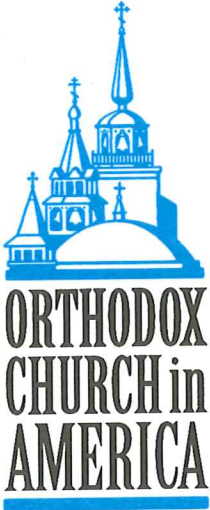


August 13, 2015  
No. 08/018

His Eminence, The Most Reverend Michael  
Archbishop New York, Diocese of New York and New Jersey  
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Your Eminence, Archbishop Michael,

I am writing at this time to express my gratitude to you and the clergy and lay delegates from the Diocese of New York and New Jersey and for your leadership, dedication and the selfless offering of your talents and gifts to our 18th All American Council. Please allow me to congratulate Your Eminence for your inspirational video presentation highlighting the work of the Diocese and the excellent work being accomplished for the sake of our youth. May our Lord continue to bless these and all the endeavors of the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey.

I am sure you will agree that this Council marked a positive turn in the life of the Orthodox Church in America. Clergy, monastics, laity, youth and even those not present have expressed enthusiasm for the revitalization of our community as it strives to live as a truly local church here in North America.

Our successful gathering in Council would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of members from your diocese. I would like to give personal thanks to Archpriest Peter Baktis for his work as Clerg Vice-Chairperson of the Council; Archpriest David Cowan for his work on the Council Secretariat; Priest Leonid Schmidt for his work with the Credentials Team; Priest John Diamantis for his work on the Resolutions Team; and to Matushka Tamara Skvir for her work on the Tellers Team. Finally, please express my sincere gratitude to all the members of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey for all they have done and continue to do to expand the mission.

With love in the Lord,

+ TIKHON  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada