda and rules of procedure for the All-American Council and submit them to the Metropolitan Council for approval and confirmation by the Holy Synod, it being understood that the agenda may be changed by vote of the All-American Council;
- d. Establish and oversee procedures for registration and certification of members at the All-American Council;
- e. Establish All-American Council assessments and fees;
- f. Publish the agenda, notices, and arrangements for the All-American Council at least sixty (60) days prior to the date set for the convening of the All-American Council;
- g. Ensure that proposed amendments to the Statute, together with recommendations of the Commission on Canons and Statute, are published at least sixty (60) days prior to the date set for the convening of the All-American Council;
- h. Notify members of their certification at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set for the convening of the All-American Council; and
- i. Assure that all reports to the All-American Council are in written form and that they are published at least thirty (30) days prior to the date set for the convening of the council.

***Section 6: Requirements for Parish Representation at the All-American Council***

Each Parish which has fulfilled its financial obligations to the Church as established by the All-American Council and by its Diocese is entitled to representation at the All-American Council.

***Section 7: Qualification, Election, and Accreditation of Lay Delegates***

a. Each Parish shall elect at a Parish Assembly lay delegates equal to the number of priests as defined in Article III, Section 2.c, and a single alternate. In order to be validly elected and accredited, the lay delegates and alternate to the All-American Council from Parishes must be Voting Members of the Parish as defined in Article XII, Section 5.d of the Statute.

b. The Parish Priest shall attest to the qualification and election of the delegates and alternate in the manner determined by the Preconciliar Commission. In case the office of the Parish Priest is vacant or the Parish Priest is incapacitated or otherwise prevented from making such an attestation, this responsibility shall be assumed by the District Dean or Diocesan Bishop.

c. Provisions for the qualification and accreditation of lay delegates from Stavropegial Institutions and other Church-recognized institutions shall be substantially similar to those in Article XII, Section 5, as determined by the institution in consultation with the bishop with canonical oversight. They shall be appropriately accredited by the abbot, rector or superior of the Stavropegial Institution they represent.

### ***Section 8: Divine Services***

The order of liturgical services at the All-American Council shall be determined in advance by the Holy Synod.

### ***Section 9: Language***

The official texts and communications of the All-American Council shall be published in the English language. Proceedings and texts shall be translated to and from English as necessary.

### ***Section 10 Presiding Officers***

a. The presiding officer of the All-American Council shall be the Metropolitan. If the Metropolitan is unable to attend a session of the All-American Council because of temporary circumstances, he may delegate a member of the Holy Synod to preside in his absence. If the Metropolitan is unable to preside for grave circumstances (Article II, Section 7c-d) and unable to appoint a presiding officer, the member of the Holy Synod senior by rank and date of episcopal ordination shall preside. In the case of a vacancy in the Office of Metropolitan, the Locum Tenens shall preside, in accordance with the provisions of Article IV, Section 3 of the Statute.

b. The All-American Council shall elect two delegates, one priest or deacon and one layperson to serve as vice-chairpersons.

### ***Section 11: Secretariat***

The Council shall elect a Secretariat sufficient for its needs. It shall also elect the chairperson of the Secretariat.

### ***Section 12: Minutes***

The official minutes of each session of the All-American Council shall be prepared by the Secretariat, signed by its chairperson, and submitted to the presiding officer of the Council for review and approval by the Holy Synod. This review shall take place within twenty-four (24) hours of the adjournment of the session. Upon approval by the Holy Synod, the minutes shall be distributed to the Council at its next session. Any disagreements or disputes relating to the

minutes of that session shall be raised at that time. If the final session of the Council has adjourned, disagreements or disputes concerning that session's minutes shall be referred to the newly-elected Metropolitan Council for consideration at its first meeting. Within a period of not more than sixty (60) days after the conclusion of the All-American Council, the official text of the minutes shall be transmitted to each member of the Council.

### ***Section 13: Quorum***

A majority of the delegates to the All-American Council who have been accredited and registered shall constitute a quorum.

### ***Section 14: Procedures and Voting***

As its first order of business, the Council shall adopt rules of procedure for the conduct of its business as proposed by the Preconciliar Commission and approved by the Metropolitan Council and confirmed by the Holy Synod.

Resolutions and decisions made in plenary sessions of the All-American Council shall require a majority vote, except for the election of the Metropolitan, which is governed by special provisions (cf. Article IV, Section 4), and amendments to the Statute (cf. Article XVII, Section 4).

### ***Section 15: Approval by the Holy Synod***

Every resolution or decision made in a plenary session of the All-American Council shall be reviewed by the Holy Synod within twenty-four (24) hours of the adjournment of that session. The Holy Synod's approval or rejection of a resolution or decision shall be reported to the presiding officer of the All-American Council and transmitted to the All-American Council at the beginning of the following session. In case the Holy Synod does not accept a resolution or decision adopted by a plenary session of the All-American Council, it shall explain its reasons for not accepting the resolution or decision. At the final session of the All-American Council, a recess shall be taken for an appropriate period prior to final adjournment to allow the Holy Synod to have an opportunity to act on any resolutions or decisions made at that session.

### ***Section 16: Pension Board***

#### **a. Definition**

The Pension Board is an autonomous executive body, established by the All-American Council, that supervises administration of The Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan, which is a retirement plan established and mandated by the Church for all eligible clergy and lay employees. The assets of the Pension

Plan constitute property held in trust for beneficiaries of the Pension Plan and are not assets of The Orthodox Church in America.

b. Composition

- i. The Board consists of seven (7) members. The Holy Synod appoints one bishop to membership on the Pension Board; the All-American Council elects the remaining members.
- ii. The Pension Board appoints one or more trustees from its membership.

c. Terms of Office

The bishop appointed to the Pension Board shall serve at the pleasure of the Holy Synod. The other members of the Pension Board are priests or deacons and laypersons in equal number, with relevant professional experience, elected as follows:

- i. At each All-American Council, if there are vacancies on the membership of the Pension Board to be filled by election by the All-American Council, the priest or deacon and the layperson who receive the highest number of votes are elected for a term from one All-American Council through the next two All-American Councils excluding any extraordinary All-American Council.
- ii. The priest or deacon and the layperson who receive the next highest number of votes are elected for a term from one All-American Council through the next All-American Council excluding any extraordinary All-American Council.
- iii. The All-American Council also elects two alternates, one priest or deacon and one layperson. The priest or deacon and the layperson who receive the next highest number of votes are elected as alternates for a term from one All-American Council through the next All-American Council excluding any extraordinary All-American Council.
- iv. An alternate shall fill a permanent vacancy on the Pension Board, complete the balance of the vacated term of the person whom he or she replaces, and assume all member duties and privileges relating to re-election.

Members of the Pension Board may continue to be eligible for re-election by the All-American Council.

d. Periodicity

The Pension Board shall meet quarterly, or as often as is necessary to accomplish effective, professional, and prudent administration.

e. **Competence**

The following matters are within the competence of the Pension Board. The Pension Board shall:

- i. Submit the Pension Plan and any proposed amendments to the Pension Plan to the Metropolitan Council for adoption;
- ii. Uphold the provisions of the Pension Plan as defined by the Plan Document and comply with United States Internal Revenue Service regulations and any other applicable regulations that qualify it for favorable tax exempt status as a qualified pension plan;
- iii. Consult on a regular basis with professional investment, legal, actuarial, accounting and auditing providers, as it deems appropriate in order to evaluate plan provisions and capabilities, while securing the stability, financial security and viability of the Pension Plan, with a goal of providing optimum benefits for plan participants; and
- iv. Report to the All-American Council on the activities and status of the plan and each year to the Metropolitan Council.

## **ARTICLE IV – THE METROPOLITAN**

### ***Section 1: The Metropolitan***

The Metropolitan enjoys primacy of honor among the bishops of The Orthodox Church in America. As Primate, he shows concern for the internal and external welfare of the entire Church. He is the president of the Holy Synod. He is the ruling archbishop of the Archdiocese of Washington and bears the title "Metropolitan of All America and Canada." The Metropolitan is commemorated by all bishops during liturgical services.

### ***Section 2: Competence***

The following matters are included within the competence of the Metropolitan. The Metropolitan shall:

- a. Uphold the unity of the bishops of the Church;
- b. Convene and preside over all regular and special sessions of the Holy Synod and all sessions of the Standing Synod;

- c. Supervise implementation of decisions of the Holy Synod;
- d. Appoint a Locum Tenens in the event of a vacancy in the office of a Diocesan Bishop;
- e. Initiate action to fill a vacancy in the office of Diocesan Bishop, confirm the election by the Holy Synod, and preside, or delegate another bishop to preside, at the enthronement;
- f. Preside, or delegate another bishop to preside, at the ordination of all bishops;
- g. Confirm the election by the Holy Synod of an auxiliary bishop;
- h. Give fraternal counsel to a brother bishop as necessary regarding his personal life or the exercise of his archpastoral ministry, and if the bishop disregards this counsel, the Metropolitan may submit the matter to the Holy Synod;
- i. Receive and, in consultation with the other members of the Holy Synod, act upon petitions of priests and deacons from other Orthodox Churches seeking acceptance into the ranks of the clergy of The Orthodox Church in America;
- j. Receive and, in consultation with the other members of the Holy Synod, act upon petitions of non-Orthodox clergy seeking reception into the ranks of the clergy of The Orthodox Church in America;
- k. Represent the Church in its relations with other Orthodox Churches, other religious bodies and organizations, and secular authorities;
- l. Commemorate the Primates of other autocephalous Churches in liturgical services;
- m. Consecrate and distribute Holy Chrism to the Diocesan Bishops;
- n. Provide Diocesan Bishops with Holy Relics necessary for the consecration of Church altars and Holy Antimensia;
- o. Maintain in conjunction with the Holy Synod and appropriate Officers of the Church the patrimony of the Office of the Metropolitan;
- p. Convene and preside over the All-American Council, report to it on the life of the Church, and promulgate its decisions;
- q. Convene and preside over meetings of the Metropolitan Council;
- r. Serve as president of the Church as a civil corporation;
- s. Nominate the Chancellor, Secretary, Treasurer, and any other officers of the Church for endorsement by the Metropolitan Council and subsequent confirmation by the Holy Synod;
- t. Supervise Church Officers and receive regular reports from them;
- u. Supervise and have pastoral care of Stavropegial Institutions;

- v. Supervise the ministry of military and institutional chaplaincies and act as the Church's ecclesiastical endorser of chaplains;
- w. Issue pastoral letters addressed to bishops, clergy, monastics, and laity of the Church; and
- x. Exercise pastoral care with the right of initiative and pastoral intervention in all matters concerning the life of the Church within the framework of the Sacred Canons.

The Metropolitan possesses the authority necessary to exercise his primatial ministry within the Church in conformity with the Holy Canons.

### ***Section 3: Vacancy in Office***

In the event of the Metropolitan's death, retirement or resignation accepted by the Holy Synod, medical incapacity, or deposition by canonical process, the member of the Holy Synod senior by rank and date of episcopal ordination shall convene the Holy Synod in extraordinary session to declare the office of the Metropolitan vacant and proceed with the selection of a Locum Tenens. Within a period of three months, unless some unavoidable necessity forces a prolongment of this period, but not to exceed six months, the Locum Tenens shall convene an extraordinary All-American Council at which a new Metropolitan shall be elected. During a vacancy there shall be no innovations in matters affecting the basic structures and administration of the Church. The Chancellor shall safeguard the particular patrimony of the Office of the Metropolitan until a new Metropolitan is elected.

### ***Section 4: Election***

A nominee for the Office of Metropolitan must have at least three years of episcopal ministry in The Orthodox Church in America.

The election shall take place according to the following order:

- a. The All-American Council, without previous discussion of names, proposes nominees by secret ballot. An official paper ballot shall be distributed to each delegate of the Council present at that session.
- b. On the first vote, a single name shall be written on each ballot. If a name of a person is written on a number of ballots equal to or in excess of at least two-thirds of the total number of Voting Members in attendance at that session of the Council, this nominee shall be presented to the Holy Synod for canonical election. If the Holy Synod does not elect the nominee, a member of the Holy Synod shall formally state the reason for which the nominee was not elected.

- c. If no canonical election results from the first vote, a second vote shall be taken by the All-American Council. An official paper ballot shall be distributed to each delegate of the Council present at that session.
- d. On the second vote, two names shall be written on each ballot. The tellers shall not count any ballot on which fewer or more than two names are written. The names of the two nominees who receive the highest number of ballots on the second vote shall be submitted to the Holy Synod for canonical election of one of these nominees.
- e. With his acceptance of the canonical election by the Holy Synod, the new Metropolitan has full authority and prerogatives as Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada, and he is immediately invested with the insignia of his Office.

## **ARTICLE V – THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

The Metropolitan Council is the permanent executive body of the Church administration which exists for the purpose of implementing the decisions of the All-American Council and continues the work of the Council between its sessions. The Metropolitan serves as the chairman of the Council.

### ***Section 2: Composition***

The Metropolitan Council shall consist of:

- a. The Metropolitan;
- b. The Chancellor, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of The Orthodox Church in America, ex officio;
- c. Two representatives from each Diocese, one priest or deacon and one layperson, elected by the Diocesan Assembly unless otherwise provided for by Diocesan Bylaws; and
- d. Six (6) members elected at-large by the All-American Council, three priests or deacons and three laypersons.

An alternate elected at the All-American Council becomes a member of the Metropolitan Council only when a permanent vacancy in an at-large membership occurs.

### ***Section 3: Terms of Office***

- a. Ex officio members of the Metropolitan Council serve for the duration of their term in office.
- b. Diocesan Representatives to the Metropolitan Council are elected for a term of three (3) years.
- c. At-large members of the Metropolitan Council and alternates are elected for a term from one All-American Council through the next, excluding any extraordinary All-American Council.
- d. Elected members of the Metropolitan Council, whether Diocesan or at-large, may serve no more than two successive terms.

### ***Section 4: Periodicity***

The Metropolitan Council shall meet at least twice each year, once in the fall quarter and once in the spring quarter of each year.

### ***Section 5: Vacancies in Office***

- a. Unless provided for by Diocesan Bylaws, permanent vacancies occurring among Diocesan Representatives are filled by the next Diocesan Assembly, with permanent vacancies occurring in the interim being filled by appointment of the Diocesan Council.
- b. In those cases in which a Diocesan Representative is temporarily unable to attend meetings of the Metropolitan Council, the Diocesan Authority may designate a substitute to attend as a guest of the Metropolitan Council, with right of voice but not the right to vote.
- c. Permanent vacancies occurring among at-large members are filled by alternates who have been elected by the All-American Council, one priest or deacon and one layperson.

### ***Section 6: Quorum and Voting***

A majority of the members of the Metropolitan Council will constitute a quorum. All decisions of the Metropolitan Council are made by a majority vote of those present; in case of a tie, the deciding vote shall be cast by the Chairperson. The decisions of the Metropolitan Council shall become effective upon approval by the Metropolitan or the Holy Synod, depending on the nature of the decision.

Guests may be invited to attend sessions of the Metropolitan Council by any member, with the approval of the Metropolitan. Guests shall have no right to vote but may address the Council if requested.

### ***Section 7: Competence***

The following matters are within the competence of the Metropolitan Council. The Metropolitan Council shall:

- a. Implement the decisions of the All-American Council and continue the work of the All-American Council between sessions in the areas of its competence;
- b. Assist the Metropolitan and the Holy Synod in implementing decisions within its competence;
- c. Establish and implement the annual budget for the operations of the Church;
- d. Supervise and review the audit of all financial reports and records of the Church and see to their prompt and transparent publication;
- e. Supervise the collection of revenues as authorized by the All-American Council;
- f. Develop and implement programs of planned giving for support of the Church, including gifts, grants, bequests, and other contributions;
- g. Oversee the management of Church properties and investments;
- h. Consider and authorize the purchase, rental, sale, mortgaging, or alienation of the real and personal property of the Church, except in cases covered in Article XII, Section 9;
- i. Conserve the spiritual and cultural patrimony of the Church including not only real property but also personal property owned or bequeathed to the Church, particularly items of religious, spiritual, liturgical, cultural, historic, and artistic significance;
- j. Maintain an inventory of all properties of the Church both real and personal;
- k. Initiate, prosecute, and defend all legal matters affecting the interests of the Church;
- l. Endorse for confirmation by the Holy Synod the Metropolitan's selection of the Chancellor, Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers of the Church whose competence or service extends beyond the boundaries of a single Diocese;
- m. Provide for publication and dissemination of materials for promoting the Orthodox Faith;

- n. Determine the data and means necessary for collecting and reporting on the state of the Church, and direct the appropriate Church Officers to collect, preserve, and report on the results;
- o. Receive and act upon reports from the Church Officers, Church institutions, departments, commissions, committees, offices, and boards in areas within its competence;
- p. Appoint committees and officers in areas within its competence, determine the scope of their activities, and receive their reports in a timely fashion;
- q. Nominate a Preconciliar Commission for appointment by the Holy Synod;
- r. Assist the Holy Synod in determining the dates, location, and theme of the All-American Council;
- s. Nominate and appoint members of the Auditing Committee and receive written reports from it in accordance with Article V, Section 9;
- t. Adopt and amend the Pension Plan of The Orthodox Church in America upon recommendation of the Pension Board, in accordance with Article III, Section 1:6; and
- u. Resolve disputes regarding the minutes of the All-American Council, as provided for in Article III, Section 1:2.

### ***Section 8: Administrative Committee***

The Metropolitan Council may appoint a committee consisting of the Chancellor, Secretary, Treasurer, and two additional members of the Metropolitan Council to meet with the Standing Synod of Bishops upon its invitation, for discussion of routine administrative matters. This committee shall present a written report to the Metropolitan Council concerning all discussions and actions.

### ***Section 9: Auditing Committee***

An Auditing Committee, consisting of three persons with relevant professional experience, shall be appointed by the Metropolitan Council at its first meeting following adjournment of a normally convened All-American Council. Members of the Auditing Committee shall serve for a term from one All-American Council through the next, excluding any extraordinary meetings of the All-American Council. The Committee's duties shall be to audit all accounts of The Orthodox Church in America on a semiannual basis, to review the audited accounts of all Stavropegial Institutions on an annual basis and to present written reports to the Metropolitan Council. The Chair of the Auditing Committee shall attend sessions of the Metropolitan Council solely to make the Committee's reports. An Auditing Committee

member may succeed himself/herself for one additional term, and may be removed only for cause by a two-thirds vote of the Metropolitan Council. Any vacancy in the Auditing Committee shall be filled in a timely fashion by the Metropolitan Council.

## **ARTICLE VI – CHURCH OFFICERS**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

The Church Officers shall be a Chancellor, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. Church Officers assist the Metropolitan and the Holy Synod in the administration of the Church and work with the Metropolitan Council in carrying out its particular competence. The Chancellor, Treasurer, and Secretary, together with the Metropolitan, also serve as corporate officers of the Church. Those holding additional positions may be designated as Church Officers by the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan Council, as needed.

The Church Officers work under the direct supervision of the Metropolitan and report to him, the Holy Synod, and to the Metropolitan Council of which they are ex officio members.

### ***Section 2: Terms of Office***

The Church Officers are nominated by the Metropolitan and confirmed in their positions by the Holy Synod, upon endorsement by the Metropolitan Council. The Metropolitan Council establishes the compensation and benefits for the Church Officers.

Church Officers are employees terminable without legal cause and can be dismissed by the Metropolitan with agreement of the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan Council. The affected Church Officer shall not vote when the Metropolitan Council considers matters concerning his or her dismissal.

Upon the election of a new Metropolitan, Church Officers remain in their positions for no less than six (6) months after the election in order to assure a smooth transition in the administration of the Church.

### ***Section 3: Competencies***

The following matters are within the competencies of the Church Officers. The Church Officers shall:

- a. Assist the Metropolitan and the Holy Synod in the administration of the Church;
- b. Serve as official representatives of the Metropolitan when so designated;
- c. Serve as ex officio members of the Metropolitan Council;

- d. Report on all aspects of their duties to the Metropolitan, the Holy Synod, the All-American Council, and the Metropolitan Council at regular intervals and as directed;
- e. Discharge their fiduciary responsibilities in a clear and transparent manner;
- f. Manage the financial resources of the Church responsibly and with integrity and report on their activities in a clear and transparent manner;
- g. Assure the proper maintenance of both the active and archival records of the Church;
- h. Have direct oversight over departments, commissions, committees, offices, and boards of the Church; and
- i. Perform such duties as assigned to them by the Metropolitan, the Holy Synod, and the Metropolitan Council.

When the Office of the Metropolitan is vacant, the Chancellor shall safeguard the particular patrimony of the Office of the Metropolitan until a new Metropolitan is elected.

## **ARTICLE VII – THE DIOCESE**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

The Diocese is the basic Church body which unites Parishes and institutions, usually in a defined geographical area, under the authority of a Diocesan Bishop. He governs with the assistance of a Diocesan Assembly and a Diocesan Council. For purposes of the Statute, the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Assembly, each acting in its proper capacity, shall constitute the Diocesan Authority.

### ***Section 2: Establishment of and Modification to a Diocese***

a. The Holy Synod may modify the boundaries of an existing Diocese, erect new Dioceses and determine their boundaries, and suppress or merge Dioceses according to the needs of the Church.

b. The Holy Synod may establish Dioceses that are not defined by a specific geographical area, but rather are composed of Parishes and institutions that are characterized by a particular identity, as recognized and defined by the Holy Synod. Parishes and institutions affiliated with such Dioceses shall be governed by their own Diocesan Bishop, who shall exercise within his Diocese the same authority as the Diocesan Bishop of a geographical Diocese.

### ***Section 3: Diocesan Bylaws***

Each Diocese shall have Bylaws adopted by and subject to amendment by the Diocesan Authority.

The Bylaws, among other provisions, shall provide for:

- a. The nomination of a Diocesan Bishop in accordance with Article VIII, Sections 5-7;
- b. The composition and election of the Diocesan Council;
- c. The appointment, dismissal, and duties of Diocesan Officers;
- d. The terms of office, method of election, and duties of the Diocesan Auditing Committee, and,
- e. The amendment of the Diocesan Bylaws.

### ***Section 4: Deaneries***

The Diocese may be divided into Deaneries, each headed by a District Dean, who is selected according to the provisions of Article XI, Section 2, unless otherwise provided for in the Diocesan Bylaws. The number, names, and delineation of the Deaneries shall be determined by the Diocesan Authority.

## **ARTICLE VIII - THE DIOCESAN BISHOP**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

By virtue of his canonical election by the Holy Synod and episcopal ordination, the Diocesan Bishop possesses full canonical authority within his Diocese, and shall exercise it with the assistance of Diocesan clergy and laity. He is the Chief Shepherd of his Diocese.

The Diocesan Bishop is a member of the Holy Synod in accordance with Article II, Section 1. He shall participate in its sessions and provide a regular report to the Holy Synod on the state of his Diocese. The Diocesan Bishop shall have the title of a principal city within his Diocese, his title being determined by the Holy Synod. He shall reside within the limits of his Diocese. In all matters, the decisions and pronouncements of the Diocesan Bishop are final, except insofar as they are subject to appeal as provided in the Sacred Canons and the Statute.

### ***Section 2: Competence***

The following are within the competence of the Diocesan Bishop. The Diocesan Bishop shall:

- a. Expound the Faith and moral teaching of the Orthodox Church and guide his flock in accordance with Church doctrine;
- b. Have the right of initiative and authoritative guidance in all matters concerning the life of his Diocese, and may issue pastoral letters, instructions and regulations for the guidance of clergy and laity;
- c. Establish Parishes, missions, provisional missions, mission stations, chapels, and monasteries in his Diocese;
- d. Consecrate churches and chapels, erect permanent altars, and consecrate and provide Holy Antimensia within his Diocese;
- e. Distribute Holy Chrism consecrated by the Metropolitan;
- f. Maintain custody, with the appropriate Officers of the Diocese, of the patrimony of the Diocese;
- g. Assume possession, with the appropriate Officers of the Diocese, of the sacred and untouchable items, as well as all official records and archives, in all cases of the dissolution of a Parish or monastery in the Diocese;
- h. Ensure that his Diocese and its Parishes and institutions are properly organized in accordance with local civil law and that they hold clear and unambiguous title to their real property with the exception of encumbrances incurred in normal course with the permission of the Bishop;
- i. Convene and preside over the Diocesan Assembly and Diocesan Council;
- j. Approve or disallow the decisions of the Diocesan Assembly, Diocesan Council, and Deanery and Parish meetings;
- k. Appoint or confirm Diocesan Officers, as provided in the Diocesan Bylaws, and maintain general oversight of and bear general responsibility for the efficient administration of his Diocese;
- l. Ordain qualified graduates of Orthodox seminaries to the priesthood and diaconate as well as lower clergy for his Diocese;
- m. Ordain candidates to the priesthood and diaconate for his Diocese otherwise qualified, with the approval of the Holy Synod;
- n. Appoint, transfer, remove, and grant retirement to Parish Clergy of his Diocese;
- o. Accept clergy at his discretion from another Diocese of The Orthodox Church in America, receiving their personal dossier and a canonical release;
- p. Release clergy at his discretion to another Diocese of The Orthodox Church in America, at the request of its Diocesan Bishop, issuing a canonical release and conveying their personal dossier and other appropriate documentation;

- q. Exercise discipline over Diocesan clergy and laity in all cases not requiring the action of a Church Court;
- r. Appoint the members of Diocesan Courts and exercise final authority regarding acceptance of their decisions and action upon their findings; in matters in which final judgment has been reserved to the Holy Synod by the Statute or by resolution of the Holy Synod, convey to the Synod the finding of a Diocesan Court and all relevant documentation relating to the case and the Court's finding;
- s. Honor worthy clergy and laity of his Diocese with Diocesan awards, or request the Holy Synod to confer synodal awards in the prescribed manner;
- t. Make canonical visits to the Parishes, monasteries, and institutions of his Diocese on his own initiative;
- u. Grant charters and exercise general oversight over Diocesan monastic communities and, in consultation with the particular community, confirm its superior; and
- v. Establish Diocesan educational or philanthropic institutions according to the needs of his Diocese, issue their charters, and appoint officers as provided in their charters.

The Diocesan Bishop possesses the authority necessary to exercise his episcopal ministry within the Church in conformity with the Sacred Canons.

