

Русская Православная  
Церковь Заграницей  
Сиракузско Свято-  
Никольская Епархия



Russian Orthodox  
Church Abroad  
Syracuse-St.Nicholas  
Diocese

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Your Eminence, Vladika Agafangel!

In connection with the fact that our North American flock is very confounded by what has been occurring lately in the Holy Trinity Parish in Astoria and generally in North America, I am compelled to turn to you in front of all of our brethren arch-pastors with this letter.

I consider the decisions which were accepted by the Synod on 29 October 2015 to be mistaken. The cause of the derailment which has occurred could be the fact that the majority of the bishops, members of the Synod, do not properly understand the situation which has developed lately here in America. The borders of our diocese were changed by the Synod under pressure from you and against my agreement (You demanded that the Synod be transferred to Odessa if the parish in Astoria was not transferred to you, which is wittingly inadmissible for our Church in South America due to the fact that their registration is referenced to a Synod registered in New York). This contradicts in particular the 8th rule of the Third Ecumenical Council. Similarly your hasty decisions regarding the Holy Trinity parish have brought our church life to such a catastrophic condition. During the last session of the Synod I requested that you return the Holy Trinity parish to my rule but you did not heed my words which caused the conflict to increase.

Paragraph 40 of the Regulations of the Russian Church Abroad states: "The Russian Church Abroad is divided into dioceses, the borders of which are determined by the Synod of Bishops subject to a final confirmation by the Sobor of Bishops". Insofar as a final confirmation by the Sobor has not taken place with respect to the current situation, I reserve the right, in the interest of peace in the Church, to make the necessary decisions with respect to the North American flock. In accordance with paragraph 45 of the Regulations of the ROCA "The diocesan bishop, as leader of the local church (diocese) utilizes in accordance with God's institution, the full extent of hierarchical authority, i.e. teaching, performance of Holy Rites, rule and judgement within the boundaries of his diocese".

Also, dear Vladika, during the last session of the synod, Archbishop Sofrony filed a complaint against you to the Church Court. Until a decision has been reached by the

court you cannot continue ruling the church including issuing Ukases. During the period of the court's investigation, the ruling of the church must be transferred to your replacer Bishop Gregory.

All our parishes in America are very closely connected and we cannot look on with indifference while one of the most important parishes of our Church on the North American continent is being destroyed before our eyes.

In order to pacify the conflict which has arisen and to prevent its further development you undoubtedly need to admit the error of your actions and immediately cancel your Ukases regarding prohibition from Holy Communion of the parishioners and members of the church council Vadim Yarmolintz and Larisa Young. To all of us it is obvious that the only reason for the issuance of these Ukases served your striving to exclude them from membership in the parish and deprive them of the ability to occupy any positions on the Parish Council.

At the last session of the Synod you contrived to accuse them without any basis in collaboration with the KGB and in other wrongdoings. Do you really think that protopresbyter Vsevolod of eternal memory, who knew them for many years and was their spiritual father and who blessed of them to be members of the Parish Council, knew them any less than you? Certainly this could not have been the case!

Dear Vladika! According to the words of the Savior: "If your brother should sin against you, go and accuse him privately between you and him; if he should listen to you then you have acquired your brother; if he should not listen to you, bring with you one or two others so that by the words of two or three witnesses every word should stand; if he should not listen to them, tell it to the Church; and if he does not heed even the Church then let him be to you as a pagan and a publican". (Mat. 18: 15-17) I have already appealed to you with a personal letter and now once again, as a brother with the witness of all our arch pastors I call on you to heed the voice of the Church and correct the mistakes which have been committed and thus to prevent the destruction of the Holy Trinity Parish.

With love in Christ, your brother

Archbishop Andronik + Archbishop Andronik

11/24 June 2016

Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas

