

**COMMITTEE FOR CANONICAL REGIONAL PLANNING
ASSEMBLY OF CANONICAL ORTHODOX BISHOPS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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**Places of Greater Orthodox Unity in America: The State of Local Parish-to-Parish
inter-Orthodox Cooperation and Communication**

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Introduction: Background and Goal of the Study

The study "The Places of Greater Orthodox Unity in America: The State of Local Parish-to-Parish inter-Orthodox Cooperation and Communication" was conducted by the Committee for Canonical Regional Planning of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America (Metropolitan Nicolae, Chairman). The study was administered in December 2016 - June 2017.

The Committee for Canonical Regional Planning (CCRP) is charged with formulating a plan for organizing all the Orthodox faithful of every jurisdiction in the Region on a canonical basis, in accordance with the Rules of Operation, Article 5.e of the 4th Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference in Chambésy. Accordingly, over the past several years the CCRP has developed and offered the Assembly a number of proposals for the administrative re-organization of the Orthodox jurisdictions in the United States. None of these proposals, however, received approval "by consensus" of all the members of the Assembly of Bishops.

Some progress was achieved at Assembly VI (2015) that resolved: "To authorize the Committee for Canonical Regional Planning to survey all the Assembly hierarchs willing to conduct an in-depth study in a region of the US in order to discuss ways of addressing canonical structure and of collaborating on ministries and departments in their region." Following this decision, the CCRP has prepared the report "Exploring the Path to the Future of Orthodoxy in America" which was presented to Assembly VII in Detroit (2016).¹ Although information discussed in this report was limited to the territory of only three states (Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico) the overall findings of this study were insightful and instrumental for taking the next steps. In particular, the 2016 report emphasized two major conclusions:

- ❖ That the vitality of the individual parishes could be significantly improved, if they would develop strong inter-jurisdictional local parish networks and communicate and work jointly on a regular and organized basis.

¹ Both the full report and summary report are available upon request to all Assembly members.

- ❖ That there already exist certain areas/cities in the US where a high level of cooperation and communication among the parishes of various jurisdictions has been “naturally” achieved,² thus, making such areas good examples for other parts of the country.

Based on these conclusions, the CCRP recommended to Assembly VII in Detroit (2016) to consider the creation of a better organizational framework for local inter-Orthodox cooperation. More specifically, the 2016 report suggested the development of "Local Parish Networks" that would help individual parishes engage in local inter-Orthodox cooperation on a regular and more effective basis. Appendix 1 outlines the basic principles for creation of the Local Parish Networks as it was presented by the CCRP to Assembly VII.

It should be noted that this recommendation brought by the CCRP to Assembly VII was also “in tune” with the overall atmosphere after the Holy and Great Council (June 2016) when it became clear that the *administrative* reorganization of Orthodox Church in the USA was not seen as an “immediate” task. Rather, it was felt that the primary focus of CCRP should be switched to work on possible strategies for bringing all Orthodox faithful in America to a deeper *spiritual unity* and creating conditions for greater inter-Orthodox cooperation. As a first step in this direction the CCRP asked the Assembly VII to endorse a US nationwide study on the present state of inter-Orthodox parish-to-parish cooperation on the local level.

The main goal of this study was to identify and “catalogue” cities and geographic areas situated in different parts of the country that stand out by a high level of the inter-Orthodox communication and cooperation. Accordingly, the following short study report offers:

- ❖ The analysis and list of the cities and geographic areas in the USA where a high level of cooperation and communication among the local Orthodox clergy and parishes of the various jurisdictions has developed;
- ❖ The list and information on the presently existing regional and local Orthodox clergy brotherhoods and associations;

² Within the region that was examined in the study (the states of TX, OK and NM) two metropolitan areas stood out by the high level of the inter-Orthodox parish-to-parish communication and cooperation: San Antonio, TX and Oklahoma City, OK.

- ❖ Recommendations for the next steps towards creating the model of Local Parish Networks that can be implemented in the parts of the country where the situation is “ripe” and conducive for greater and better organized parish-to-parish inter-Orthodox cooperation.

How this Study Was Conducted

The information presented in this report was gathered through a national survey of the Orthodox parish clergy. The survey asked parish priests three questions:

1. How much communication and cooperation exist among the Orthodox parishes of different jurisdictions situated in your area? The answer choices for this question were:

- a. We are the only Orthodox parish in our area
- b. There is NOT much communication and cooperation between Orthodox parishes in our area
- c. The communication and cooperation is MOSTLY LIMITED to communication and cooperation among clergy. Parishioners and parishes are not (or little) involved
- d. The parishes situated in our area communicate and cooperate regularly with one another regardless of their jurisdiction. Both clergy and parishioners are involved.

2. In your area, does a formally organized Orthodox clergy association or brotherhood exist?

The answer choices for this question were:

- a. No
- b. Yes, but it is not very active
- c. Yes and it is fairly active

3. If the answer to question 2 was "Yes and it is fairly active," the survey followed with three more questions:

- a. What is this association's name (if there is one)
- b. What is this association's website (if there is one)
- c. Who is the main contact person (name of clergyman and his contact information)

This questionnaire was emailed to all parish clergy of the Orthodox Church in America. The emails were followed by phone calls and personal interviews with the clergy who did not reply via email. In other words, in this study, the OCA priests acted as “key informants” who described overall situation of the inter-Orthodox cooperation in the areas where their parishes are located. The choice of OCA clergy for being key informants was based on the fact that among all US Orthodox jurisdictions the OCA has largest number of parishes that are situated in nearly all geographic areas where the parishes of the other jurisdictions are present. That is, the geographic network of the OCA parishes covers most of the regions where US Orthodox churches are present.

In addition, we also identified all areas where there are no OCA parishes in close proximity, but the parishes of other jurisdictions are present. In these areas, the survey was given to the clergy of other jurisdictions. In short, it was assured that the information would be gathered from all parts of the country that have organized Orthodox Church life. In the case of multiple responses coming from the same area (i.e. from several parishes situated in close proximity to each other), the “majority opinion” was recorded as the survey response.

When all data were gathered, only those areas were included into the final analysis that have at least three parishes which belong to at least two different jurisdictions and are situated within 25 miles of each other. In other words, we excluded from the final analysis the replies that came from the “stand alone” parishes and the parishes that have only one close-by neighboring Orthodox parish.

Clearly, as in any survey-based study, the interpretation of questions and choices of the answers were based on the subjective perceptions of the respondents: what one might have described as “The communication and cooperation is MOSTLY LIMITED to communication and cooperation among clergy. Parishioners and parishes are not/little involved” the other might have seen as “The parishes situated in our area communicate and cooperate regularly with one another regardless of their jurisdictions. Both clergy and parishioners are involved.” Therefore, after completion of the survey, we followed up with phone calls and interviews with a number of clergy.

Essentially, in vast majority of cases, the clergy who answered, “The communication and cooperation is MOSTLY LIMITED to communication and cooperation among clergy. Parishioners and parishes are not/little involved,” told us about occasional joint pan-Orthodox worship services (with Sunday of Orthodoxy mentioned most frequently). Differently, the clergy who answered “The parishes situated in our area communicate and cooperate regularly with one another regardless of their jurisdiction. Both clergy and parishioners are involved” typically were able to describe some joint inter-Orthodox activities, programs and ministries *beyond pan-Orthodox worship services*. Examples here include running together some local charities, co-sponsoring a parochial Orthodox school or OCF, having joint parish festivals and fundraisers, organizing joint mission trips and retreats, developing inter-parish religious education programs and events etc.

In short, overall the data obtained in the survey reflect accurately the significant differences between the areas and cities where “The parishes situated in our area communicate and cooperate regularly with one another regardless of their jurisdiction. Both clergy and parishioners are involved” and all other parts of the country.

Major Findings

The analysis of replies to the survey (see questionnaire on p. 4) identified 54 (fifty-four) cities and geographic areas with a high level of inter-Orthodox communication and cooperation. These fifty-four “places of greater Orthodox unity” can be divided in two major categories that partially overlap with each other. That is, some of the places/areas satisfy criteria of both categories as described below.

In category 1 are all cities and geographic areas where the respondents selected answer “d” to the first question: “The parishes situated in our area communicate and cooperate regularly with one another regardless of their jurisdiction. Both clergy and parishioners are involved.” Thirty-seven cities/areas are in this category.

In category 2 (right column in Tab. 1) are those cities and geographic areas where the clergy selected answer “c” to the second question (i.e. the answer reporting the presence of the active organized local Orthodox clergy brotherhood/association). In other words, the cities and geographic areas in category 2 are the places where there is a good fellowship and regular communication among the local Orthodox clergy. Thirty-eight cities/areas fit into this category.

One can also see that a significant number of cities and areas are listed in both columns of Tab. 1 (these cities and areas are highlighted with bold letters). That is, these are the cities and geographic areas where the clergy selected both: answer “d” to the first question (“The parishes situated in our area communicate and cooperate regularly with one another regardless of their jurisdiction. Both clergy and parishioners are involved.”) **and also** answer “c” to the second question (i.e. the answer reporting the presence of the active organized local Orthodox clergy brotherhood/association). These cities and geographic areas form category 3 and are shown at the bottom of the table. That is, category 3 includes cities and areas where the high level of inter-jurisdictional communication and cooperation among the parish communities is augmented and “fortified” by the formally organized and active associations of the Orthodox clergy.

In simple terms, local inter-Orthodox cooperation in America has different expressions. In some places there are active and vibrant Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods, but not much goes on the level of their parishes in terms of joint inter-jurisdictional activities, programs and ministries. In other places, the entire parish communities engage in communication, fellowship and joint activities without a formally organized and “structured” clergy brotherhood. Finally, there are places where both are true: significant cooperation and regular communication among the parish communities is combined with well-organized and active local Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations.

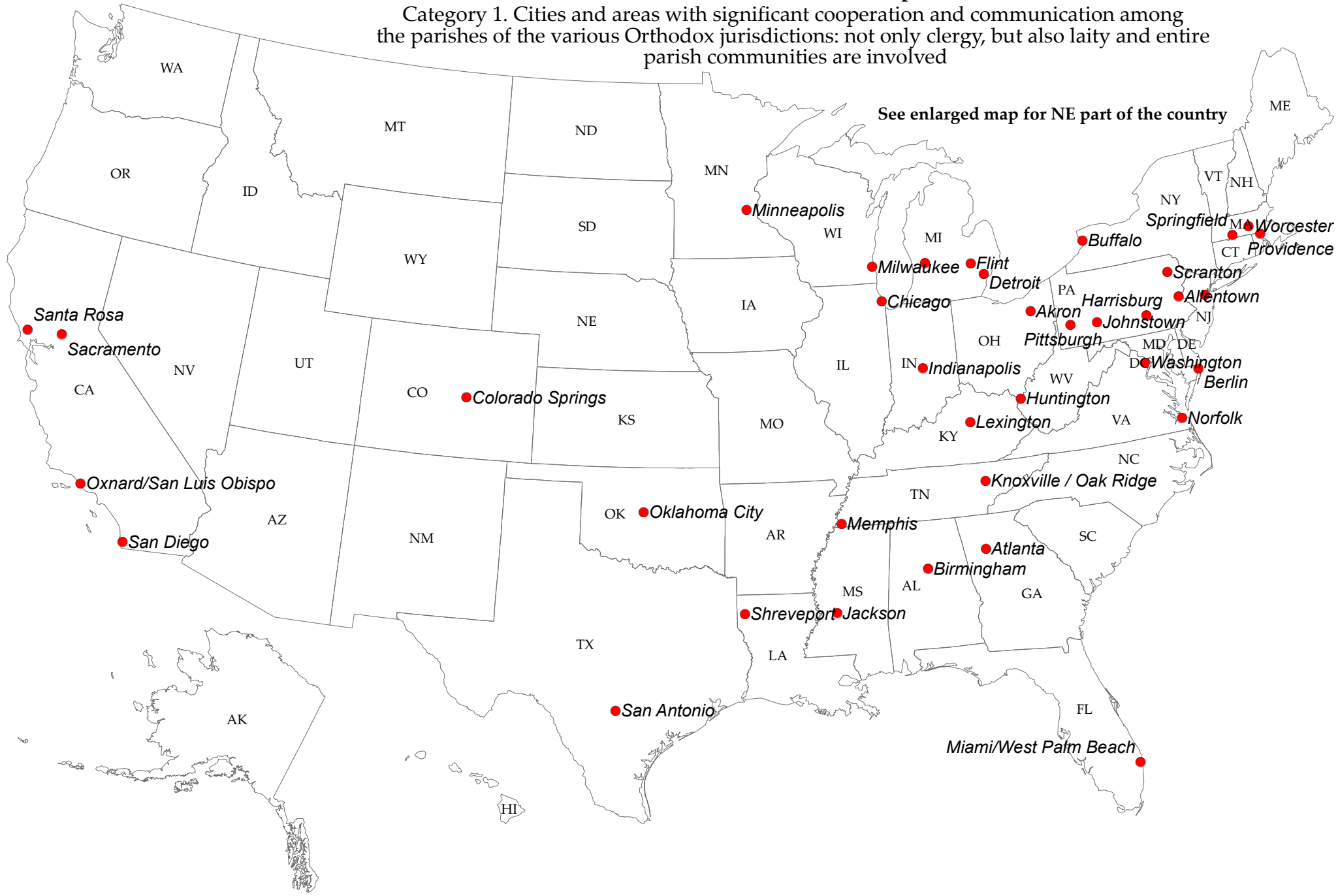
Tab. 1 Three Categories of US Cities and Areas with the High Level of Inter-Orthodox Cooperation and Communication

