



Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon for Steward Sunday

November 19, 2017

To the Venerable Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, Monastics, Distinguished Stewards, and the entire family of the Orthodox Church in America:

The theme chosen for the Orthodox Church in America's 19th All-American Council is "For the Life of the World." As we seek to better identify where and how to expand the mission of Orthodoxy in North America, this theme will help us to identify the gifts that we have to offer to others, to the world around us, and ultimately to God Himself. Father Alexander Schmemmann, in his classic work of the same title, reminds us that man's primary vocation is to be a priest of creation who offers up all of his life to God in thanksgiving. It is time for us to begin reflecting on this theme and to ask ourselves in what way each of us can personally offer our lives to God.

When I reflect upon the witness of the Orthodox Church in America, I see a multitude of Orthodox Christian individuals and communities striving to worship God and serve their neighbors. Those individuals and communities may sometimes feel isolated in their labors, but they are strengthened by the many ministry departments in the OCA which provide a sense of common purpose to those individual efforts.

The Department of Youth, Young Adults and Campus Ministry and the Department of Christian Education provide our young people with an opportunity to stay connected to the Church and to share their lives with their peers in an Orthodox context. The excellent work of Dr. David Drillock and his team in the Department of Liturgical Music and Translation has provided training to more than ninety choir directors over the past few years, in addition to providing the necessary music resources for our parish choirs.

The Department of Evangelization's Mission Planting Grant Program, over the course of its existence, has provided over one million dollars to plant, grow and sustain mission parishes across North America. And, through the Department of Pastoral Life and the Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid, helpful resources are provided to help strengthen our parish clergy and their families, as well as the faithful, so that everyone within the community may continue in their work as servants of Christ.

Metropolitan Tikhon, Primate

All of this excellent work is made possible through your prayers, your sacrificial labors and your gifts to the Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America. The Stewards exists for the sole purpose of helping the Church offer the labors of her faithful to God in thanksgiving.

Today, as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America and on behalf of the Holy Synod of Bishops, I invite you to join me and thousands of other faithful on this Stewards Sunday in making a free will gift to the Stewards of the Orthodox Church in America. And please accept my gratitude for all that you do each day to build up the life of the Orthodox Church in America.

May the Lord continue to grant you every good thing for your salvation and for the growth of His Body, the Church.

With love in Christ.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a cross symbol followed by the name 'Tikhon' in a cursive script.

+TIKHON
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada