

**SS. PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
605 Washington Ave., Manville, NJ 08835  
Voice: 908-685-1452 / fax: 908-685-1074  
Web: [ssppoc.org](http://ssppoc.org) / email: [frjames@ssppoc.org](mailto:frjames@ssppoc.org)

**BULLETIN OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2008**

**SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 7th**  
**12th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 3)**  
**Sunday of the Environment**  
**Sunday Before the Holy Cross**  
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour; Church School Classes  
5:30p.m. Vigil

**MONDAY/SEPTEMBER 8th**  
**NATIVITY OF THE THEOTOKOS**  
**(One of the "12 Great Feasts")**  
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
7:00p.m. Outreach Committee Meeting

**WEDNESDAY/SEPTEMBER 10th**  
7:00p.m. Compline & Akathist to  
**St. Silouan of Athos (Sept. 11th)**

**SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 13th**  
9:30a.m. Akathist; Confession  
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

**SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 14th**  
**13th Sunday After Pentecost (Tone 4)**  
**ELEVATION OF THE HOLY CROSS**  
**(One of the "12 Great Feasts")**  
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy  
Coffee Hour; Church School Classes  
Teen Discussion

Today, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> is a Fast Day. We do not eat  
meat, dairy or fish products. Wine and oil are  
permitted.

**Fasting Days**  
Wednesday, September 10th  
Friday, September 12th  
Sunday, September 14th



**SYNOD MAKES +DMITRI LOCUM  
TENENS, EXPRESSES "GRATITUDE  
TO +HERMAN FOR HIS PRIMATEIAL  
SERVICE"**

The Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, meeting at the OCA Chancery in Oyster Bay Cove, NY, on Thursday, September 4, 2008, issued the following statement:

*"On September 4, 2008, The Holy Synod of Bishops received a letter from His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN. In this letter, His Beatitude asks for Retirement, effective immediately, 'in the best interests of The Orthodox Church in America, and taking into consideration the current condition of my health.'*

*"Effective this date, The Holy Synod of Bishops grants His Beatitude's request to retire from the Office of Metropolitan of All America and Canada of the Orthodox Church in America.*

*"The Holy Synod of Bishops resolves that, in retirement, the title will be 'Former Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada.'*

*"The Holy Synod of Bishops expresses to His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, their fraternal love and gratitude for his primatial service and archpastoral labors.*

*"The Holy Synod of Bishops resolves that His Eminence, DMITRI, Archbishop of Dallas and the South, be Locum tenens of The Orthodox Church in America. In liturgical commemorations, he is to be commemorated as 'His Eminence, DMITRI, Locum tenens of The Orthodox Church in America.'"*

## **+HERMAN TO "VOLUNTARILY" RETIRE, +THEODOSIUS GETS WRIST SLAPPED**

The Synod of the OCA allowed the Primate of the OCA, Metropolitan Herman, to retire voluntarily today, one day after a devastating Report from the Special Investigative Committee exposing his central role in a decade long cover-up of the financial misdeeds by the former OCA Chancellor, Robert Kondratick. The retirement follows a unanimous resolution from the Metropolitan Council that he be *removed from office.* A press release officially announcing the retirement is expected shortly.

At the same time, former Primate of the OCA, retired Metropolitan Theodosius, +Herman's predecessor, received a slap on the wrist, a literal "liturgical" house arrest, for his role in diverting millions into secret, off-the-books bank accounts controlled both he and Kondratick.

According to the OCA announcement:

*"The Holy Synod of Bishops of The Orthodox Church in America, meeting at the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America in Oyster Bay Cove, New York, on September 4, 2008, resolved that His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius be restricted to attending, and celebrating the Divine Services, when invited, at the Church of St. John the Baptist, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, henceforth."*

No word has been given yet to any discipline accorded to the the other three "unindicted" but named episcopal co-conspirators, Archbishop Nathaniel, Archbishop Seraphim and Bishop Nikon, all of whom according to the SIC Report were personally informed of Kondratick's misdeeds in December 2004 but choose to do and say nothing. Likewise, there is no word about any discipline being accorded to the three priests recommended for sanctions by the SIC Report - former OCA Treasurers Fr. Paul Kucynda and Fr. Dmitri Oselinsky and former OCA Comptroller, Fr. Stavros (Stephen) Strikis.

