



Metropolitan Council considers long-term planning

HUNTINGTON, NY – The Spring Session of the Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in America was held at Immaculate Conception Seminary February 6 through 8, 2018.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon opened the session with a Service of Prayer. In his opening remarks, he reflected on how the imagery found in 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, in which Saint Paul envisions the Church as a living organism akin to the human body, is central to the life of the Church.

“The Orthodox Church in America as a whole should reflect, or strive to reflect, this image of the One Christ, as should specific bodies within the Church such as this Metropolitan Council, the respective Councils and Assemblies of our dioceses, and even the local parish,” Metropolitan Tikhon noted.

Reports were delivered by Archpriest John Jillions, Chancellor; Archpriest Eric G. Tosi, Secretary; and Melanie Ringa, Treasurer. Updates on the 18th All-American Council were reviewed in detail. Reports were given by Judge E. R. Lanier, OCA General Counsel; Angela Parks, Chair of the Legal Committee; Protospesbyter Leonid Kishkovsky, Director of External Affairs; the Metropolitan Council’s committee chairs; the Pension Board; and the Departments of Liturgical Music and Translations and Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry. ■ **FULL**

STORY: <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/metropolitan-council-considers-long-term-planning-during-spring-session>

Letter of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon to US President Donald J. Trump

February 15, 2018

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

It is with a heavy heart and deep sadness that I write to you in the aftermath of yet another violent assault which has murdered and wounded students and teachers, leaving our nation and people in grief and fear. The tragic shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, took place last week just as Christians throughout our country were beginning Great Lent, the period of prayer and repentance which prepares us for the feast of the Resurrection. It was yet another reminder of the fallen world we live in and of the reality of death.

It was also a reminder of the responsibility we have as people of faith to care for the least of our brothers and sisters, especially our children. This is not an easy task. We struggle to find ways to console family and friends, and to answer the hard and fair questions of those who are now grieving. Many have offered “thoughts and prayers,” but others are finding such sentiments to be empty, reflexive ways to absolve themselves of the responsibility to act. Yet prayer is a crucial part of our reaction to such events: prayer of mourning, prayer for healing and consolation, and – as we often find in the Psalms – prayer offered in exasperation and horror.

Sin is personal, but it is also corporate. It is our responsibility to consider our soul as a nation, and to ask the difficult question as to why such killings – in schools, on campuses, in public gatherings, in churches, with automatic weapons – happen here so much more than they do anywhere else. Many of us have already made up our minds about the problems and the solutions. And there is as yet little or no meaningful dialogue between those of us who have done so.

Too often our debates reduce human beings to easy labels such as “predator” and “prey,” “oppressor” and “oppressed.” There may be some truth behind such characterizations, but they do not convey the full dignity of the human person – and all of us are human persons, struggling to figure out how to live peacefully in this difficult world. We know there is but one way to heal the affliction of evil, and that is by the goodness that comes from Jesus Christ.

Mr. President, a few weeks ago you offered the following words at the Annual March for Life: “Under my administration, we will always defend the very first right in the Declaration of Independence, and that is the right to life.” You also stated: “That is why we march. That is why we pray. And that is why we declare that America’s future will be filled with goodness, peace, joy, dignity, and life for every child of God.”

With increasing frequency, the citizens of our nation are confronted by evil, conflict, sorrow, ignominy, and death. As Orthodox Christians, we understand that these are realities of human existence, and our communities are committed to maintaining the sanctity of all life through our efforts to reach out and minister to all, to bring healing, and to instill peace. But we also require the active contribution of our civil authorities in stemming the onslaught of tragedy that faces our nation.

Mr. President, we ask for your leadership in this. We ask you to keep our schools safe so that our children may not suffer the anxiety of an unsafe

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A monthly digest featuring news from the web site of the Orthodox Church in America – [http:// oca.org](http://oca.org) – published with the blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon. Parishes are kindly asked to duplicate and distribute *OCAreview*, especially to those without internet access.

March 2018

Fr. John Matusiak, Editor • info@oca.org

Holy Synod of Bishops issues Liturgical Instructions

SYOSSET, NY – In a recent letter to all clergy of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon announced two decisions of the Holy Synod of Bishops with regard to the celebration of the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great and the reception of Holy Communion by clergy at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. These Liturgical Instructions are available online, together with historical background information, titled “Notes on the Epiclesis in the Anaphora of Saint Basil and on the Chalice at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts.” ■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/holy-synod-of-bishops-issues-liturgical-instructions>

“Living Lent” – OCA web site features weekly lenten video reflections by Metropolitan Tikhon

SYOSSET, NY – “Living Lent” is the title of a series of video reflections on select Triodion Hymns by his Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon featured on the OCA web site weekly during Great Lent. ■ **SEE** <https://oca.org/media/video/living-lent-1-weekly-reflections-by-metropolitan-tikhon>

Update on 19th AAC exhibits, program book

SYOSSET, NY – The deadline for vendors wishing to display and market their goods and services at the 19th All-American Council in Saint Louis, MO July 23-27, 2018 is May 25, 2018. For questions and/or additional information, please contact the Local Committee Exhibition Co-chairs, Ken Herman at kryanherman@gmail.com or Paul Reuschhoff at pdRueschhoff@sbcglobal.net.

Ads and listings for the commemorative book to be published in conjunction with the AAC and the 92nd National Convention of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America are being accepted through June 1, 2018. Please submit text and graphics as PDF or Word files to focabook2018@gmail.com. More information is available from John Schultz at 304-479-5071. ■ **FULL STORIES:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/vendors-exhibitors-invited-to-register-for-19th-all-american-council> and <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/ads-listings-for-19th-aac-foca-convention-commemorative-book-being-accepted>

St. Vladimir’s Seminary announces open house

YONKERS, NY – Saint Vladimir’s Seminary will host a campus open house for prospective students on Thursday, March 8, 2018. The day-long program will offer an opportunity to attend classes, chapel services and community meals with the seminarians and their families; meet the seminary President and select faculty members; explore the seminary’s degree programs; and experience the rhythm of the Seminary during the season of Great Lent.

To register or to obtain additional information, please contact Robyn Hatrak at rhatrak@svots.edu or 914-961-8313, ext. 330. ■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/st.-vladimirs-seminary-to-host-open-house-for-prospective-students-march-8>

In Memoriam

- **Matushka Barbara Anne Kucynda**, 71, wife of Archpriest Paul Kucynda, Rector of Holy Resurrection Church, Wayne, NJ, fell asleep in the Lord on February 16, 2018. ■ <https://oca.org/in-memoriam/matushka-barbara-kucynda>
- **Matushka Mary Perez**, 46, wife of Priest Dimitri Perez, Holy Apostles Mission, Vancouver, WA, fell asleep in the Lord on February 12, 2018. ■ <https://oca.org/in-memoriam/matushka-mary-perez>

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Letter to President Trump

environment. We ask you to do everything you can to prevent another Columbine, another Sandy Hook, another Parkland. Please know that in the prayers of our churches throughout the United States we ask God to grant mercy to our country, to our civil authorities, to our armed forces and to you as our President.

As we enter into Great Lent, reflecting on our own sinfulness and surrendering ourselves to the merciful God, we also yield to the same reflection and surrender as a nation, before God. As we do so, we are mindful that our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is our Judge, knows by experience on the Cross the murderous effects of human passion. We bow down before Him, begging His mercy on the victims and their families, on the first responders, on all who have been especially touched by this event. And in this we ask his mercy on us sinners, and on our nation.

Most respectfully,

+ **Tikhon**

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/metropolitan-tikhon-addresses-tragic-florida-shootings-in-letter-to-preside>

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