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GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

November 2, 2019

Mr. George Matsoukas, Executive Director
Orthodox Christian Laity
Post Office Box 6954
West Palm Beach, FL 33405

Dear Mr. Matsoukas,

I greet each of you in the peace and love of our Lord as you gather together in Christian fellowship for the Orthodox Christian Laity's 32nd Annual Meeting being held this year in Houston, Texas.

You have chosen a very appropriate and timely theme for your Open Forum: Thinking Globally and Acting Locally on Pan-Orthodox Unity. It is easy for us to maintain a parochial mindset, especially on the local parish level in our churches. It is much more difficult, however, to view our parishes with the entirety of the Orthodox Church as our perspective. Using an adage attributed to the divine Chrysostom, instead of looking at our parish as our universe, we should look at our universe as our parish.

As we now find ourselves in a time when our world is filled with tremendous pressures from all sides, we must stay strong and committed in our Faith and support each other, "encouraging one another and building one another up" (1 Thess. 5:11), so that we "may be filled with the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:19) through Christ's holy Church.

Offering you my best wishes for every success in your meetings, that they might prove to be uplifting and enriching, and to Almighty God my prayers for many healthy years filled with spiritual renewal and every blessing from above, I remain

With paternal love in Christ,

to Αμερικανς Ορθοδόξους

† ELPIDOPHOROS

Archbishop of America

OCL PRESIDENT & CHAIRPERSON

Welcome to Houston! I pray that your visit here will be both inspirational and educational. I first would like to thank the faithful OCL members and donors that we can always depend upon to assist and sustain our mission and goals. You cannot manage any organization without dedication and a steady stream of funds to help meet day-to-day expenses and support all the incredible resources OCL has been providing for 32 years. They include our website www.ocl.org, publications, occasional papers, Open Forums, video presentations to name a few.

I was so inspired after our last event held in Cleveland which was chaired by the dynamic Andy and Katherine Kartalis. The annual meeting verified the need for Pan Orthodox advocacy and what we can do together as a team with our fellow Orthodox brothers and sisters! Our website hosts the short film on "Orthodox Cleveland" and their best practices. I hope and pray that we can see more inter-Orthodox partnered events nationwide and in the greater Houston Orthodox community.

THINKING GLOBALLY AND ACTING LOCALLY ON PAN-ORTHODOX UNITY is our theme today. We are fortunate to have distinguished speakers who will offer insight and motivation for action. On behalf of OCL I graciously thank His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah; Kenneth Kidd, Focus North America; Father Stephen Powley, Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry; and Michael Spartalis, Adjunct Professor at University of Houston for their time and effort in preparing for this event.

The experience of serving as President this year has been incredible. The highlight was OCL's meeting with Archbishop Elpidophoros and sharing with him our insights concerning the future of Orthodoxy. It was a worthwhile visit and a true honor to be in his presence to hear his views as he begins his stewardship of the Archdiocese and the Assembly of Bishops. I also have enjoyed interacting with guest speakers and faithful Orthodox throughout the year.

There are so many rapid changes happening constantly in our world and it is more important than ever to be informed. I would like to challenge every supporter to reach out to other Orthodox faithful of all ages that they know and inform them of the diverse articles and dialogue posted on the OCL website. It will be an eyeopener for some and hopefully, they will become followers and providers. They will be exposed to a community of Orthodox Christians who love the church and endeavor to make it transparent, accountable and approachable for all people regardless of their ethnic background.

We are especially grateful to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church community for enabling this event to take place in their Parish Facilities.



Argo Georgandis Pyle, Chairman and President

32nd Annual Program Schedule **THINKING GLOBALLY AND ACTING LOCALLY ON PAN ORTHODOX UNITY**

An open Forum organized by Orthodox Christian Laity www.OCL

Saturday, November 2, 2019

Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral

3511 Yoakum Blvd, Houston Texas 77006

9:00 - 9:30 a.m.

Continental breakfast and greeting

9:30 - 10:10 a.m.

His Eminence Isaiah, "Pan Orthodoxy"

10:30 - 11:00 a.m.

*Kenneth Kidd, Executive Director, Focus North
America*

Community Outreach for those in need

11:30 - 12:00 p.m.

Father Steven Powley of Pueblo, Colorado

Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry

12:15 -12:45 p.m.

Michael E. Spartalis, CPA, CPC

Ethics as applied to "not-for-profits"

**EACH SPEAKER WILL ALLOW TIME FOR QUESTIONS
AND ANSWERS**

TOWARD A MORE UNITED ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN HOUSTON

Thinking Globally....Acting Locally

We welcome you and thank you for your participation during our annual OCL meeting. For the past 32 years, Orthodox Christian Laity (OCL) has actively advocated and promoted Orthodox Christian Unity and emphasized the importance for transparency and accountability in Church governance. **Our mission remains the same today.**

OCL continues to serve as a “catalyst” in motivating the faithful of our community’s various jurisdictions to share and partner together with their hierarchs and clergy on a local level. We commend the Houston community’s example of inter Orthodox cooperation with The Romanos Chorale that has enriched your community’s appreciation of the hymnology of Orthodoxy and offers fellowship to its participants.