### ***Section 3: Compensation***

The Diocesan Bishop shall receive appropriate compensation commensurate with his position and responsibilities, a suitable retirement plan, and a residence or a housing allowance, as determined by norms and practices of the Diocese.

### ***Section 4: Auxiliary Bishop***

An Auxiliary Bishop may be appointed to the Diocese, with a city in the Diocese as his titular see, upon nomination by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council, and canonical election by the Holy Synod, confirmed by the Metropolitan.

An Auxiliary Bishop shall have his duties, responsibilities, and rights defined by the Diocesan Bishop and the Diocesan Bylaws. He shall be an ex officio member of the Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Assembly.

He shall receive adequate and proper compensation to be determined by norms and practices of the Diocese.

### ***Section 5: Vacancy in Office***

The office of Diocesan Bishop shall be declared vacant by the Holy Synod in the event of the incumbent's death, retirement or resignation accepted by the Holy Synod, medical incapacity accepted by the Holy Synod, transfer, or deposition by canonical process.

### ***Section 6: Qualifications***

- a. If he is not already a bishop, the candidate for the office of bishop shall be nominated from among the clergy or laity, monastic, celibate, or widowed.
- b. To receive episcopal ordination, the nominee must satisfy all the requirements of the Sacred Canons pertaining to this highest of all ecclesiastical offices.
- c. It is preferable that the candidate have completed a course of study in a graduate school of Orthodox theology.
- d. He should be conversant in the English language and, as appropriate, in another language commonly spoken among the faithful of the Diocese.
- e. If at the time of his nomination he is a layman or a celibate or widowed priest, he shall pronounce at least the first monastic vows (rasophore), if he has not already pronounced such vows.
- f. Diocesan bishops shall not be eligible for nomination for another Diocese.

### ***Section 7: The Vacant See***

- a. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Diocesan Bishop, a Locum Tenens, appointed by the Metropolitan, shall convoke and preside over a special Diocesan Assembly for the sole purpose of nominating a candidate as Diocesan Bishop.
- b. Should the election of a new Diocesan Bishop be delayed for an extraordinary length of time, the Holy Synod may authorize the Locum Tenens to assume additional authority proper to a Diocesan Bishop, as required by the best interests and continuing welfare of the Diocese.
- c. The special Diocesan Assembly shall conduct the nomination in accord with the provisions of the Diocesan Bylaws, and the Locum Tenens shall submit the nominee to the Holy Synod according to procedures established by the Holy Synod.
- d. Upon the acceptance of the nomination by the Holy Synod, the candidate shall be summoned to a session of the Holy Synod for canonical election.

e. If the special Diocesan Assembly fails to nominate a candidate acceptable to the Holy Synod, the Synod may elect another qualified candidate as Diocesan Bishop, or they may authorize another Diocesan Assembly to nominate.

f. With his acceptance of the canonical election by the Holy Synod, the new Diocesan Bishop, if already of episcopal rank, has full authority and prerogatives as Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese to which he has been elected.

g. If the Bishop-Elect is not yet of episcopal rank, his ordination should occur within thirty (30) days after his canonical election by the Holy Synod. The Metropolitan, or a senior hierarch of the Holy Synod whom he may delegate, shall preside.

h. The new Diocesan Bishop's enthronement in his Diocese shall occur within two (2) weeks following his ordination or, if he is already of episcopal rank, his canonical election to the Diocese. The enthronement shall take place in the Diocese, preferably in the Diocesan cathedral. The Metropolitan, or a senior hierarch of the Holy Synod whom he may delegate, shall preside.

### ***Section 8: Mission Activity***

The Diocesan Bishop shall propagate and expound the Faith and moral teaching of the Orthodox Church among all people within the boundaries of his Diocese, both Orthodox Christians and those not members of the Orthodox Church.

The Diocesan Bishop shall:

- a. Ensure that his clergy witness to the Orthodox faith in their communities;
- b. Direct Parish Clergy also to extend their pastoral activity to the unchurched;
- c. Establish missions for the purpose of propagating the Orthodox Faith; and
- d. Ensure that necessary funds are provided for missionary activity within his Diocese.

## **ARTICLE IX - THE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

The Diocesan Assembly is the highest legislative and administrative authority within the Diocese, and assists the Diocesan Bishop in its governance. The Assembly brings together the various elements of the Diocese to bear witness to her identity, unity, and mission.

## ***Section 2: Composition***

The Diocesan Assembly shall be composed of:

- a. The Diocesan Bishop;
- b. The Auxiliary Bishop(s);
- c. The superiors of Diocesan monasteries;
- d. The priests and deacons of each Parish, ex officio, and an equal number of lay delegates from each Parish, elected as provided in Section 7 of this Article;
- e. One lay delegate from each Parish not having a priest;
- f. The members of the Diocesan Council and the members of its Auditing Committee, if not otherwise qualified to attend;
- g. Two delegates, one priest or deacon and one layman, from the faculty and senior staff of each Diocesan theological institution, appointed by the appropriate authority of the institutions;
- h. Attached clergy, if accredited by the Diocesan Council, with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop, with the right to attend and to speak from the floor of the Assembly, but without the right to vote;
- i. Retired bishops and other clergy resident in the Diocese, if accredited by the Diocesan Council, with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop, with the right to attend and to speak from the floor of the Assembly, but without the right to vote;
- j. Members of special committees invited by the Diocesan Council to attend and participate in the discussions of the subject of their work; and
- k. Additional persons invited by the Diocesan Council with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop, to attend sessions of the Diocesan Assembly with or without the right to participate in the discussions, but without the right to vote.

Members of a Parish of the Diocese, having been accredited in a manner to be determined by the Diocesan Council, may attend the Diocesan Assembly as Observers and, with the agreement of the majority of the delegates, may be permitted to address the Assembly, but not to vote.

## ***Section 3: Periodicity***

- a. The Diocesan Assembly shall be convened at least once each calendar year, or as otherwise provided for in Diocesan Bylaws. The place of the meeting is to be determined by the previous Diocesan Assembly; however, in case of necessity, the Diocesan Council may change the place of meeting.

b. Special Diocesan Assemblies may be convoked by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council, or by the Locum Tenens for the election of a Diocesan Bishop as specified in Article VIII, Section 7.

#### ***Section 4: Competence of the Diocesan Assembly***

The following are within the competence of the Diocesan Assembly. The Diocesan Assembly shall:

- a. Consider and approve measures to strengthen the life of the Diocese and encourage the growth of her Parishes and faithful people in Orthodox Faith and piety through the establishment and maintenance of educational, philanthropic and other necessary institutions, organizations and programs;
- b. Establish means for securing revenue necessary to fulfill these aims, to fund the Diocesan administration, and to fulfill the Diocesan financial obligations to the Church as determined by the All-American Council;
- c. Receive reports on the operation and activities of the Diocesan Administration and Diocesan institutions, the Deaneries, the Auditing Committee, and organizations and programs;
- d. Authorize the Diocesan Council to acquire, encumber, or dispose of Diocesan properties;
- e. Approve the Diocesan budget and otherwise allocate and encumber Diocesan resources;
- f. Propose matters for consideration by the Metropolitan and Church Officers, the All-American Council, or the Metropolitan Council, as appropriate;
- g. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Diocesan Bishop, and constituted as a Special Assembly, nominate a candidate for that office to the Holy Synod, in accordance with Article VIII, Section 7.
- h. Elect the members of the Diocesan Council and Auditing Committee as provided in the Diocesan Bylaws;
- i. Elect Diocesan Representatives and alternates to the Metropolitan Council as provided in Article V, Section 2; and
- j. Cooperate in implementing decisions of the Holy Synod, the All-American Council, the Metropolitan Council, and other Church authorities on the Diocesan and parochial levels.

### ***Section 5: Requirements for Representation at the Diocesan Assembly***

Every Parish in the Diocese which has remitted all financial obligations determined by the All-American Council and all financial obligations determined by previous Diocesan Assemblies is entitled to representation as outlined in Section 2.d-e of this Article.

The Parish shall assume the expenses incurred by its delegates in attending the Assembly.

### ***Section 6: Reports***

The Diocesan Council, acting with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, shall determine the reports which are to be presented at the Diocesan Assembly and, if necessary, shall appoint the persons or committees to make such reports.

### ***Section 7: Election and Accreditation of Delegates***

The lay delegates of the Diocesan Assembly must meet the following requirements to be elected and accredited:

- a. Be elected by a Parish Assembly or by the Parish Council in accordance with the requirements and procedures established for such an election in Diocesan or Parish Bylaws;
- b. Be a Parishioner in accordance with Article XII, Section 5;
- c. The elected delegates shall be accredited to the Assembly in accord with procedures and documentation established by the Diocesan Authority; and

The Parish Priest shall submit the proper documentation to the Diocesan Authority. If the Parish or mission has no Parish Priest the District Dean shall oversee the election and submit the documentation. The delegates from a theological institution, if laymen, shall be accredited by the appropriate authority of the institution.