In other news from the Synod today, Archimandrite Jonah (Paffhausen) has been elected by the Synod to be the Bishop of Ft. Worth, to serve as Archbishop Dmitri's Vicar Bishop. Details of his consecration will be forthcoming.

- Mark Stokoe

**Parish Council Meeting**  
September 18th, Thursday at 7:00p.m.

## **September Month – Cheesecake & Jewelry Fundraiser**

You are invited to participate in this annual fundraiser. Extra materials with menu and catalog may be found both on the vestibule stand and on the "Free" table in the lower hall. Our sale ends on September 28th. Thanks for your support. Questions? Please speak with Lisa Keller.

## **Offerings for the week of Sept. 7th**

Olive Oil – in memory of Michael and Justina.

Wine - in thanksgiving and health of Daniel and Maria Torrisi (wedding anniversary).

Flowers – in honor of the Theotokos

Litya Breads - for the health of Mary and Zena.

## **Parish Synodicon – Memory Eternal!**

Sept. 27, 2008 Sophie Wassel (40<sup>th</sup> Day)

Sept. 07, 1966 Fr. Stephen Adamcio  
(Rector 1953-1962)

Sept. 07, 1967 Anthony Cherniak

Sept. 07, 1970 George Rech

Sept. 08, 1925 Paul Petsur

Sept. 08, 1977 Michael Mahalick

Sept. 08, 1985 Adam Rzeszowski

Sept. 09, 1978 Xenia Seminuk

Sept. 11, 1964 Michael Grenther

Sept. 12, 1929 Helen Kotliarchik

Sept. 12, 1971 Pauline Kravitsky

Sept. 12, 1974 Anna Naruta

Sept. 12, 1995 Anna Rudzina

## **Important Events in our OCA**

This past week was dramatic in the life of our church. The full report of the *Special Investigating Committee* (32 pages plus appendix) may be read from the site of the OCA [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org) or accessed through Orthodox Christian for Accountability [www.oceanews.org](http://www.oceanews.org) A Four Page Executive Summary is being distributed with this Sunday's Bulletin. Extra copies may be picked up on the vestibule stand.

Let us pray that a real "housing cleaning" has taken place and that we can be renewed in the essential work of our Church – to worship and proclaim the teachings of our Lord.

## **The Post-Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos**

Is celebrated thru the "leave-taking" on Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>.

# **An Orthodox Perspective**



## **Climate Change: Desecrating the Icon of Creation**

ANTHROPOGENIC (HUMAN CAUSED) CLIMATE CHANGE IS AN INESCAPABLE challenge for humanity and a crisis for all living things. Our response to climate change must be based on the light our Orthodox tradition throws on creation, and upon our feet as we tread the path toward transfiguration or damnation. How can our Orthodox Tradition help us understand and respond to climate change?

If one should summarize in a single sentence the teaching of the Orthodox Tradition on creation from Genesis to Revelation, through the witness of the Cappadocian Fathers, the great Byzantine spiritual writers, Saints Dionysios, Maximos the Confessor and John of Damascus, to Saints Simeon the New Theologian, Gregory Palamas and Nikodemos the Hagiorite, down to the present, that sentence would be:

*"Creation is the love of God for man made visible."*

Love is not truly love unless it expresses itself toward the beloved in thought, word and action. Creation is the incarnation of the thoughts, words (*logoi*) and the providence of God, fashioned as a dialogue of love between Himself and humanity made in His image and likeness. The whole world is a single icon of God (St. John of Damascus). Creation is not a neutral "environment" outside of us; it is the living cosmic icon upon which our lives write in line and color our responses to God's loving invitation to dialogue. Only as we realize that we are inside creation's single icon will we enter into conscious dialogue with God through it, and will we realize what climate change means for the authenticity of the icon and our responsibility in co-creating it.

