



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN LAITY

“The same yesterday, today and tomorrow”

2020 New Year's Greetings

With our entry into a new decade, the Boards and supporters of Orthodox Christian Laity (OCL) join most Orthodox Christians in looking back with regret at another decade of disappointments, of lost opportunity and lost numbers. As once-faithful members of our Church walk away from our parishes and our ranks, and find new spiritual homes in other churches, or even enter in the limbo of the unrooted and growing four-letter category of "None," we must rededicate ourselves to the renewal of Orthodoxy in America.

The OCL is what it has always been since its inception thirty years ago - a caring organization of laypeople and clergy, of leaders and quiet supporters, of Bishops and brand new members of the Orthodox faith - who have come together in our dedication to four founding principles of Orthodox Christianity: a vigorous role in Church governance by an informed laity; transparency; accountability; and Orthodox Unity in America. Our ranks include people from every single ethnic and historical jurisdiction that is represented in the United States. We believe that today, Orthodox unity is the vehicle that will best transport us to the best possible accomplishment of our other three goals.

No one can doubt that Christ intended for us all to comprise a single church, and to worship together in our undoubted unity of doctrine, celebrating always our unique personal and familial distinctiveness. Anyone who has experienced true Orthodox ecumenism in worship has always walked away inspired, wondering why it is not always thus. It is in our power to make it thus. It is also our sacred calling.

When we do, when we achieve Orthodox conciliar and canonical unity, we will create a new force for Christian good in an increasingly fragmented world. Christ would surely want us to do this, else He would not have come to the world to save us. Let us resolve then, in this year, in this decade, in our short lifetimes, to pass on to our children a unified American Orthodox Church, stronger than any religious force we have yet known, working for truth and salvation and justice, and doing so in the very same way that we will have worked together to achieve that unity.

With God's help, and in His son's name, we can do no less.

With great respect, and in the infinite love of Christ,

Your friends and neighbors of the OCL

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