

His Grace the Right Reverend Bishop NIKOLAI
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His Beatituude the Most Blessed JONAH
Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All-America and Canada
Orthodox Church in America
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June 1, 2009

Your Beatitude, Dear Vladyka JONAH,

I would like to inform Your Beatitude of a disturbing report on alleged past behavior of one of our leading Hierarchs, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada, former Secretary of the Holy Synod, The Orthodox Church in America. I received the report by telephone from a person I consider to be truthful and not given to spreading unfounded gossip. The report was of inappropriate sexual behavior by the Archbishop in a relationship with minor boys. While that was in itself disturbing, the reporter went on to confide that the reason Archbishop Seraphim had rather suddenly and unexpectedly withdrawn his name from consideration from the position which Your Beatitude now holds was because a threat to violate a previous agreement by potential complainants had been communicated to His Eminence; namely, he had been warned that if he allowed his name to be placed in consideration, all previous agreements to keep quiet about the inappropriate sexual behavior would be considered to have been nullified.

As I mentioned to Your Beatitude in a conversation some time ago, I have been baited by a number of web sites and individuals wanting to take issue with the sad state of the OCA, and I have not risen to the bait. My concern, rather, is that such behavior as that imputed to Archbishop Seraphim is of the sort which some studies show tends to be repetitive: it is chronic in nature.

Further, Your Beatitude, I feel that His Eminence's attacks on my own character, with their blatant lack of evidentiary foundation, are defensive in nature; they might very well be symptomatic of an inner conflict between guilt and self-righteousness which His Eminence himself is undergoing.

Further, I was told that he confided these matters to you and that you sent him to St. John Monastery (where the Abbot is reputed to be a psychotherapist of sorts) for a ten day "retreat." I find that response to be dismal if true, and I feel duty-bound to remind Your Beatitude that we as a Church share culpability for any inaction which might be perceived by the enemies of the Church as evidencing a lack of accountability and "transparency."

As of today, I have left six messages asking for a return response from Your Beatitude (as not only the First Hierarchy of our Holy Synod, but as a fellow Christian to whom I have been addressing a request for help) since Holy Week (the most recent one was on May 26), and I have gotten no reply.

These matters are of grave importance to the Church and to me personally as a Hierarchy of the Orthodox Church in America and as Your Beatitude's brother in Christ.

Your Beatitude! You may very well choose not to reply to this letter; however, it's my conviction that you would thereby be shirking your duty: your duty to God, your neighbor, and yourself. Websites such as the notorious ocanews.org and others with their crusading and secular-journalist mentality will have a field day whenever these matters will come to light. For them it will be but "icing on the cake" if they can add to their scandalized posturing the information that Your Beatitude had been made aware of "all this" for some time, but had adopted an attitude like that of the child who says to himself, 'If I close my eyes, this will all go away!' Your Beatitude's immediate predecessor as Metropolitan was wont to imagine that if only he could get rid of Protopresbyter Rodion S, Kondratich, then all the turmoil engendered by Protodeacon Eric Wheeler and company would simply "go away." It doesn't go away by itself, Your Beatitude. I feel I have done more than my own part to assist you and the Church.

Assuring you of my prayers and asking yours,

I remain, your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nikolai". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font. There is a small cross-like symbol to the left of the first letter 'N'.

Bishop Nikolai