<p>Category 1. Cities and areas with significant cooperation and communication among the parishes of the various Orthodox jurisdictions: not only clergy, but also laity and entire parish communities are involved (highlighted with bold fonts are cities and areas that are present both in category 1 and category 2)</p>	<p>Category 2. Cities and areas with active pan-Orthodox clergy associations/brotherhoods. (highlighted with bold fonts are cities/areas that are present both in category 1 and category 2)</p>																																																																												
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Maps 1, 2 and 3 show all cities and areas that belong to categories 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

Local Parish-to-Parish inter-Orthodox Cooperation in the USA

Category 1. Cities and areas with significant cooperation and communication among the parishes of the various Orthodox jurisdictions: not only clergy, but also laity and entire parish communities are involved

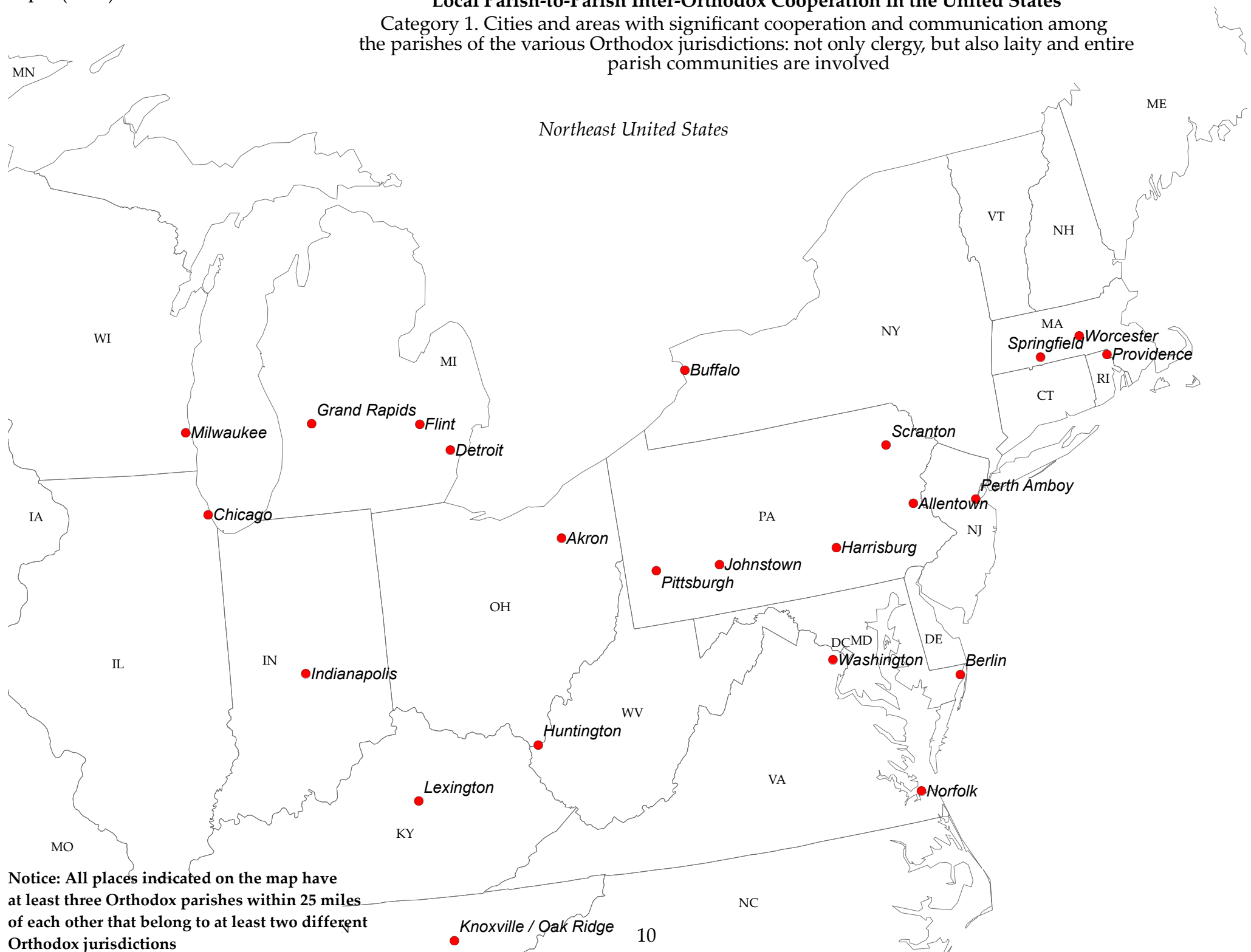


Notice: All places indicated on the map have at least three Orthodox parishes within 25 miles of each other that belong to at least two different Orthodox jurisdictions

Map 1 (inset)

