

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 11, 2021

**YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY AGENCY
PUBLISHES ROSTER OF DIRECTORS**

WASHINGTON, DC – At its inaugural meeting on December 3, the Board of Directors of the newly blessed Youth & Young Adult Ministry Agency met to begin this important work in the life of the Church.

The members of the Board are as follows:

Bp. Thomas Joseph, Episcopal Liaison | Charleston, WV

Bishop of the Diocese of Oakland, Charleston and the Mid-Atlantic

Jurisdiction: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “My prayer and hope for the newly established Youth and Young Adult Agency is that it becomes a hospital for our sins, especially those of our youth. Those who have been charged with the responsibility of leading us in ministering to our youth, God willing, will be the people who diagnose our sins and remind us of the medicine that the Church offers us so that all of us will go and sin no more as we flee to the heavenly kingdom. May God grant all of our youth workers many years of fruitful service in our Lord's vineyard.”

Eric Namee, Board Chairman | Wichita, KS

Parish: St. Mary, Wichita, KS

Jurisdiction: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “This Agency was unanimously approved by the Assembly of Bishops, reflecting their collective commitment to our youth and young adults. With the support and encouragement of the Assembly, this Agency will do transformational and unprecedented work to make our Orthodox Faith alive and relevant to the next generation.”

Dn. Justin Bosl, Board Vice Chairman | Hayward, CA

Parish: Resurrection, Castro Valley, CA

Jurisdiction: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “That we will be able to work together as an Orthodox Church to assist our parishes in creating vibrant ministry that will result in faithful Orthodox Christians for generations to come. This will have a transformative effect not only on those young people, but on each of their families as well.”

Nick Lekas, Secretary | Hudson, OH

Parish: Annunciation, Akron, OH

Jurisdiction: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “My wife Kathy and I are so over-the-top pleased with any and every effort that is made for the sake of our youth, having personally suffered the lack of connection growing up... [we are passionate about] a Christ-centered experience, of Christ-centered faith.”

Drake Behrakis, Treasurer | Sudbury, MA

Parish: St Nicholas, Lexington, MA

Jurisdiction: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “[That we will] bring together all pan-Orthodox youth to strengthen the bond of Orthodoxy.”

Neno Djordjevic, Board Member | Park Ridge, IL

Parish: Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Chicago, IL

Jurisdiction: Serbian Orthodox Church in North, Central, and South America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “To me, if we begin programs that impact young people directly, positively, bring them spiritual joy, give them sustenance in an often confusing world – that is the key to sustainable growth and fruitful ministry as it will expand over time, one meaningful encounter at a time.”

Tassos Gianakakos, Board Member | Scottsdale, AZ

Parishes: Assumption, Scottsdale, AZ; and Holy Cross Belmont, CA

Jurisdiction: Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “Our children are experiencing incredible challenges, confronted with darkness at every turn. They need the light that is Christ and Orthodoxy to be bright within them.”

Melissa Kean, Board Member | Houston, TX

Parish: St. George, Houston, Texas

Jurisdiction: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “I hope to give our children the strength they will need to survive as Christians in a world that attacks that faith from all directions.”

Protodeacon David Keim, Board Member | Cary, NC

Parish: All Saints, Raleigh, NC

Jurisdiction: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Hopes and Prayer for our New Agency: “[That it] will be a vehicle whereby the lives of people being transformed into images of Christ – our Board members, Agency leadership, Facilitators, etc. – can be shared with young people, drawing them ever nearer to Christ and His holy Church.”