Our Orthodox faith teaches us that Tradition, the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church, is both always the same and always new. Climate for the earth is akin to Tradition for the Church. Every definition of climate includes the weather conditions that prevail over a long period of time in a place, and the conditions which cause consistent variability. Climate, like tradition, is the ever-same and ever-new support for life. But when certain variables in the living tradition of our Orthodox faith are over-emphasized and others are suppressed, it can create a destructive change in Tradition's capacity to nurture and save. Tradition-change is heresy. Climate, too, is susceptible to our sinfulness. When billions of individual human choices and acts occur not in accord with the God-given cosmic "tradition" of climate, then the life-nurturing capacity of climate becomes unpredictable and destructive. Anthropogenic climate change is a form of blasphemy. Our challenge is to write blessed, not blasphemous, images upon the divine icon of creation.

- Vincent Rossi

## **The Orthodox Fellowship of the Transfiguration**

*Proclaiming the Ecological Mission  
of the Orthodox Church  
as the Reconciliation of  
All Things in Christ*

### **Mission Statement**

The Orthodox Fellowship of the Transfiguration exists to hallow God's Name "on earth as it is in heaven" by seeking the transfiguration of creation through the activation of the Christian calling toward transfigured life.

In the context of the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church, the Fellowship seeks to extend the transfiguring activity of the sacraments into all creation through ascetic practice, the keeping of the commandments and the acquisition of virtue, thus restoring the beauty and integrity of God's earthly temple.

### **Steering Committee**

Fr. Christopher Bender, Aliquippa, PA  
Fr. Terrence Baz, Syracuse, NY  
Fr. John Chryssavgis, Bath, ME  
Fr. D. Sergei Kapral, Wilkes-Barre, PA  
Frederick Krueger, Santa Rosa, CA  
Anne Glynn Mackoul, Princeton, NJ  
Fr. Michael Massouh, St Petersburg, FL  
Fr. Robert Popichak, Carnegie, PA  
Vincent Rossi, Forestville, CA

### **Membership Information**

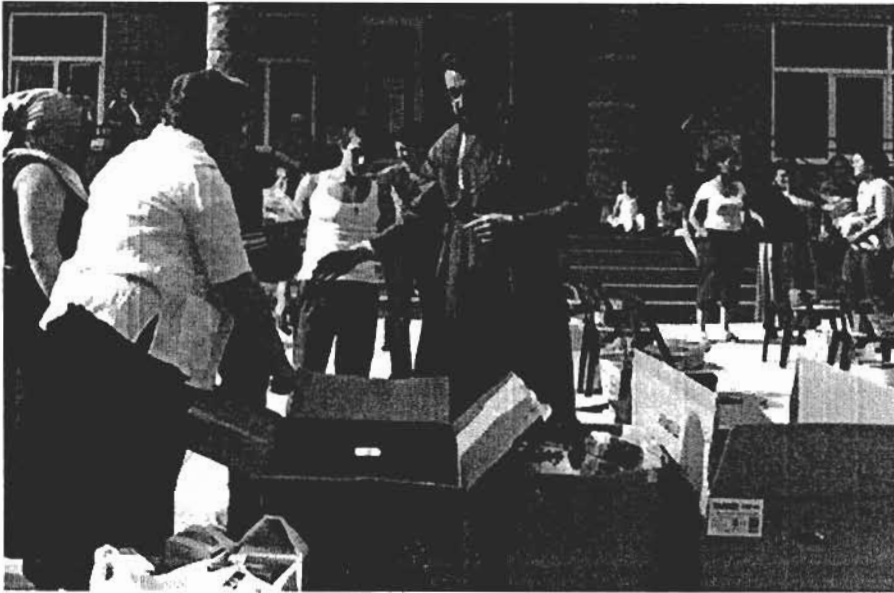
Readers are invited to join the Orthodox Fellowship of the Transfiguration (OFT). The OFT is a SCOPA-endorsed organization serving all canonical jurisdictions. Membership is \$30 per year. Low income or student, \$18. Donations are welcome.

### **Contact Information**

The OFT  
887 Sebastopol Road, Suite A  
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

For further information,  
please view our Website at:  
[www.Orth-Transfiguration.org](http://www.Orth-Transfiguration.org)

## *IOCC Delivers Aid to Families Who Fled to North Ossetia*



### ***The Poor Basket for the Month of September***

Is earmarked for relief work for refugees in Georgia and South Ossetia. Please help our Orthodox Christians in need.