### ***Section 8: Credentials Committee***

A Credentials Committee, appointed by the Diocesan Council with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, or the Locum Tenens in the case of a Special Diocesan Assembly, shall verify the credentials of all members of the Diocesan Assembly and of additional persons invited by the Diocesan Council.

### ***Section 9: Divine Services***

The order of liturgical services at the Diocesan Assembly shall be determined in advance by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council.

### ***Section 10: Agenda***

The agenda for the Diocesan Assembly shall be fixed in advance by the Diocesan Council with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, and shall be provided to all delegates at least three (3) weeks prior to the date set for the convening of the Assembly. The agenda may be changed by vote of the Assembly.

### ***Section 11: Presiding Officers***

- a. The presiding officer of the Diocesan Assembly shall be the Diocesan Bishop, or an Auxiliary Bishop or priest specifically appointed by the Diocesan Bishop.
- b. Two vice-chairpersons, one priest or deacon and one layperson, shall be elected by the Diocesan Assembly and shall perform such functions as may be assigned to them by the presiding officer.

### ***Section 12: Secretariat***

The Diocesan Assembly shall elect a Secretariat according to its needs.

### ***Section 13: Minutes***

The minutes of the Assembly shall be prepared and signed by the Secretariat and submitted to the presiding officer for his written acceptance as to form and accuracy. Within a period of not more than sixty (60) days after the final adjournment of the Assembly, the minutes, approved by the presiding officer, shall be published and distributed to each delegate. The minutes shall be approved by the Diocesan Authority no later than the next Diocesan Assembly.

### ***Section 14: Committees***

The Diocesan Council shall establish such committees as may be necessary for the proper operation of the Assembly, and shall define their membership and responsibilities.

### ***Section 15: Quorum***

A majority of the members of the Diocesan Assembly who have been accredited and registered shall constitute a quorum.

### ***Section 16: Voting***

- a. As its first order of business, the Assembly shall adopt rules of procedure for the conduct of its business, unless otherwise provided for in the Diocesan Bylaws.

b. All resolutions and other decisions of the Diocesan Assembly shall be approved by majority vote, unless otherwise required by the Diocesan Bylaws.

***Section 17: Approval by the Diocesan Bishop***

No resolution or other action of the Diocesan Assembly shall be effective until it is approved by the Diocesan Bishop, or the Locum Tenens in the case of a Special Diocesan Assembly. Approval or disapproval shall in the normal course be announced before the adjournment of the Diocesan Assembly.

***Section 18: Auditing Committee***

The Auditing Committee, consisting of no fewer than three (3) members, shall be elected by the Diocesan Assembly. The members of the Diocesan Auditing Committee shall not be members of the Diocesan Council or be Diocesan Officers. Members of the Auditing Committee shall be members ex officio of the Diocesan Assembly. Their relevant professional experience, the terms of office, the method of their election, and their duties shall be as defined in Article X, Section 8, and in the Diocesan Bylaws.

**ARTICLE X - THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL**

***Section 1: Definition***

The Diocesan Council, normally meeting under the presidency of the Diocesan Bishop, is the permanent executive body of the Diocesan administration which exists for the purpose of implementing the decisions of the Diocesan Assembly and continues the work of the Assembly between its sessions.

***Section 2: Composition***

The Diocesan Council shall consist of:

- a. The Diocesan Bishop, or Locum Tenens, ex officio;
- b. Auxiliary Bishop(s);
- c. The Diocesan Officers, ex officio;
- d. The Diocesan Representatives to the Metropolitan Council, ex officio; and
- e. Additional members as determined by the Diocesan Bylaws.

The Diocesan Bylaws may provide for the appointment of non-voting members to the Council.

The Diocesan Bishop, or Locum Tenens, shall be the chairman of the Diocesan Council, but in his absence, an Auxiliary Bishop or a priest designated by the Diocesan Bishop, or Locum Tenens, may preside at a particular meeting of the Council.

The Diocesan Council shall elect such other officers as may be needed to carry out its functions, as provided in the Diocesan Bylaws.

### ***Section 3: Periodicity***

- a. The Diocesan Council shall convene at least twice each calendar year.
- b. Extraordinary sessions of the Diocesan Council may be convened by the Diocesan Bishop, the Locum Tenens, or at the written request of at least one-half of the voting membership of the Council.

### ***Section 4: Terms of Office and Vacancies in Office***

Terms of office and the means of filling vacancies on the Diocesan Council shall be as provided in the Diocesan Bylaws.

### ***Section 5: Quorum and Voting***

- a. The Diocesan Bishop, or Locum Tenens, or another presiding officer designated by him, plus one-half of the Voting Members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of business.
- b. Decisions of the Diocesan Council shall be by majority vote of the members present and voting unless otherwise provided in the Diocesan Bylaws.
- c. All decisions of the Diocesan Council shall become effective upon approval by the Diocesan Bishop, or Locum Tenens.

### ***Section 6: Competence***

The following matters are within the competence of the Diocesan Council. The Diocesan Council shall:

- a. Consider and act on matters affecting the Parishes and institutions of the Diocese in accordance with the directives of the Diocesan Bishop and the decisions of the Diocesan Assembly;
- b. Consider matters submitted by the Diocesan Bishop and make recommendations regarding his further action;
- c. Implement the decisions of the Diocesan Assembly;

- d. Cooperate in implementation on the Diocesan and parochial levels of the decisions of the Holy Synod, the All-American Council, the Metropolitan Council, and other Church authorities;
- e. Oversee Diocesan Officers and administrative bodies as provided in the Diocesan Bylaws, and provide for the employment of such personnel as necessary for the efficient functioning of the Diocesan administration;
- f. Allocate Diocesan funds for the general benefit of the Diocese, including, as necessary, the allocation of Diocesan funds to Parishes or institutions of the Diocese;
- g. Supervise the collection of regular financial obligations fixed by the Diocesan Assembly, and initiate and oversee special fund-raising projects;
- h. Examine and verify the financial records and reports, including the reports of the Auditing Committee;
- i. Oversee the management of all Diocesan investments and property, real and personal; and supervise and approve the acquisition, encumbrance and disposition of the same;
- j. Attend to legal matters affecting the interests and welfare of the Diocese;
- k. Advise the Diocesan Bishop on the establishment of Parishes and deaneries;
- l. Render a final decision regarding the authenticity of the minutes of the Diocesan Assembly should a question arise concerning their accuracy;
- m. Provide for the establishment and maintenance of institutions or organizations of philanthropy and education within the Diocese;
- n. Oversee preparation for the Diocesan Assembly; and
- o. Maintain the religious, cultural, and historical patrimony of the Diocese, its Parishes, and institutions.

### ***Section 7: The Diocesan Officers***

The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint a Chancellor and a Treasurer, who shall perform such duties as assigned to them by the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan Assembly, and the Diocesan Council. The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint such other officers as may be provided for in the Diocesan Bylaws to ensure the efficient operation of the Diocesan Administration.

The Diocesan Officers work under the direct supervision of the Bishop and report to the Diocesan Council of which they are ex officio members.

The Diocesan Officers shall implement the decisions of the Diocesan Council under the supervision of the Diocesan Bishop.

The Diocesan Officers shall assure the proper maintenance of both the active and archival records of the Diocese and assist Parishes and institutions of the Diocese in the proper maintenance of their own active and archival records.

When the office of the Diocesan Bishop is vacant, the Chancellor shall safeguard the particular patrimony of the Diocese until a new Diocesan Bishop is elected.

### ***Section 8: Auditing Committee***

The Auditing Committee, consisting of three persons with relevant professional experience, shall be elected by the Diocesan Assembly. The Auditing Committee shall audit annually the accounts of the Diocesan administration with respect to all Diocesan funds and the funds of all Diocesan institutions. The Auditing Committee shall report its findings to the Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Assembly. Members of the Auditing Committee may attend sessions of the Diocesan Council to make its report. Vacancies in the Auditing Committee shall be filled by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council, pending the convening of the next Diocesan Assembly. Matters relating to terms of office, method of election, and further duties shall be as defined in the Diocesan Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE XI - THE DEANERY**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

A Deanery is a specified administrative district, within the boundaries of a Diocese, usually encompassing Parishes in a defined geographical area, and established by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council.

### ***Section 2: The District Dean***

The District Dean is a priest who heads a deanery. He assists the Diocesan Bishop in the administration of the Deanery.

The District Dean shall be appointed by the Diocesan Bishop from among the Parish Priests of the Deanery in consultation with Deanery clergy or as provided for in the Diocesan Bylaws.

### ***Section 3: Competence of the District Dean***

The following are within the competence of the District Dean. The District Dean shall:

- a. Oversee Deanery matters and the activities of its clergy;
- b. Assist the Diocesan Bishop by giving direction and fraternal counsel to deanery clergy in areas of pastoral concern in a private and circumspect manner,

- whenever their personal conduct or manner of discharging their duties indicates the need for such counsel or action;
- c. Receive and investigate complaints against clergy and laity and against the decisions of Parish bodies and submit his report and recommendations to the Diocesan Bishop;
  - d. Participate in Parish meetings at the direction of the Diocesan Bishop;
  - e. Participate in Parish meetings at the request of the Parish Priest or the Parish Council with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop;
  - f. Provide for services during temporary absence of Parish Clergy with the consent of the Diocesan Bishop;
  - g. Assist the Diocesan Bishop in the planning and organization of new Parishes within the Deanery;
  - h. Convene periodic meetings of Deanery clergy and submit the minutes of the meetings to the Diocesan Bishop; and
  - i. Submit an annual report on the Deanery to the Diocesan Bishop and the Diocesan Assembly.

The District Dean shall fulfill other duties entrusted to him by the Diocesan Bishop.

***Section 4: The Dean of Orthodox Military and Veterans Administration Chaplains***

- a. The Dean of Orthodox Military and Veterans Administration Chaplains is appointed by and directly responsible to the Metropolitan.
- b. The competence and duties of the Dean of Orthodox Military and Veterans Administration Chaplains shall be the same as those of the District Deans as described above insofar as they are applicable.

## ARTICLE XII – THE PARISH

### *Section 1: Definition*

- a. The Parish is a local Orthodox Eucharistic community canonically established by and subject to the authority of the Diocesan Bishop. For purposes of the Statute, unless otherwise specified, the term Parish refers to Parishes, Missions, Provisional Missions, and Mission Stations.
- b. The organization and administration of a Parish are subject to the Statute, the statute or Bylaws of the Diocese, and the Parish Bylaws approved by the Diocesan Authority. The Orthodox Church in general and The Orthodox Church in America in particular are hierarchical in structure.
- c. A Chapel is a unique Orthodox Eucharistic community canonically established by and subject to the authority of the Diocesan Bishop. Although a Chapel is not a Parish, the Statute and this Article in particular apply to Chapels insofar as they are appropriate to their situation.

### *Section 2: The Diocesan Bishop and the Parish*

- a. The Bishop is the spiritual leader of all Parishes within his Diocese. In consultation with the Diocesan Council, he shall establish, territorially define, consolidate with another Parish, or suppress a Parish. He appoints Parish Clergy, maintaining a relationship with them that is at once hierarchical and conciliar, marked by obedience and collaboration. He has the obligation and right of visitation to the Parish and receives and approves regular reports on Parish life. In case of conflict and disorder within the Parish, he takes all necessary measures to resolve them consistent with the Sacred Canons and the Statute.
- b. For the establishment of a Parish, a local group of faithful must demonstrate that it is stable and has the potential to become self-supporting and self-sustaining, and that it agrees that its corporate charter and Bylaws will be consistent with canonical requirements and the Statute. No corporate charter or Bylaws of any Parish shall be effective unless approved by the Diocesan Authority.
- c. When the Bishop deems it appropriate, in consultation with the local group of faithful, he dedicates the new Parish to a feast day or places it under the protection of a patron saint.

d. Additional signs of the canonical status of the Parish and the sacramental communion that exists between it and the Bishop are the Holy Antimension given by the Bishop and the commemoration of the Bishop during liturgical services.

### ***Section 3: The Parish Priest***

a. The Parish Priest, also referred to as rector or priest-in-charge, by virtue of his ordination and canonical appointment, serves as the spiritual father and teacher of that portion of the flock of Christ entrusted to him, the first among the Parish Clergy, and presides over liturgical worship in accordance with the tradition and the norms of the Church.

b. By virtue of the authority delegated to him at his appointment by the Diocesan Bishop, the Parish Priest, as head of the Parish, shall:

- i. Teach, sanctify, and edify the faithful entrusted to his spiritual care with no partiality;
- ii. Provide for the administration of the sacraments and the celebration of all liturgical services;
- iii. Ensure that all educational, philanthropic, social, and cultural activities within the Parish or of the Parish are consistent with the mission of the Church;
- iv. Head and administer the Parish in a manner consistent with the provisions of the Statute, the governing documents of the Diocese and Parish, and the directives of the Diocesan Authority in cooperation with the Parish Council. No activities in the Parish can be initiated without his knowledge, approval, and blessing; neither should he do anything pertaining to the Parish without the knowledge of the appropriate Parish bodies, so that always and everywhere there may be mutual trust, cooperation, unity, and love;
- v. Normally preside over the Parish Assembly and Parish Council, except in cases when the Bishop is present or when the Bishop's delegate is present for this purpose;
- vi. Head the Parish office and be entrusted with the care, custody, and maintenance of sacramental and administrative records, inventories, and the official Parish seal; and
- vii. Represent the Parish before local civil and judicial authorities and other third parties, either personally or through his delegate.

c. The Parish shall compensate the Parish Priest. His compensation shall be determined according to established Diocesan procedures and norms. His compensation is to be clearly agreed upon prior to his appointment.

d. The Parish Priest possesses the rights and exercises the responsibilities stipulated by the Sacred Canons, the Statute, and the directives of the Holy Synod and the Diocesan Authority.

e. The Parish Priest cannot vacate his Parish, change his status, or seek to transfer to another Parish or Diocese without the permission of the Diocesan Bishop.

#### ***Section 4: Other Parish Clergy***

a. An Associates Priest is a Priest who has been appointed to a Parish by the Diocesan Bishop, receives compensation from the Parish, and carries out ministries within the Parish as directed by the Parish Priest in consultation with the Parish Council. His role in the governance of the Parish is determined by the established Diocesan procedures and norms.

b. An Assigned Deacon is a Deacon who has been appointed by the Bishop to service within a Parish, receives compensation from the Parish, and carries out ministries within the Parish as directed by the Parish Priest in consultation with the Parish Council. His role in the governance of the Parish is determined by the established Diocesan procedures and norms.

c. Attached clergy are priests or deacons who are canonically attached to a Parish by the Bishop without necessary compensation from the Parish and without involvement in Parish governance.

d. Like the Parish Priest, all Parish Clergy, including those in minor orders, possess the rights and exercise the responsibilities stipulated for their order by the Sacred Canons, the Statute, and the directives of the Holy Synod and the Diocesan Authority.

e. Parish Clergy cannot vacate the Parish to which they are assigned or attached, change their status, or seek to transfer to another Parish or Diocese without the permission of the Diocesan Bishop.

#### ***Section 5: Parishioner***

a. A Parishioner is one who, by virtue of Baptism and Chrismation, is a member of the Body of Christ and incorporated into a local Parish community as a Parish member.

b. A Parishioner has a reasonable expectation for pastoral care in accordance with the Orthodox tradition. He or she enjoys full benefits of participation in Parish life. He or she has

the duty to sustain, strengthen and witness to the Orthodox Faith; to live according to the teaching of the Church; to participate in the religious services; to partake of the Holy Sacraments; to fulfill acts of Christian mercy; to support and help the Church.

c. Parish membership may be suspended or revoked by the Parish Priest or the Diocesan Bishop for due cause, such as:

- i. Open rejection of the Orthodox Faith;
- ii. Public and open defamation of, defiance of, or rebellion against ecclesiastical authority;
- iii. Grave moral transgression; or
- iv. Formal association with a non-Orthodox religious body.

d. A Voting Member of the Parish is a Parishioner who:

- i. Is at least eighteen years of age;
- ii. Receives the Sacrament of Confession at least once a year in the Parish or, with the permission of the Parish Priest, elsewhere;
- iii. Receives Holy Communion at least once a year in the Parish;
- iv. Has been a Parishioner for a period of time fixed by the Diocesan Authority; and
- v. Fulfills financial obligations as established by the All-American Councils, Diocesan Assemblies, and the Parish.

Voting Membership shall be denied if these criteria are not met.

e. A Voting Member has accepted the right, privilege, and responsibility to vote in Parish Assemblies. A Voting Member may be considered for election to office in appropriate Parish bodies. A Voting Member is eligible for election as a delegate to the Diocesan Assembly and the All-American Council.

### ***Section 6: Financial Obligation***

Each year, the Parish shall remit to the Diocesan Treasurer its minimum financial support to the Diocese and through it to The Orthodox Church in America as determined by the All-American Council and in conformity with local civil law.