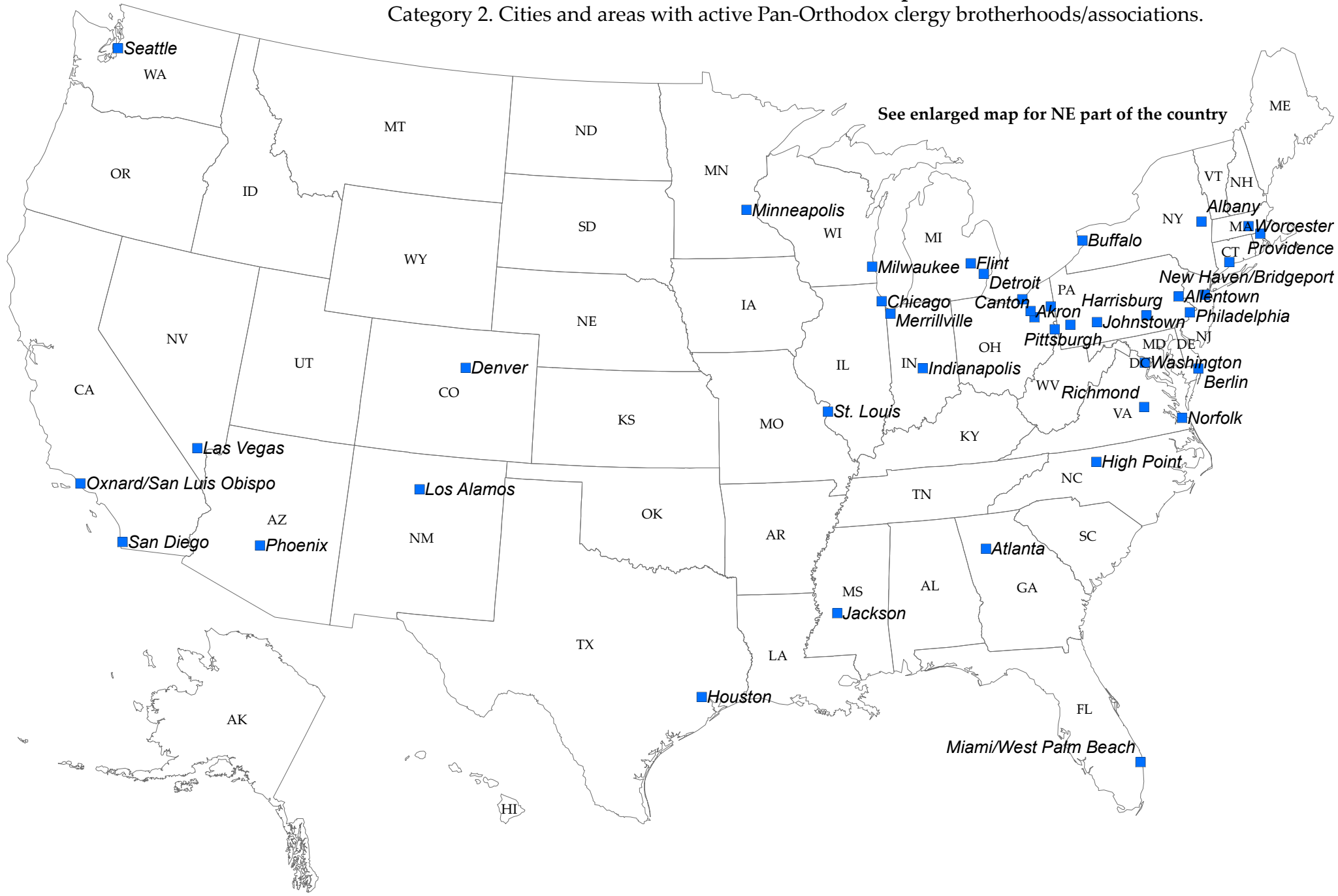
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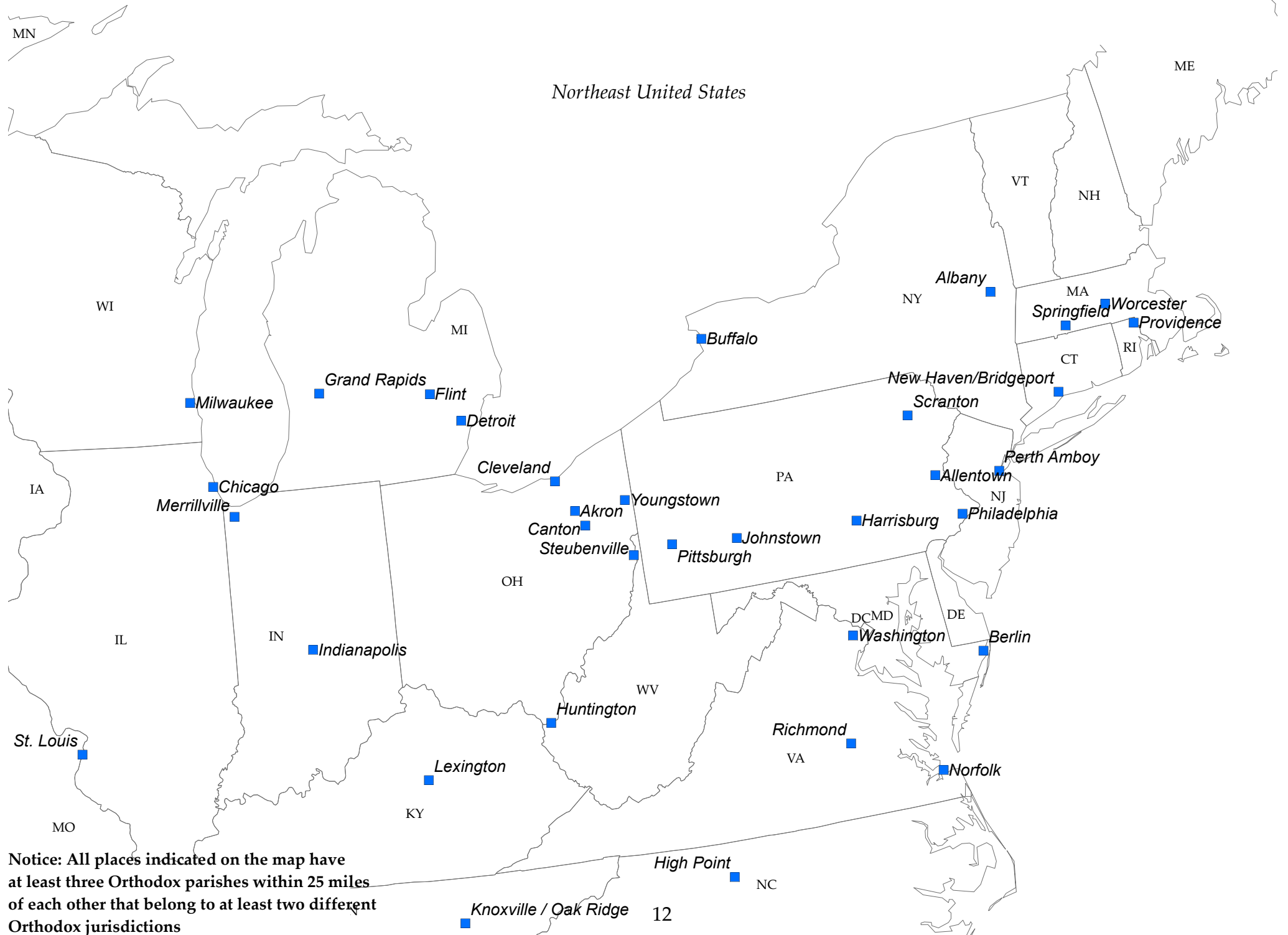
Local Parish-to-Parish inter-Orthodox Cooperation in the USA
Category 2. Cities and areas with active Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations.



Notice: All places indicated on the map have at least three Orthodox parishes within 25 miles of each other that belong to at least two different Orthodox jurisdictions

Map 2 (inset)

Local Parish-to-Parish Inter-Orthodox Cooperation in the United States
Category 2. Cities and areas with active Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations.