With assistance from the Russian Orthodox Church, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) delivered humanitarian aid to 100 families that fled to North Ossetia (the Russian Federation) from the conflict in Georgia. (photo credit: IOCC Russia)

August 28, 2008

**Baltimore, Maryland** — With assistance from the Russian Orthodox Church, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) delivered humanitarian aid to 100 families that fled to North Ossetia (the Russian Federation) from the conflict in Georgia.

The families are taking shelter in the Alansky Epiphany Monastery in the town of Alagir. IOCC distributed hygiene supplies, linen, towels, kitchen utensils, toys, baby food, and diapers. More than 155,000 people have been displaced from their homes in Georgia and South Ossetia since the conflict began on August 8.

"IOCC's longstanding relationship with the Orthodox churches of Georgia and Russia allows us to serve all who have been victimized by this conflict," says Greg Manzuk, IOCC Emergency Response Coordinator for Georgia and Russia.

IOCC began providing assistance to displaced persons in and around Tbilisi on August 13, assisting more than 1,000 individuals in three distributions. The displaced families included South Ossetians, ethnic Russians, and Georgians. IOCC will expand its assistance to other parts of the country that are receiving less assistance than the capital.



Families who fled the conflict in South Ossetia receive hygiene supplies and other items from IOCC. The families are staying at a women's monastery in North Ossetia, the Russian Federation. (photo credit: IOCC Russia)

**INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES**

# Special Investigating Committee presents report to OCA Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council

*This is a preliminary report because footnotes are not included. That work is in progress.*

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### A. Introduction

The Special Investigating Committee ("SIC") established by a joint resolution of the Holy Synod ("HS") and the Metropolitan Council ("MC") in October 2007 concluded its sevenfold charge concerning the financial affairs of the Orthodox Church in America ("OCA"). The SIC's work resulted in specific conclusions concerning the financial affairs of the OCA, specific recommendations to correct the mistakes, and specific recommendations to help protect financial affairs of the OCA from wrongdoing.

The body of the report provides the detail that lead to the SIC's conclusions regarding Metropolitans Theodosius ("+MT") and Herman ("+MH"), the HS, the MC, the OCA Treasurers, the OCA Comptroller, and the former OCA Chancellor Robert Kondratick (Kondratick). In addition, this report contains specific recommendations concerning actions that should be taken by the HS as *"the supreme canonical authority in the Church"*<sup>3</sup> and the MC as *"the permanent executive body of the Church Administration."*<sup>4</sup>

The SIC's work is based upon 44 interviews, more than 10,000 pages of documents, and more than 4,000 hours of collective work. Additionally, the SIC acknowledges the groundbreaking work of the former Special Commission (SC). The SC's work provided the SIC a foundation from which to begin and this in turn assisted the SIC in completing its work in a timely manner. The SIC's executive summary of conclusions and recommendations concerning the financial affairs of the OCA from 1988 to 2008 follow:

#### 1. Metropolitan Theodosius (Lazor)

- (a) failed to exercise his moral, financial, and fiduciary responsibilities
- (b) abdicated his management responsibilities, thus allowing Kondratick to assume control;
- (c) created and used "discretionary accounts" from external funds donated for other purposes and failed to provide documentation;
- (d) withheld the magnitude of the "discretionary accounts" from the HS;
- (e) actively prevented the auditing of the "discretionary accounts;"
- (f) permitted and participated in the extra-statutory use of the Administrative Committee;
- (g) allowed Kondratick to live rent-free in a house owned by the OCA while approving paying him an annual housing allowance; and
- (h) entered into an unauthorized agreement reimbursing the Kondraticks for \$250,000 for alleged expenses plus interest they incurred on the OCA-owned Chancellor's residence.

#### 2. Metropolitan Herman (Swaiko)

- (a) failed to exercise his moral, financial, and fiduciary responsibilities as Acting Treasurer and Metropolitan by not taking action in response to evidence provided to him of financial improprieties at the Chancery and by the Chancellor as early as September 1999;
- (b) appointed Kondratick as Chancellor in 2002 and again in 2005 with no investigation of allegations made against him for wrongdoing;
- (c) attempted, with initial success, to suppress any investigation into these reported improprieties;
- (d) actively silenced priests and condemned laity seeking to learn the truth of these allegations;
- (e) specifically denied allegations which he knew to be true; and
- (f) blocked the release of the SC report, supposedly on the advice of legal counsel.