### ***Section 7: The Parish Assembly***

a. The Parish Assembly, sometimes known as the Parish Meeting, meets annually to consider matters pertaining to the life of the Parish and to conduct necessary elections relating to the Parish as a whole. The Parish Assembly is comprised of the Voting Members of

the Parish, and such additional persons as shall be provided for by Diocesan and Parish Bylaws, established procedures and norms, normally meeting under the presidency of the Parish Priest, or the Diocesan Bishop or the Bishop's delegate. The Parish Priest together with the Parish Council may invite additional persons with or without the right to speak but without the right to vote.

b. The Parish Priest together with the Parish Council, or the Diocesan Bishop, may call a special Parish Assembly to consider matters of specific concern.

c. Procedures for the call, conduct, and recording of the annual and any special Parish Assemblies shall be provided by the Diocesan and Parish Bylaws.

d. The following matters are within the competence of the Parish Assembly. The Parish Assembly shall:

- i. Hear and approve annual or special reports by committees and Parish organizations;
- ii. Consider and decide on matters concerning the purchase, improvement, or sale of real property; investment of Parish funds (other than in savings accounts); and the transfer of any interest in or change of ownership and the incurring of indebtedness or otherwise encumbering Parish funds or property, subject to the approval of the Diocesan Authority;
- iii. Approve the annual operating budget submitted by the Parish Council;
- iv. Provide for the adoption and amendment of Parish Bylaws, if this is not otherwise provided for; and
- v. Elect members of the Parish Council, the auditing committee, and the lay delegates to the Diocesan Assembly and to the All-American Council, if the latter is to meet during that current year.

e. In case the Parish Priest disagrees with one or more decisions of the Parish Assembly, his reasoned opinion shall be recorded in the minutes and the matter submitted to the Bishop. So also, if an officer of the Parish Council disagrees with one or more decisions of the Parish Assembly, his or her motivated opinion shall be recorded in the minutes and the matter submitted to the Bishop. The manner in which further dissent is recorded and possibly transmitted to the Bishop shall be dealt with by Diocesan and Parish Bylaws and established procedures and norms.

f. No Parish Assembly, either annual or special, shall take any action which is contrary to or not in accord with the Statute. Should there be any such conflict, the Statute shall

prevail. Should there be a question whether an action of a Parish Assembly is valid or lawful under the Statute, the issue shall be submitted to the Diocesan Authority for determination.

### ***Section 8: The Parish Council***

a. The Parish Council is the executive body that assists the Parish Priest in administration of the Parish and normally meets under his presidency. The Parish Council is comprised of the Parish Priest, ex officio, and members elected by the Parish Assembly and any ex officio and appointed members as may be provided for by Diocesan or Parish Bylaws. The Parish Council seeks to foster the spiritual and material welfare of the Parish.

b. The number of members of the Parish Council and their terms of office shall be determined by Diocesan and Parish Bylaws. The mode of election, terms of office, titles, and duties of Parish Council officers shall also be determined by Diocesan and Parish Bylaws. All members of the Parish Council shall be installed by the Parish Priest according to Diocesan procedures and norms.

c. Periodicity of meetings and procedures for the normal conduct of business for the regular and special Parish Council meetings shall be provided by the Diocesan and Parish Bylaws.

d. The following matters are within the competence of the Parish Council. The Parish Council shall:

- i. Exercise fiduciary responsibility for the Parish;
- ii. Implement within its competence the decisions of the Parish Assembly, the Diocesan Authority, and the All-American Council;
- iii. Formulate, implement, and direct stewardship programs;
- iv. Oversee implementation of the budget adopted by the Parish Assembly;
- v. Authorize any fundraising activity within the Parish;
- vi. Manage, inventory, and maintain Parish properties, both real and personal;
- vii. Regulate use of Parish facilities;
- viii. Maintain and verify the official roster of the Parish's general and voting membership;
- ix. Oversee and regularly receive reports from Parish ministries and organizations;
- x. Prepare reports on aspects of Parish life within its competence for the annual Parish Assembly;

- xi. Propose an annual budget for consideration at the annual Parish Assembly; and
- xii. Set a date and propose an agenda for Parish Assemblies.

e. No regular or special meeting of the Parish Council shall be held without the knowledge and blessing of the Parish Priest. If the Parish Priest is unable to preside over a meeting of the Parish Council, the senior elected officer of the Parish Council shall preside with the blessing of the Parish Priest or the Bishop. In case the office of Parish Priest is vacant, until the appointment of the new Parish Priest, the senior elected officer of the Parish Council shall preside, unless the Bishop or his delegate is present.

f. The official minutes of all meetings of the Parish Council shall, in accordance with Diocesan or Parish Bylaws, be approved, signed, properly maintained, and made available as appropriate.

g. In case the Parish Priest disagrees with one or more decisions of the Parish Council, his reasoned opinion shall be recorded in the minutes and the matter referred to the Diocesan Authority.

### ***Section 9: Parish Property***

a. The Parish corporation holds legal title to all Parish property, assets, and funds. In administering them, the Parishioners and the officers elected by them must always remember the religious nature, purposes, and goal of the Parish and act as trustees of such property dedicated to the service of God and the use of the Church.

b. All Parish property, assets and funds are and shall be owned and held by the Parish or Parish corporation in trust for the use, purpose, and benefit of the Diocese of The Orthodox Church in America of which it is a part. This provision shall not limit the authority of the Parish or Parish corporation in its administration of such property, assets, and funds in accord with the faith, governance, and discipline of The Orthodox Church in America.

c. In the event the Diocese shall be dissolved or attempt to disaffiliate from The Orthodox Church in America in a disorderly manner, all Parish property, assets and funds of such Diocese are and shall remain subject to the use, purpose, and benefit of The Orthodox Church in America.

d. If the Parish is canonically suppressed or otherwise ceases to exist, its real and personal property shall be disposed of in accord with Section 9, b, above. In all cases, the sacred and untouchable items, viz. the Holy Antimension, the Tabernacle, and the Sacred Vessels, as well as all Parish records, shall be surrendered to the Diocesan Bishop or his designee.

## ARTICLE XIII – MONASTICISM

### *Section 1: Definition*

a. A monastery is a local Orthodox Eucharistic community of men or women who have willingly chosen to live the monastic life and which functions under the immediate canonical supervision and pastoral care of the Bishop, who is the canonical and spiritual leader of the monastery. For purpose of the Statute, unless otherwise specified, the term monastery refers to and includes monasteries, monastic communities, sketes, metochia, and cells.

i. The Metropolitan shall be the canonical and spiritual leader of all stavropegial monasteries.

ii. The Diocesan Bishop shall be the canonical and spiritual leader of all Diocesan monasteries within his Diocese.

b. The organization of monastic life and the administration of the monasteries are subject to the Sacred Canons, the Statute, regulations for monasteries and monasticism as developed by the Holy Synod, the statute or Bylaws of a Diocese, where applicable, and the monastery's own statutes or Bylaws approved by the Bishop, in consultation with the Holy Synod. The Orthodox Church in general and The Orthodox Church in America in particular are hierarchical in structure.

### *Section 2: Monastery Leadership*

a. The Bishop supervises all the monasteries under his canonical supervision. In all matters related to the administration of monasteries, he seeks only the welfare of the monasteries. He appoints or confirms monastery superiors, maintaining a relationship with them that is at once hierarchical and conciliar, marked by obedience and collaboration. He ordains and appoints monastic clergy at his discretion. He has the obligation and right of visitation to the monastery and receives from it and approves annual reports on the life of the monastery. In cases of conflict or disorder within the monastery, he takes all necessary measures to resolve them consistent with the Sacred Canons and the Statute.

b. By virtue of the authority delegated at his or her appointment or confirmation by the Bishop, the superior of the monastery is responsible for all administrative and spiritual matters of the monastery, being assisted by monastic councils and assemblies as provided for in monastic regulations and statutes or Bylaws.

### ***Section 3: Establishment of a Monastery***

Establishment, suppression, or other significant alterations in the status or operation of a monastery shall be initiated by, and require the approval of, the Bishop who is the canonical and spiritual leader of the monastery. The Bishop shall, in taking such action, give careful and thorough assessment of the reasons, material base, necessary monastic personnel, and local missionary conditions which bear on his decision. He shall consult in such matters with the Holy Synod, and the appropriate Council (the Diocesan Council in the case of a monastery whose canonical and spiritual leader is the Diocesan Bishop and the Metropolitan Council in the case of a monastery whose canonical and spiritual leader is the Metropolitan) with respect to any matters within the competence of that Council.

### ***Section 4: Monastic Property***

a. The monastery corporation holds title to all its own monastery property, assets, and funds, whether of a legal or equitable character. In administering them, the monastery leadership must always remember the religious nature, purposes, and goal of the monastery and act as trustees of such property dedicated to the service of God and the use of the Church.

b. All monastic property, assets and funds, whether of a legal or an equitable character, are and shall be owned and held by the monastery in trust for the use, purpose, and benefit of the Diocese of The Orthodox Church in America of which it is a part and in trust for the use, purpose, and benefit of The Orthodox Church in America.

c. In the event that a Diocese of The Orthodox Church in America shall be dissolved or attempt to disaffiliate from The Orthodox Church in America in a disorderly manner, all monastery property, assets and funds of such Diocese, whether of a legal or an equitable character, are and shall remain subject to the use, purpose, and benefit of The Orthodox Church in America.

d. If a monastery of which the Diocesan Bishop is the canonical and spiritual leader is canonically suppressed or otherwise ceases to exist, its real and personal property, whether of a legal or an equitable character, shall be disposed of in accordance with the directives of the Diocesan Bishop. The Diocesan Bishop shall consult with the Holy Synod in the formulation of his directives in this regard and he shall moreover consult with his Diocesan Council with regard to any matters within its competence which may be implicated in or by his directives.

e. If a monastery of which the Metropolitan is the canonical and spiritual leader is canonically suppressed or otherwise ceases to exist, its real and personal property, whether of a legal or an equitable character, shall be disposed of in accordance with the directives of the Metropolitan. The Metropolitan shall consult with the Holy Synod in the formulation of his

directives in this regard and moreover he shall consult with the Metropolitan Council with regard to any matters within its competence which may be implicated in or by his directives.

f. In all monastic establishments of The Orthodox Church of America, the founders, donors and benefactors of any monastic establishment shall have no right or privilege, whether legal or equitable, of ownership, use, or interference in their management, their administration, or their spiritual life. Moreover, none of those who have made donations or contributed financially or materially toward the construction, alteration, expansion or maintenance of any monastic establishment shall have any right, whether in law or in equity, to the return of any donated property, whether real or personal, or its monetary equivalent.

