

April 14, 2013
Sunday of Saint John of the Ladder

Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, Reverend Deacons, Venerable Monastics, Esteemed Members of the Diocesan and Parish Councils and Faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest,

The past eight months have been difficult for the entire Diocese of the Midwest and have seen the clergy and faithful in all of the parishes deeply affected by the matter of the allegations against His Grace, Bishop Matthias. The resolution of this matter has likewise required significant attention and the Holy Synod recognizes the stress that everyone has been under during this time.

Since Archbishop Nathaniel's letter to the diocese of November 3, 2012, the Holy Synod has been carefully reviewing all aspects of this matter, including the Report of the Response Team that investigated the complaint, the Report of the Institute which offered the week-long evaluation and the discussions held at the Assembly and Diocesan Council of the Diocese of the Midwest.

At the Spring Session of the Holy Synod, held on March 11-14, 2013, the members of the Holy Synod met with His Grace, Bishop Matthias, and came to a consensus on this matter. After much prayer and deliberation, the Holy Synod regretfully determined to recommend to their brother, Bishop Matthias, that he retire voluntarily from his position as diocesan bishop for the Diocese of the Midwest.

Although His Grace was obedient to all the directives placed upon him by the Holy Synod, it was the Holy Synod's considered opinion that the healing of the Diocese and of the complainant, as well as Bishop Matthias' own healing would not be possible should he be returned to the Diocese as a ruling hierarch. The Holy Synod offered him some time to reflect upon this action and to plan for his transition.

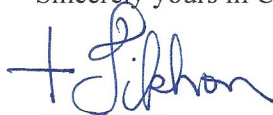
Since the time of the Holy Synod meeting, His Grace, Bishop Matthias, the Holy Synod of Bishops and the Diocese of the Midwest have reached a consensus concerning this entire matter. This includes the necessary considerations for the complainant, for His Grace and for the clergy and the faithful of the diocese. Bishop Matthias' retirement will be effective Monday, April 15, 2013.

Finally, effective April 15, 2013, the Holy Synod has appointed His Grace, Bishop Alexander, Bishop of Toledo, as the *Locum Tenens* of the Diocese of the Midwest. He is to be commemorated liturgically as "His Grace, Bishop Alexander, Bishop of Toledo, *Locum Tenens* of the Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest."

May our Lord, through his precious and life-giving Cross, continue to strengthen us all on our journey to the Kingdom.

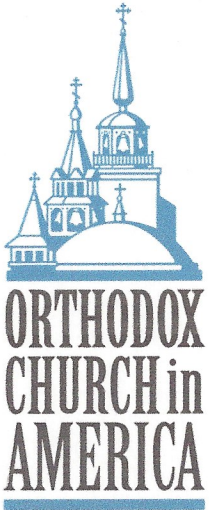
Asking God's blessings upon all, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,



+TIKHON

Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



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