### 3. The HS

- (a) acceded to +MT's position that the "discretionary accounts" did not need to be audited, without apparent inquiry into the size, nature, and sources of those accounts;
- (b) failed to demand of the former Chancellor timely, full, and accurate financial reports and audits, and accepted compilation reports in their stead;
- (c) failed in their fiduciary responsibilities to demand an investigation into reports of financial and other improprieties at the Chancery of which they were made aware;
- (d) failed to hold each other mutually accountable on issues pertaining to the entire Church; and
- (e) shortly before the release of this report, "*affirmed their confidence in the leadership of +MH*" and thanked him for his "*perseverance*," thereby giving the impression to some of pre-judging their response to this report.

### 4. The MC

- (a) failed in its fiduciary responsibilities to demand timely, full, and accurate financial reports and audits, and accepted compilation reports instead;
- (b) permitted the exclusion of John Kozey ("Kozey"), Chair of the OCA Audit Committee, from reporting his concerns about financial improprieties to the MC;
- (c) allowed critical responsibilities to be usurped by the Administrative Committee, and failed to require regular reports on Administrative Committee decisions; and
- (d) allowed certain MC members to enforce and encourage a culture of silence and loyalty to the former Chancellor by failing to investigate the emerging grievances raised by some MC members and others.

### 5. The Treasurers

- (a) In the years between Lee Galiotis ("Galiotis") and Father Michael Tassos ("Tassos"), 1989 through 2007, all Treasurers were clergy who lacked requisite financial education and experience, and were all part-time, with the exception of Protodeacon Eric A. Wheeler ("Wheeler");
- (b) none instituted written policies, procedures, processes, and practices; and
- (c) after 1989 until Father Tassos took office, Treasurers followed the unwise policy of pre-signing up to 50 checks at a time, which facilitated financial abuse.

### 6. The Comptroller

- (a) Fr. Steven Strikis ("Strikis") lacked the competencies required of a professional Comptroller. The SIC received testimony that he took pride in his idiosyncratic accounting system which stymied others who relied upon his performance. While Strikis tried, from time to time, to obtain documentation of expenses from Kondratick, he met with overall failure during his tenure as Comptroller.

(b) Kondratick typically failed to provide Strikis with receipts of his spending. He sometimes presented his personal expenses, passing them off as "charity" or "external affairs." Strikis failed to report Kondratick's fiscal wrongdoings and questionable, improper monetary disbursements.

### 7. The Former Chancellor Robert Kondratick

- (a) misused hundreds of thousands of dollars from OCA accounts;
- (b) created unauthorized and unaudited "discretionary accounts," funds from which are either undocumented or untraceable and apparently were used for the payment of personal expenses;
- (c) submitted and received reimbursement for unauthorized personal and family expenses from the OCA;
- (d) lived rent-free in a home owned by the OCA while receiving a housing allowance;
- (e) willfully ignored OCA procedures by seeking and receiving reimbursement for undocumented credit card expenses;
- (f) created a culture of deception, deceit, and covertness, which permeated the Chancery;

- (g) used OCA resources to develop personal loyalty, dependence, and silence on the part of the hierarchy, clergy, and laity through gifts, which included cash, jewelry, meals, travel, lodging, and incidentals;
- (h) authorized numerous undocumented cash withdrawals just under the \$10,000 United States Treasury reporting limit; and
- (i) imported religious and other articles for resale without proper documentation and accounting.

## B. Recommendations

The SIC's recommendations resulting from the conclusions reached about the financial affairs of the OCA are categorized as immediate and long-term. The immediate recommendations are made to begin the process of holding accountable those responsible for wrongdoing. The responsible individuals **must be held accountable**. The long-term recommendations are to help protect the financial affairs of the OCA.