Our speakers today will present ideas about programs and principles that are global in scope, taken directly from scripture. They will give us the opportunity to learn **how we can think globally and apply ideas in developing meaningful local programs.**

New outreach community programs can combine their varied resources and facilities to form sustainable cooperative ministries that can excite all ages, especially our youth and young families, by focusing on practical and needed activities as encouraged in the Gospel. **The Apostle Mathew (25:35-37) clearly states:for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.”**

The OCL web site www.ocl.org is a clearinghouse for local cooperative ministries. They are posted in order to encourage and inform other groups of possible programs. Some of these ministries include:

- Pan Orthodox Bible Bowl for middle schoolers, Hunt Valley, MD
- Detroit’s Own Orthodox Christian Radio, Detroit, MI
- Orthodox Christian Book Store, Wichita, KS
- Loaves and Fishes Homeless Ministry, Atlanta GA
- St Herman’s House of Hospitality, Cleveland, OH
- Eastern Orthodox Women’s Guild in Akron, OH; Milwaukee, WI, Cleveland, OH
- Fellowship of Orthodox Christians Churches of Connecticut
- Greater Johnstown Orthodox Christian Parishes Group, Johnstown, PA

Let us pray with humility and embrace the future together in partnership and compassion as a canonically unified Orthodox Christian Church in our local communities and in our nation. Let us also administer the work of the church with principles of accountability and transparency.



George Matsoukas, Executive Director

METROPOLITAN ISAIAH

Metropolitan Isaiah was born in Portsmouth New Hampshire. After his primary and high school education, he served with distinction in the United States Marine Corps during the Korean conflict. In the autumn of 1954 he enrolled at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Seminary in Brookline, Massachusetts. Upon his graduation in 1960, he attended the Ecumenical Patriarchate Seminary of Halki in Istanbul, Turkey for graduate studies.

On February 25, 1962 Metropolitan Isaiah was ordained a deacon by His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos at Saint Spyridon Church in San Diego, California, having been tonsured a monk on the previous day. He received his ordination to the holy priesthood from His Grace Bishop Demetrios of Olympos at Saint Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles, California, on March 18, 1962. His first assignment in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese was as assistant to the pastor at Holy Trinity Church in Salt Lake City Utah. In December of 1964 he was assigned as pastor at Saint John the Baptist Church in Youngstown, Ohio. On November 30, 1969 he was raised to the office of Archimandrite by Archbishop Iakovos at the consecration services of the new church and community center in Youngstown.

Archbishop Iakovos reassigned the Metropolitan to Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology as the Director of Student Life in August of 1971. Taking a leave of absence from his duties in February 1975, he enrolled as a graduate student at the School of Theology at the University of Thessaloniki, where he earned a master's degree in theology. He returned to the United States in July of that year and continued in his capacity as dean of students.

In September 1976 he was given additional responsibilities at the college-seminary as the Dean of Administrative Affairs together with his position as Dean of Students. In October 1977 he assumed additional duties as the Interim Pastor at Saint Nicholas Church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Relinquishing all of these positions in March 1979, he was assigned as the Chancellor of the Diocese of Chicago under His Grace, Bishop Iakovos of Chicago.

Cont. ->

METROPOLITAN ISAIAH

Metropolitan Isaiah was elected to the rank of bishop by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul (Constantinople), Turkey on April 10, 1986. He was consecrated a Bishop on May 25, 1986 at Holy Trinity Cathedral in New York City, and was given the title of Bishop of Aspendos, a former Christian city in southwestern Asia Minor. In September 1986, His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos assigned him as the Chancellor of the Archdiocese in New York. Bishop Isaiah continued to function in this capacity until June 23, 1992 when he was elected Bishop of the Diocese of Denver by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, taking the new title on June 24, 1992 at special ceremonies in the Archdiocesan Chapel. He was enthroned as Bishop of Denver on September 10, 1992, at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Denver, Colorado.

On November 24, 1997 the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elevated him as Metropolitan of Proikonisos and Presiding Hierarchy of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Denver. Metropolitan Isaiah was also appointed as President of Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology on July 1, 1997 by His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon of America. He accepted a one-year term which officially ended on August 14, 1998.

On December 20, 2002 the Ecumenical Patriarchate elevated the status of the Diocese to a Metropolis, and in 2003 elected Metropolitan Isaiah as Metropolitan of Denver.



Metropolitan Isaiah

KENNETH KIDD

Kenneth Kidd is the Interim Executive Director of FOCUS North America, based in Pittsburgh. A native of Charleston, West Virginia, Kenny was Chrismated into the Orthodox Church on Holy Saturday, 1997, at Holy Spirit Antiochian Orthodox Church in Huntington, West Virginia. He is a social worker by education, and for 6 years worked in front line street outreach and service to our most vulnerable homeless neighbors in Asheville, North Carolina. For the past 13 years, however, Kenny has been blessed to serve the Orthodox Church through 11 years of service at the Orthodox Christian Mission Center, where his work afforded opportunities to serve in India, Tanzania, and Alaska, and for the past 2 years as Development Director at FOCUS North America.

FOCUS North America is a national movement of Orthodox Christians, united in faith and joined by a desire to provide action-oriented and sustainable solutions to poverty in communities across America. FOCUS has operations and youth volunteer experiences in more than 20 cities in the United States.



Kenneth Kidd, Interim Executive Director of FOCUS NA

FR. STEPHEN POWLEY

Fr. Stephen serves as the Executive Director for Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM). He also serves as the priest at St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church in Pueblo, CO. He has served at St. John's since 2005. He resides in Colorado with his loving wife of over 42 years, Ashley. They have four wonderful children, 3 are married, and three incredibly beautiful grandchildren (3 years, 2 years, and 6 months old).

In his free time, Fr. Stephen loves mountain biking, hiking, and backpacking. Before he went to seminary, he was a Smokejumper for the Forest Service, parachuting into wilderness areas to fight forest fires. Some have suggested a few bad landings on his head may have influenced his decision to become a Prison Chaplain. (He would prefer to think it was the guidance of the Lord.)

Fr. Stephen began serving as a Prison Chaplain in January of 1985. He has ministered in every prison security level from minimum to super-max. In 1994, he was invited to help open and then be the Chaplain for the most maximum secure prison in this country.

He retired from Prison Chaplaincy in August of 2010. Over those years, Fr. Stephen had the great privilege of being a spectator of many incredible things that God did inside the prisons some of which he plans to share with you. He began serving on the OCPM Board of Directors in 2005 and he began working with OCPM following his retirement.



Fr. Stephen, OCPM Director

E. MICHAEL SPARTALIS

E. Michael Spartalis, CPA, CPC

BBA – Accounting; University of Houston, Bauer College of Business

CPA – Certified Public Accountant

CPC – Certified Personnel Consultant

Program Topic: Ethics as applied to “not-for-profits”

Principal focus of business services: CFO's, Controllers, senior level Accounting & Finance, Tax professionals, Staff Accounting, Finance and selected areas in consulting. As an executive recruiter, my focus has been providing both project and permanent staffing needs. Over 25 years' experience in delivering qualified candidates to some of the best firms in Houston. Values that are critical are integrity and ethics, where I require both my clients and applicant to share these at the highest levels.

With both industry and public accounting experience, working in the trenches and understanding the efforts that are required in the delivery of financial statements, financial services, cost analysis, special reporting, systems implementations, tax compliance reporting both federal and state, auditing and management of employees, my experience enhances and adds value to the recruiting effort.



E. Michael Spartalis

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OCL PUBLICATIONS

Series of Occasional Papers:

Transition, Renewal: ONE FAITH, ONE CHURCH Bishop Iacovos of Catania, 1997.

The Theological Foundation of the Role of the Laity in the Church, Daniel J. Sahas, Ph.D., University of Waterloo Ontario, Canada, 1997.

The Challenge of Outreach, Nikolas K. Gvosdev, Ph.D., 1997.

An Orthodox Christian Church in the United States: Unified and Self Governed, Peter Haikalis, Ph.D., 2000.

Greek Philosophy and the Theology of the Greek Orthodox Church, John Mavroides, Ph.D., 2006.

New Strategy Needed To Save Endangered Ecumenical Patriarchate, Peter Marudas, 2006.

The American Orthodox Church is Holy, Catholic and Apostolic: IT MUST NOW BE ONE 2016.

Books:

Orthodox Christianity at the Crossroad: A Great Council of the Church-When and Why

George E. Matsoukas, Editor, 2009, iUniverse New York Bloomington, IN.

Contributors include: Forward and Overview: Nathaniel, Archbishop of Detroit, Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, Member of Synod OCA; Christopher, Metropolitan of the Serbian Midwestern Diocese, Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church: "Need for an Inclusive – Open Council Motivated by Love and Integrity"; Rev Dr John Erickson, Peter N. Gramowich Professor of Church History St Vladimir's Orthodox "Overview of History and Difficulties in Preparing for the Council"; Very Rev Alexander Abramov Representative of the Moscow Patriarchate: "Facing Critical Questions of World Orthodoxy"; Dr Vigen Guroian: "Youth, Unity and Orthodoxy in America"; Dr Elizabeth H. Prodromou, "The Need for a Great and Holy Council: Why, Why Not Yet, and How?"

Project for Orthodox Renewal: Seven Studies of Key Issues Facing Orthodox Christians in America, Stephen J. Sfeakas and George E. Matsoukas, 1993, Light and Life Press.

The American Church and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Meeting, Alice Kopan, Editor, 1998.

Reprint with St Vladimir's Press Alexander Bogolepov, Toward an American Orthodox Church.



CD Series Great Events of American Orthodoxy

A New Era Begins – Overview of Meeting of All Canonical Bishops Ligonier, PA 1994

Welcome Home – Acceptance of Evangelical Clergy and Laity in Orthodoxy, 1994

Book by OCL Executive Director

A Church in Captivity: The Greek Orthodox Church of America, George Matsoukas iUniverse 2008.

Orthodox Christian Laity Archive Housed at DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois

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