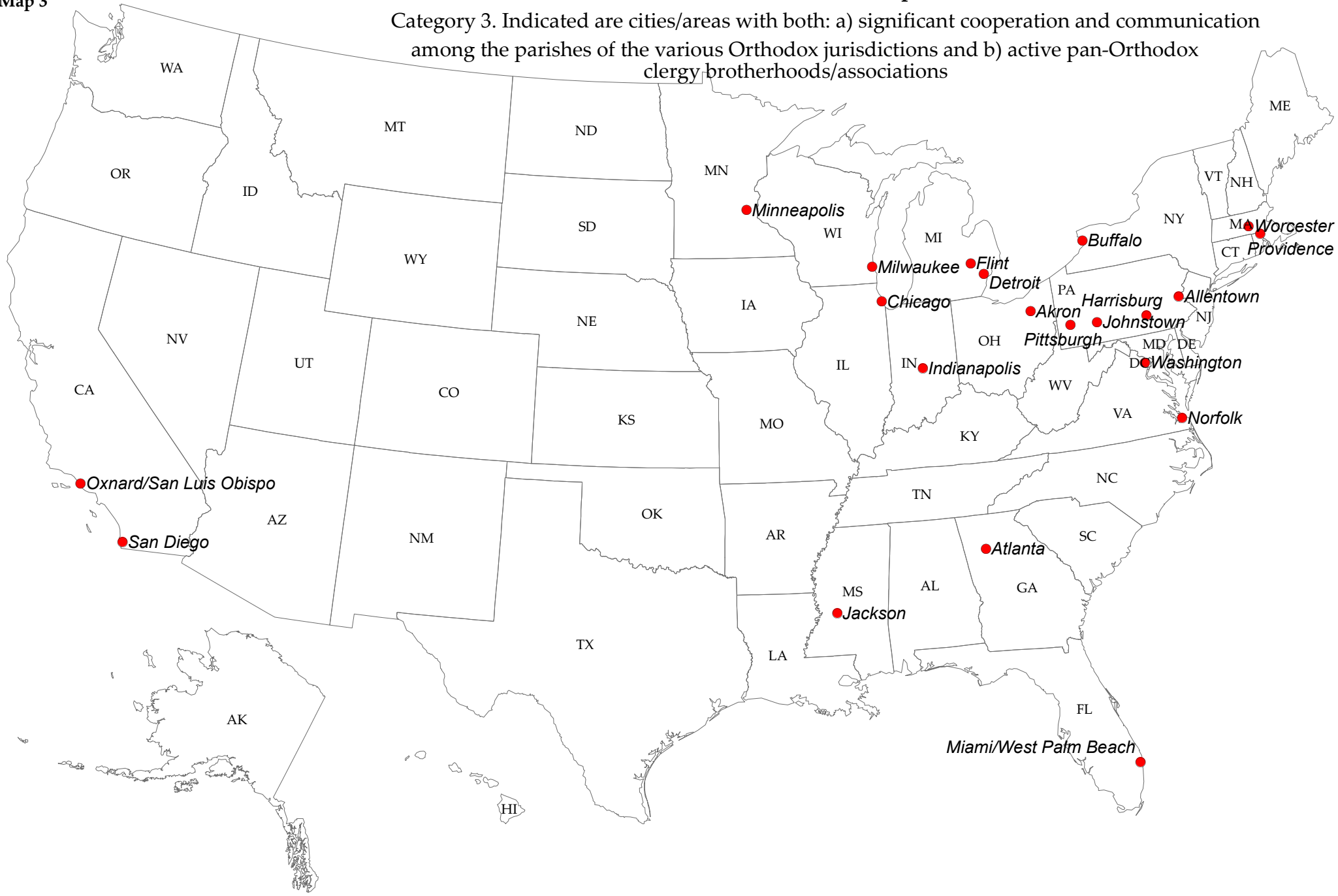


Notice: All places indicated on the map have at least three Orthodox parishes within 25 miles of each other that belong to at least two different Orthodox jurisdictions

Map 3

Local Parish-to-Parish inter-Orthodox Cooperation in the USA

Category 3. Indicated are cities/areas with both: a) significant cooperation and communication among the parishes of the various Orthodox jurisdictions and b) active pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations



Notice: All places indicated on the map have at least three Orthodox parishes within 25 miles of each other that belong to at least two different Orthodox jurisdictions

The data presented in Tab. 1 and Maps 1-3 allow for several major observations:

- ❖ Fifty-four (54) cities and areas in US can be described as “places of greater Orthodox unity:” i.e. places with a high level of communication and cooperation among the parishes and/or clergy of the various Orthodox jurisdictions
- ❖ Out of the 54 “places of greater Orthodox unity in America:”
 - ✓ 21 are cities and areas where significant cooperation and communication among the parish communities is combined with well-organized and active Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods and associations (cities/areas in category 3 at the bottom of the Table 1).
 - ✓ In 16 cities and areas the parishes of the various Orthodox jurisdictions achieved high level of communication and cooperation, but Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations are either not organized or are not very active (cities/areas in category 1 in Tab. 1 that are not highlighted with bold fonts).
 - ✓ In 17 cities and areas, the clergy of various Orthodox jurisdictions engage in communication and fellowship via well organized and active Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations, but joint work and cooperation among their parish communities remain limited to occasional joint worship services (cities/areas in category 2 in Tab. 1 that are not highlighted with bold fonts).
- ❖ Maps 1-3 show that only a few “places of greater Orthodox unity” are situated in Western part of the country. The vast majority of them are in the East and, especially, in the Northeast region of the USA. Indeed, out of 54, only 10 (i.e. less than 20%) are in the American West: in the states of NM, CO, WY, MT, AZ, UT, ID, NV, CA, OR, WA and AK.
- ❖ Remarkably – and this should raise a red flag for Church leadership – in many cities with a significant number of Orthodox parishes, neither good cooperation and communication exists among the parishes of various jurisdictions nor are active clergy associations present. This case, for instance, in New York City, Los Angeles, Dallas, Boston, Portland, Seattle, etc. That is, parishes and clergy in these cities are much more “insular” and the clergy are more “on their own” than in the cities/areas listed in Tab. 1

Tab 2 provides the list of thirty-eight active local/regional Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations in the United States. When information about local/regional clergy brotherhoods/associations was

gathered, some of them were identified as existing nominally, but not active in reality. These “dormant” brotherhoods/associations are NOT included in Tab. 2.

For each Orthodox clergy brotherhood/association, Tab. 2 indicates:

- ❖ The city/town around which the parishes of this clergy brotherhood/association are situated. It should be noted that some of the associations listed in Tab. 2 are truly “local:” i.e. their “territories” are limited to a particular town and its immediate vicinity (for example “Holy Cross Society” clergy brotherhood in Flint, MI). Differently, the other Orthodox clergy associations are geographically widespread and, sometimes, even include the clergy from the parishes in several neighboring states (for example, the Minnesota Eastern Orthodox Clergy Association includes not only clergy serving in Minnesota parishes but also some priests from Western Wisconsin and North Dakota);
- ❖ The formal name of this brotherhood/association;
- ❖ Contact information: website (if there is one) and contact information of a priest who serves as president/coordinator/secretary of this brotherhood/association. Out of thirty-eight associations/brotherhoods in Tab. 2, only 16 maintain either websites or Facebook pages;
- ❖ Estimated number of parishes where clergy are involved in an association/brotherhood and any other comments. It should be noted that the numbers of parishes involved on a regular basis in an association/brotherhood indicated in this column are precise only in the case of the smaller associations. In the case of the large associations (either by territory or by number of parishes), these numbers are approximate estimates.

One additional note should be made with regard to information provided in Tab. 2. The fact that in a particular geographic area an active Orthodox clergy brotherhood/association exists does NOT mean that all local Orthodox clergy participate or even formally consider themselves as a part of this brotherhood/association. In the process of data collection we learned that in many instances only clergy from certain jurisdictions would be members of a local clergy brotherhood/association, while the priests from other jurisdictions would not participate. Sometimes these situations are caused by “church politics,” when some clergy intentionally distance themselves from their fellow priests from other jurisdictions. In other cases, it is simply the lack of desire on a part of certain priests to engage in the work of the local clergy brotherhoods/associations.

Tab 2. Active Local and Regional Pan-Orthodox Clergy Brotherhoods/Associations in the USA
(the table does not include brotherhoods and associations which exist formally, but are not active)

City/area around which participating parishes are situated	Name of association or brotherhood	Contact information: website and contact information for a person who is president/coordinator of a brotherhood.	Number of parishes involved and any other comments
Phoenix, AZ	The Arizona Council of Eastern Orthodox Clergy	www.azorthodox.org Fr. Michael Pallad (President), St. Harlambos Church (GOA), Peoria, AZ. frmichael@stharalambosaz.com , 623-486-8665	All parishes (15) in AZ are involved.
Oxnard/San Luis Obispo, CA	Central Coast Orthodox Clergy	Fr Nicholas Speier, St. Athanasius Church (AOCA), Santa Barbara, CA. office@stathanasius.org , 805-685-5400	6 parishes involved including AOCA, GOA, OCA.
San Diego, CA	Eastern Orthodox Clergy Council of San Diego	www.orthodoxsandiego.org Fr. John Reimann (President), St. Anthony Church (AOCA), San Diego, CA. frjohnkent@gmail.com , 858-268-4100 Fr. Jerome Cwiklinski (Secretary), St. Katherine of Alexandria Mission (OCA), Carlsbad, CA. batushkajerome@cox.net , 760-994-9792	16 parishes including AOCA, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, Serbian Orthodox, UOC.
Denver, CO	Colorado Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood	Fr. Stephan Close, St. Luke Church (AOCA), Erie, CO. frstephan@stlukeorthodox.org , 303-665-4013 The secretary is the secretary of St. Catherine GOA church in Greenwood Village, CO. helen@stcatherinechurch.org , 303-773-3411	About 30 parishes in CO.
Bridgeport/ New Haven, CT	Bridgeport Orthodox Clergy Association	Fr. Patrik Burns (President), Three Saints Church (OCA), Ansonia, CT. pnevmaticmotives@gmail.com , 203-734-3988, 203-735-0317	11 parishes involved including AOCA, ACROD, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, UOC.
In addition to Bridgeport Orthodox Clergy Association:	Fellowship of Orthodox Christian Churches of Connecticut (laity based organization)	www.forcc.org Nina Kosowsky (President), unity@forcc.org , 203-924-0936	The Fellowship of Orthodox Churches [FORCC] is a statewide organization witnessing to Orthodoxy in CT and fostering Orthodox fellowship and cooperation. FORCC sponsors scholarships, offers educational programs, supports Orthodox charitable programs/organizations.

City/area around which participating parishes are situated	Name of association or brotherhood	Contact information: website and contact information for a person who is president/coordinator of a brotherhood.	Number of parishes involved and any other comments
Washington, DC	Metropolitan Washington Orthodox Clergy Council	www.dcorthodox.org Fr. Dimitrios Antokas (President), St. George Church (GOA), Bethesda, MD. stewardship@stgeorge.org , 301-469-7990, 301-461-9353 (cell); Fr. Nicholas Alford (Secretary), St. Gregory Church (AOCA), Silver Spring, MD. frnicholas@aol.com , 301-288-4798	33 parishes involved including ACROD, AOCA, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, Serbian Orthodox, UOC. About 30-40 clergy meet monthly
Miami/West Palm Beach, FL	South Florida Pan-Orthodox Brotherhood	Fr. Peter Shportun (President), St. Mary Church (AOCA), West Palm Beach, FL. frshport@gmail.com , 561-965-5007, 561-632-7066	Nearly 30 parishes involved in Miami/West Palm Beach Area
Atlanta, GA	Atlanta Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood	Fr. Christos Mars, Greek Orthodox Annunciation Cathedral (GOA), Atlanta, GA. rchristos@atlgoc.org , 404-633-5870.	8 parishes involved including GOA, OCA, AOCA and ROCOR
Chicago, IL	Orthodox Christian Clergy Association	Fr. Andre Papkov (President), Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral (ROCOR), Des Plaines, IL. musicschool@msn.com , 847-299-2585, 847-824-0971, Dn. Alexander Koranda (Secretary), Holy Trinity Cathedral (OCA), Chicago, IL. ajkoranda@gmail.com , 708-363-3383	50+ parishes involved in greater Chicago area
Indianapolis, IN	The Presbyters' Council of the Central Indiana Orthodox Christian Churches	www.orthodoxindy.org Fr. Stevan Bauman, Joy of All Who Sorrow Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Bulgarian Diocese), Indianapolis, IN. fatherstevan@indy.net , 317-637-1897	15 parishes involved including ACROD, AOCA, Bulgarian Diocese, GOA, OCA, Serbian Orthodox.
Merillville/Gary, IN	North West Indiana Clergy Association	Fr. Ilija Balaci, Nativity of the Theotokos Serbian Orthodox Monastery, Carlisle, IN. ebalach@comcast.net , 574-654-7994, 425-736-3016 (mobile)	9 parishes and 1 monastery involved including GOA, ACROD, Romanian Archdiocese, ROCOR, OCA and Serbian Orthodox
Worcester, MA	Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches of Central Massachusetts	www.ceoc.us Fr. Nicholas Apostola (Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese), frnick@stnicholaschurch.org , nka@net1plus.com , 598-335-7378 (cell) Paul Swydan (lay representative), paul.v.swydan@gmail.com	14 parishes involved with the core group of 4 parishes in Worcester, MA
Detroit, MI	St. John Chrysostom Clergy Brotherhood	www.coccdetroit.org Fr. Laurence Lazar, St. George Cathedral (OCA), Southfield, MI. frlazar@hotmail.com , 248-356-4144, 248-569-4833	40 parishes in Metropolitan Detroit area

City/area around which participating parishes are situated	Name of association or brotherhood	Contact information: website and contact information for a person who is president/coordinator of a brotherhood.	Number of parishes involved and any other comments
Flint, MI	Holy Cross Society/Pan-Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Genesee County	Fr. Joseph Abud, St. George Church (AOCA), Flint, MI. njja@aol.com , 810-732-0720	4 parishes involved including AOCA, GOA, OCA.
Minneapolis, MN	MEOCA: Minnesota Eastern Orthodox Clergy Associations	www.meocca.org Fr. Paul Hodge (President), St. George Church (AOCA), St. Paul, MN. frpaulh@gmail.com , 651-955-8594, 651-457-0854	Includes all clergy serving in MN parishes and some clergy from Western WI and ND. About 40-45 parishes.
St. Louis, MO	No formal name	Archimandrite Theophan (Koja), St. Thomas the Apostle Church (OCA), St. Louis, MO. thkarh@sbcglobal.net , (314) 353-0841	14 parishes involved including AOCA, Bulgarian Diocese, GOA, OCA, ROCOR,
Jackson, MS	No formal name	Fr. Paul Yerger, Holy Resurrection Church (OCA), Clinton, MS. ocamail@holypes.net , 601-924-2441	4 parishes involved including AOCA, GOA, OCA.
High Point, NC	Triad Area Orthodox Clergy Association	Fr. Christopher Foley, Holy Cross Mission (OCA), Greensboro, NC. ffc@holycrossoca.org , 336-688-9920	4 parishes involved including GOA, OCA, Serbian Orthodox.
Los Alamos, NM	No formal name	Fr. Theophan Mackey, St. Job of Pochaiv Church (UOC), Los Alamos, NM. fr.theophan.mackey@gmail.com , 505-661-9704, 575-915-6535	Out of 7 Orthodox parishes in NM, 4 are involved including AOCA, OCA, UOC.
Las Vegas, NV	Clark County Orthodox Clergy Association	Fr. John Nicholas (President), St. Michael Church (AOCA), Las Vegas, NV. stmichaelaochurch@gmail.com 702-524-1780, 702-452-1299, Fr. John Dresko (Treasurer), St. Paul Church (OCA), Las Vegas, NV. jdresko@me.com , 860-833-4921	5 parishes including AOCA, GOA, OCA, Serbian Orthodox.
Albany, NY	St. Andrew's Orthodox Brotherhood of the NY Capital Region	www.facebook.com/StAndrewsBrotherhood/ Fr. Matthew Markewich, Christ the Saviour Church (OCA), Balston Lake, NY. mattmarkewich@gmail.com , 518-212-7845	13 parishes (geographically very widespread around Albany area) including AOCA, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, UOC.
Buffalo, NY	Council of Orthodox Christian Churches of Niagara Frontier	www.facebook.com/coccnf/ Fr. Jason Vansuch (President), St. George Church (OCA), Buffalo, NY. jvansuch@gmail.com , (716) 875-4222	7 parishes including AOCA, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, Serbian Orthodox, UOC.

City/area around which participating parishes are situated	Name of association or brotherhood	Contact information: website and contact information for a person who is president/coordinator of a brotherhood.	Number of parishes involved and any other comments
Akron, OH	Akron Clergy Association (operates in cooperation with lay-driven Christian Orthodox Churches of Akron)	Fr. Andrew Lentz, Annunciation Church (GOA), Akron, OH. alentz@annunciationakron.org , 330-434-9441	8 parishes including AOCA, ACROD, GOA, OCA, Serbian Orthodox.
Canton, OH	Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Stark County	www.facebook.com/starkcountyorthodox Fr. Aleksa Pavichevich, St. George Church (Serbian Orthodox Church), Canton, OH. apaviche@mac.com , fatheraleksa@gmail.com , 330-494-7888	7 parishes involved including AOCA, GOA, OCA, Serbian Orthodox
Cleveland, OH	Greater Cleveland Council of Orthodox Clergy	www.orthodoxcleveland.us Fr. Costas Keares (President), St. Paul Church (GOA), North Royalton, OH. frcostas@stpaulgoc.org , 440-237-8998. Fr. Andrew Harmon (Secretary), St. Matthew Church (AOCA), North Royalton, OH. fatherharmon@wowway.com , 440-582-5673	29 parishes and two monasteries in Cleveland, OH and Lorain, OH areas are involved
Steubenville, OH	St. Stephen's Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of the Upper Ohio Valley	Fr. Rade Merick (President), Holy Resurrection Serbian Orthodox Church, Steubenville, OH. radmerk@comcast.net , 740-282-4463, 740-264-4809	11 parishes involved including ACROD, GOA, OCA, Serbian Orthodox. Some of them are in OH and some in WV.
Youngstown, OH	Eastern Orthodox Clergy Association of Mahoning Valley	www.orthodoxyyoungstown.org Fr. Joseph DiStefano, St. Nicholas Church (GOA), Youngstown, OH frdistefano@yahoo.com , 330-743-5493, 724-304-1230	12 parishes involved including ACROD, AOCA, GOA, OCA, Serbian Orthodox, UOC.
Allentown, PA	Lehigh Valley Clergy Brotherhood	https://lvorthodox.wordpress.com Fr. Andrew Damick, St. Paul Church (AOCA), Emmaus, PA. fr.andrew@pobox.com , 610-965-2298	14 parishes including AOCA, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, UOC
Harrisburg, PA	Orthodox Council of Churches of South Central PA	Fr. Andrew Tsikitas, Annunciation Church (GOA), York, PA. fr.andreas@comcast.net , 717-741-4200, 717-448-8732	About 15 parishes involved.
Johnstown, PA	Orthodox Clergy Association of Greater Johnstown	Fr. Miles Zdinak, Sts. Peter and Paul Church (ACROD), Windber, PA. frmiles@atlanticbb.net , 814-467-7444	8 parishes involved

City/area around which participating parishes are situated	Name of association or brotherhood	Contact information: website and contact information for a person who is president/coordinator of a brotherhood.	Number of parishes involved and any other comments
Philadelphia, PA	Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Philadelphia	www.orthodoxphilly.com Fr. Stephen Hutnick, Sts. Peter and Paul Church (UOC), Wilmington, DE. otche@aol.com , 302-798-4455.	40-45 parishes are involved on a regular basis. Clergy meet monthly for a lunch in one of the parishes.
Pittsburgh, PA	Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh	Fr. Stevo Rocknage (President), St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church, McKeesport, PA. frstevor@comcast.net , 412-672-1872. Fr. Michael Kallaur (Secretary), Holy Cross Church (GOA), Pittsburgh, PA. mhkallaur@verizon.net , 412-833-3355	About 50 parishes involved in metropolitan Pittsburgh area
Houston, TX	Orthodox Clergy Association of Houston	www.orthodoxhouston.org Fr. John Whiteford, St. Jonah Orthodox Church (ROCOR), Spring, TX. frjohnwhiteford@gmail.com , rector@saintjonah.org , 281-467-0264	21 parish and 1 monastery involved including AOCA, GOA, OCA, ROCOR, Romanian Archdiocese, Serbian Orthodox Church
Providence, RI	Rhode Island Fellowship of Orthodox Churches	Fr. Andrew George, Church of the Annunciation (GOA), Cranston, RI. Fr.andrew@annunciation.org , 401-942-4188	
Norfolk, VA	Orthodox Christian Clergy Fellowship of Hampton Roads	Fr. John Manuel, St. Nicholas Church (GOA), Virginia Beach, VA. Frjim.stnicholas@cox.net , 757-422-5600	7 parishes involved including GOA, OCA, AOCA, ROCOR
Richmond, VA	No formal name	Fr. Adam Sexton, St. Andrew Church (OCA), Ashland, VA. seraphim406@gmail.com , 804-798-4198	3 parishes involved including GOA, OCA.
Seattle, WA	Washington Orthodox Clergy Association	www.orthodoxwashington.org Fr. Michael Tervo (President), St. Sophia Church (GOA), Bellingham, WA. president@orthodoxwashington.org , 360-734-8745 Fr. Daniel Triant (Secretary), St. Demetrios Church (GOA), Seattle, WA. secretary@orthodoxwashington.org , 206-325-4347, 206-631-2502	Theoretically all parishes in WA state are involved, but in reality only AOCA and GOA clergy are active participants
Milwaukee, WI	Orthodox Clergy Syndesmos of Wisconsin	Fr. Thomas Mueller, Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church (OCA), Milwaukee, WI. crankypriest@gmail.com , 414-671-5819	12 Parishes in the Milwaukee area including AOCA, GOA, Serbian Orthodox.