## **ARTICLE XIV – STAVROPEGIAL INSTITUTIONS**

### ***Section 1: Definition***

The term stavropegial refers to certain monasteries, theological schools, institutes, chapels and organizations that are under the immediate canonical supervision and pastoral care of the Metropolitan in his capacity as Primate of the Church, inasmuch as the purpose, mission and activities of these institutions typically extend beyond the limits of a single Diocese to the entire Church.

The purpose, mission and activities of a Stavropegial Institution, including any auxiliary or affiliated operations, shall be consonant with the teachings, canonical tradition and moral principles of the Orthodox Church.

### ***Section 2: Regulation***

Establishment, suppression, or significant change in purpose of a Stavropegial Institution requires approval by the Holy Synod, acting at the request of the Metropolitan, after consultation with the Metropolitan Council concerning any matters within its competence. Stavropegial Institutions are regulated by the Statute, by such regulations as may be established by the Holy Synod, and by their own charters and governing documents. Every Stavropegial Institution shall incorporate as a religious, non-profit corporation in accordance with applicable civil law, and shall submit copies of the relevant documentation to the Metropolitan, who deposits them in the Church archives and fully and accurately reports on the matter to the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan Council.

### ***Section 3: Accountability***

Every Stavropegial Institution shall submit an annual written report to the Metropolitan, and through him to the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan Council, concerning institutional life and activities.

Every Stavropegial Institution shall submit on an annual basis audited financial accounts, including those of any auxiliary and affiliated operations, for review by the Church's Auditing Committee.

## **ARTICLE XV – ECCLESIASTICAL COURTS**

### ***Section 1: The Right to Canonical Process***

Every member of the Church, whether cleric, monastic, or lay, is entitled to canonical process in the Courts of the Church and can defend and vindicate their legitimate rights in the competent ecclesiastical forum according to the norm of law.

### ***Section 2: Standards, Norms and Procedures***

The Holy Synod, as the highest canonical authority within the Church, shall establish standards, norms, and procedures to be observed in all matters involving cases presented before the Courts of the Church at all levels.

The standards, norms, and procedures established by the Holy Synod and observed in the Courts of the Church shall be those set forth in the Sacred Canons and traditions of the Holy Orthodox Church and shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. The determination by the Court of the accuser's good and irreproachable character and lack of motivations stemming from personal advantage or personal animosity;
- b. The right of the accused that accusations against the accused be in a writing addressed to the Diocesan Bishop of the accused;
- c. The right of the accused to a written summons to the relevant Church Court setting forth the name of the accuser and the nature of the accusation;
- d. The right of the accused to the advice and assistance of any third-party in connection with all procedures of the Church Court;
- e. The right of the accused to a reasonable time for the preparation of a defense before any hearing in a Church Court;

- f. The right of the accused to be present at and participate in the proceeding of the Church Court except in extraordinary and unusual circumstances; and
- g. The right of the accused to present a defense to any accusation, including the presentation of documents on behalf of the accused, the hearing of witnesses designated by the accused, and the presentation of the testimony of experts acceptable to the Court.

In all instances, the accused shall have the right to testify on his or her own behalf.

The standards, norms, and procedures approved and promulgated by the Holy Synod shall remain in effect until they are amended or abrogated by the approval and promulgation of subsequent texts by the Holy Synod.

### ***Section 3: The Diocesan Court***

The Diocesan Court shall be established by the Diocesan Bishop and shall be the Court of first instance in all matters concerning clergy and laity of the Diocese or otherwise under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

### ***Section 4: Competence of the Diocesan Court***

The Diocesan Court shall be competent to adjudicate cases involving allegations of unorthodox belief or teaching, breaches of canonical or moral discipline, issues relating to marriage, disputes between individuals, administration of Parish and other Diocesan institutions, and other matters involving good Church order.

### ***Section 5: The Stavropegial Court***

The Stavropegial Court shall be established by the Metropolitan and shall be the Court of first instance in all matters within its competence concerning the clergy and laity canonically assigned or attached to, or who freely associate themselves with, Stavropegial Institutions.

### ***Section 6: Competence of the Stavropegial Court***

The Stavropegial Court shall be competent to adjudicate cases involving allegations of unorthodox belief or teaching, breaches of canonical or moral discipline, issues relating to marriage, disputes between individuals, administration of Stavropegial Institutions, and other matters involving good Church order.

### ***Section 7: The Synodal Court***

The Synodal Court, comprised of the members of the Holy Synod and presided over by the Metropolitan, shall be convened at regular sessions of the Holy Synod and at other times, as

necessary, to address judicial matters that are within its competence. If judgment requires the augmentation of the number of bishops, Diocesan Bishops from other Orthodox Churches shall be invited to participate.

***Section 8: Competence of the Synodal Court***

The Holy Synod shall act as the Court of first instance in all matters involving a bishop and as the regular Court of final instance in all matters involving a bishop, a member of the clergy, or a member of the laity. The Synodal Court shall never act as Court of first instance in cases within the competence of Diocesan or Stavropegial Courts. The judgments of the Holy Synod are not subject to appeal, except those cases which involve the deposition of a bishop or those cases which the Sacred Canons reserve to the judgment of the worldwide communion of Orthodox Churches.

***Section 9: Standing Committee for Canonical Procedure***

The Holy Synod may in its discretion establish a Standing Committee for Canonical Procedure to which it may appoint experts in canon law, civil law, and other relevant disciplines in order to provide assistance and advice to Ecclesiastical Courts, including Diocesan, Stavropegial, and Synodal Courts. Any Standing Committee for Canonical Procedure may be charged by the Holy Synod to recommend to it for its approval and adoption of general rules for canonical procedure for use and application in all or several Courts of the Church. The Holy Synod may also charge any Standing Committee for Canonical Procedure to recommend to it for its approval and adoption special rules of canonical procedure as may be warranted by particular circumstances, provided however that no such special rules may be promulgated for use in application in any specific, individual case then pending.

**ARTICLE XVI – NATIONAL GROUPS**

When the good of the Church requires that particular national groups receive an assurance of identity, the Holy Synod may establish Dioceses and/or deaneries and set standards for their participation in the life of The Orthodox Church in America by mutual agreement with the group and until such time as the Diocesan structure of the Church can be organized on an exclusively territorial basis. If a given group is organized as a Diocese, the bishop of this Diocese is a member of the Holy Synod and receives an episcopal title defined territorially. The Statute shall constitute the fundamental law for the existence of all such groups within The Orthodox Church in America.

## ARTICLE XVII - AMENDMENTS

### *Section 1*

The Statute may be amended by a regular All-American Council or an extraordinary All-American Council called for that purpose. An amendment can be proposed by the Holy Synod, the Metropolitan Council, Diocesan Assemblies, Diocesan Councils, Deaneries, Parish Assemblies, Parish Councils, Monasteries, and Seminaries.

### *Section 2*

A proposed amendment must be submitted to the Commission on Canons and Statute at least ninety (90) days prior to the date set for the convening of an All-American Council. The Commission on Canons and Statute shall consider proposed amendments and may either approve, consolidate, or return proposed amendments.

### *Section 3*

Final drafts of proposed amendments, together with recommendations of the Commission on Canons and Statute, shall be disseminated at least sixty (60) days prior to the date set for the convening of the All-American Council.

### *Section 4*

An amendment of the Statute requires a two-thirds majority of the delegates of an All-American Council present and voting.

### *Section 5*

Upon adoption, amendments take effect immediately upon final adjournment of the All-American Council unless otherwise indicated in the amendment itself.

## ARTICLE XVIII – EFFECTIVE DATE

The Statute shall become effective on November 1, 2015. Upon its effective date, the Statute replaces and supplants all previous versions, which shall then stand repealed.

Dioceses, Parishes, monasteries, institutions, offices, and organizations of the Church shall review their governing documents and administrative practices and conform them to the Statute by December 31, 2017.

Should a conflict arise following the effective date, November 1, 2015, between or among presently governing documents and the Statute, the Statute shall govern.

GLORY TO GOD FOR ALL THINGS!