### Immediate Recommendations

1. The retirement, resignation, or removal of +MH and his referral to the HS for discipline prior to the 15th All-American Council (AAC).
2. The referral of +MT to the HS for discipline prior to the 15th AAC.
3. The referral of the former part-time Treasurers Father Paul Kucynda ("Kucynda"), and Father Dimitri Oselinsky ("Oselinsky") and the former Comptroller Strikis to the HS for discipline prior to the 15th AAC. Given his role in bringing the financial improprieties to the attention of the Church and his dedication in bringing them to an end, the SIC makes no recommendation regarding Wheeler.
4. A joint HS and MC resolution of apology and repentance to the Church prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> AAC and a joint resolution of apology to and commendation for John Kozey acknowledging his vigilance and dedication to his fiduciary responsibilities in light of the opposition he encountered.
5. A joint HS and MC resolution of commitment to implement the SIC's recommendations prior to the 15th AAC.
6. To seek the recovery of funds from +MT and Kondratick immediately after receiving this report during the HS and MC joint session, September 3-5, 2008.
7. The OCA Legal Committee and legal counsel to review this report for possible referral to the Nassau County District Attorney and other appropriate authorities no later than September 30, 2008, and report back to the HS and MC on that date.
8. *The publication of the unabridged 13-page SC report on the OCA's website no later than September 5, 2008.*
9. A report by the OCA's external auditors to the HS and the MC regarding the adequacy of the newly established internal financial controls and the release of the same on the OCA's website at the 15th AAC.
10. The establishment by the HS and MC of a committee to oversee and report on the progress of the SIC's recommendations. This committee shall consist of one hierarch chosen by the HS, the three OCA corporate officers, and three MC members selected by the MC during their meeting of September 3-5, 2008.
11. The designation of the MC's Ethics Committee as the OCA's ombudsman, a place for whistle-blowers and others to bring concerns without fear of retribution, beginning at the joint session, September 3-5, 2008.
12. The establishment of a presentation by the OCA's legal counsel to the HS and MC concerning their fiduciary and other legal responsibilities as members of their respective bodies during the 15th AAC and annually thereafter.

*This is a preliminary report because footnotes are not included. That work is in progress.*

13. The MC's selection of a committee during its September 3-5, 2008 meeting to develop a comprehensive crisis management plan, developing and adopting a policy of immediate action within the Church, and a commitment to provide effective communications with members of the Church, while problems, issues, and crises are being addressed. The committee will present a progress report to the HS and MC no later than the Spring 2009 HS and MC sessions.

#### **Long-Term Recommendations**

1. Beginning with calendar year 2008, annual external audits of all OCA bodies and institutions (including Stavropegial institutions) are to be mandated. Additionally, the financial records of the former Diocese of New York/New Jersey shall be audited. The results of these audits will be presented to the HS and MC and published on the OCA's website within 30 days of their presentation.

2. The establishment of qualifications for election as a member of the OCA's Audit Committee during the 15th AAC.

3. The OCA's Annual Audit Committee reports shall be presented to the HS and MC and published on the OCA's website within 30 days of their presentation.

4. The publication of the OCA's annual budget and monthly financial reports on the OCA's website, beginning October 1, 2008.

5. Implement changes to ensure the OCA's website is current with the goal of its becoming a reliable source of Church information, and one to which answers readers' questions submitted to the OCA, beginning no later than January 1, 2009.

6. The establishment at the 15th AAC of a long-term strategic planning committee to review: (a) the relationship of the dioceses to the Central Church; (b) the appropriate division of responsibilities and funding between the dioceses and the Central Church; (c) the separate and joint roles and responsibilities of the HS and MC in the governance of the Church; (d) the role, functions, structure, and funding of the Central Church Administration and its geographic location; and (e) the development, documentation, and implementation of sound business policies, procedures, processes, and practices. The committee will conduct a comprehensive review of *The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America* and all HS, MC, and Chancery policies to ensure accountability, openness, and communication to the Church-at-large. The committee will report to the HS and MC during their Spring and Fall sessions, beginning no later than the Spring 2009 sessions, and semi-annually thereafter.

#### FROM THE ORDER OF ELECTING AND CONSECRATING A BISHOP

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*"I promise also to preserve the peace of the Church..."*

*"And I promise to rule the flock committed unto me in the fear of God and in devoutness of life..."*

*"And all those things, my bounden duty, which I have this day promised in word, I also promise to perform in deed unto my uttermost breath, for the sake of the covenanted good things to come. And may God, who seeth my heart, be the witness to my vow."*

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