Call for Action and Proposal for Next Steps: Learning More from "Places of Greater Orthodox Unity in America" and Implementing their Experiences in Other Parts of the Country

In the previous chapter we identified twenty-one cities/geographic areas where well-organized and active Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations are combined with significant cooperation and communication among their parishioners. That is, in these twenty-one cities/geographic areas, not only Orthodox priests engage in fellowship, communication and mutual support, but also laity and entire parish communities of various jurisdictions are involved in collaborative activities and ministries beyond occasional joint worship services.

These twenty-one “places of greater Orthodox unity in America” can be seen as the “engines” pulling a long freight train of parishes in other parts of the country towards better inter-Orthodox cooperation and communication. From an organizational perspective, these twenty-one cities/areas are exemplary showcases and models to be followed, because these are places where parish-to-parish communication and cooperation occur not spontaneously but within well structured frameworks: the local/regional Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations.

Clearly, the other “places of greater Orthodox unity” described in the previous chapter³ also deserve “praise and applause,” but these twenty-one are especially instrumental for taking next steps towards developing a working model of Local Parish Networks that can be implemented in the various parts of the country.

Suggested Actions on the Part of the Assembly of Canonical Bishops of the USA:

I. The Committee for Canonical Regional Planning encourages all hierarchs who have jurisdictions over parishes in these twenty-one “places of greater Orthodox unity” (category 3 in Tab. 1):

- ❖ To engage personally in the work of the clergy associations/brotherhoods in these twenty-one cities/areas (full contact information is provided in Tab. 2);

³ I.e. either a) cities and areas with active pan-Orthodox clergy associations/brotherhoods, but without significant cooperation and communication on the level of laity and parish communities or b) cities and areas with the high level of communication and cooperation among the parishes of the various Orthodox jurisdictions, but without organized and/or active Orthodox clergy brotherhoods

- ❖ To learn more from these clergy brotherhoods/associations about forms, areas and specific examples of the local parish-to-parish cooperation;
- ❖ To offer fatherly help in further strengthening these twenty-one “places of greater Orthodox unity;”
- ❖ To implement the experiences of inter-Orthodox collaboration of these twenty-one cities/areas in the other parts of their dioceses and/or national jurisdictions.

II. The Committee for Canonical Regional Planning recommends that the directory of the local/regional clergy associations/brotherhoods (Tab. 2) be posted on the Assembly’s website.

III. The Committee for Canonical Regional Planning asks the Assembly to endorse a second phase of the national study “Places of Greater Orthodox Unity in America: the State of Local Parish-to-Parish inter-Orthodox Cooperation and Communication.” The second stage of the study will focus specifically on the twenty-one identified cities/geographic areas in the US where well-organized and active Pan-Orthodox clergy brotherhoods/associations are combined with significant cooperation and communication among the laity and entire parish communities. The Committee for Canonical Regional Planning will work with the parishes and clergy associations in these areas with three goals in mind:

- ❖ To study which forms and areas of inter-Orthodox parish-to-parish cooperation are currently most widespread and “work well” and which possible joint inter-Orthodox ministries/programs are desirable for the parishes, but not present at this point;
- ❖ To “catalogue” the examples of specific joint inter-jurisdictional activities, ministries and forms of cooperation that can be seen as unique or “unusual,” but deserve attention for possible “replication” in the other parts of the country;
- ❖ To examine: a) what the parish communities and clergy need in order to further improve and better organize their inter-jurisdictional cooperation and communication and b) what is seen by the parishes and clergy as the main obstacles to achievement higher degree and better organization in the local Pan-Orthodox cooperation.

Appendix I. The Basic Principles and Approaches to Building the Local Parish Networks

(as it was presented to the Assembly VII in Detroit)

A. The Relationship Between Hierarchs and Dioceses and the Local Parish Networks

The Local Parish Networks are not ecclesiastical or church administrative structures. All individual parishes within each Local Parish Network remain under the full authority of their ruling diocesan hierarchs. The Local Parish Networks function simply as voluntary associations and coordinating bodies of the Orthodox parishes situated in the same geographic areas.

B. The Goal and Mission of the Local Parish Networks

The goal and mission of the Local Parish Networks is threefold:

- ❖ To develop a common "Orthodox face" and to speak with "one strong voice," thus representing all Orthodox faithful versus the local community at large. That is, to jointly address the common interests, needs and concerns of all Orthodox church members residing in the same geographic areas;
- ❖ To build strong associations of local Orthodox church communities where the parishes of all jurisdictions support and help one another by sharing talents, ministries and programs;
- ❖ To create conditions and an environment that encourages communication and interaction among parishioners from all parishes, thus, breaking jurisdictional barriers among the parishes and developing a strong sense of one local Orthodox Christian family.

C. Participation in the Local Parish Networks

The participation in Local Parish Networks is voluntary: each parish community can decide to be or not to be involved in a Local Parish Network. It is our hope that the hierarchs who have parishes in the areas where Local Parish Networks will be created will encourage their parishes to join and actively participate in the Local Parish Networks. If a parish community joins a Local Parish Network, it would be expected to comply with norms and principles of how that Local Parish Network operates.

D. Suggested Areas, Issues and Principles for Further Study and Discussion When Working on the Model of Local Parish Networks

Each Local Parish Network will have its own special circumstances and it is unlikely that two Local Parish Networks will look exactly alike. Therefore, each Local Parish Network should be given the opportunity to evolve in a manner that meets its particular needs. The following are suggested areas that Local Parish Networks can focus on as they are established and develop:

- ❖ Representation of the individual parishes and the process of joint decision making in the Local Parish Networks;
- ❖ Day-to-day communication, information exchange and coordination among the parishes in the Local Parish Networks;
 - Coordination of parish calendars in order to avoid conflicting events.
 - Promotion of individual parish events to the other parishes in the Local Parish Network.
- ❖ Joint liturgical life and events in the Local Parish Networks;
- ❖ Joint programs and projects in the Local Parish Networks;
- ❖ Common efforts and work in the area of religious education within the Local Parish Networks;
- ❖ Common efforts and work in the area of youth ministries within the Local Parish Networks;
- ❖ Common strategy and joint work in the sphere of the Orthodox ministries, especially, evangelism and outreach into the wider local community;
- ❖ Development of joint social media and united "publicity" efforts with the goal to achieve greater Orthodox "visibility" in a local community;
- ❖ Financing of projects of the Local Parish Networks and, if possible, joint fundraising events;
- ❖ Legal status of the Local Parish Networks (e.g whether the Local Parish Networks should be incorporated as a not-for-profit for jointly operated ministries).