ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
DIOCESE OF NEW YORK & NEW JERSEY
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Beloved Brothers of the Altar and Faithful of the Diocese:

At the 2025 Diocesan Assembly held in Endicott, New York, unanimous approval was given for the 2026 Diocesan Charity Initiative, "Operation: Buffalo" – a revitalization project for Saints Peter and Paul Church in Buffalo, New York. Saints Peter and Paul is the oldest continuous parish in the history of the Diocese, a faithful outpost of Orthodoxy serving the Niagara Region since its founding in 1894.

You may recall that in 2011, the very first Diocesan "Operation" was undertaken, also at SS. Peter and Paul Church in Buffalo. At that time, significant renovations and repairs were needed to the interior spaces of the temple, the rectory, and the fellowship hall. Fifteen years have passed, and the parish has grown in zeal and in numbers… but as with any building that is nearly a century old, more renovations are needed.

Most especially, the North Tower of the church is in urgent need of repair – the tower which houses the bell that Saint Tikhon of Moscow consecrated in 1903, during his tenure as ruling hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Diocese of the Aleutians and North America. Without the needed repair of this tower, there would be more significant damage to the central dome, the exterior of the temple, and the interior ceiling, walls, and icons. Our fundraising goal to accomplish the needed repairs is $75,000.

With Operation Buffalo having been adopted as our Diocesan charity for this year, I am requesting that every parish take up a collection to contribute to the costs of this endeavor. I ask that each parish priest announce this appeal on three successive weekends; and whatever you collect, make a check out from your church to the ***Diocese of New York and New Jersey*** – writing in the Memo line, "Operation Buffalo" – and forward it to the **Office of the Dean of New York State:** Archpriest Alexey Karlgut, SS. Peter and Paul Church, 210 Hill Avenue, Endicott, NY 13760. If September would be a more promising season to run this three-Sunday collection with parishioners returning from travels, then you may take the collection then.

Parish organizations, and individuals blessed with financial means, are also encouraged to help. Individual donations by check may also be made payable to the ***Diocese of New York and New Jersey*** – writing in the Memo line, "Operation Buffalo" – and forwarded to the **Office of the Dean of New York State:** Archpriest Alexey Karlgut, SS. Peter and Paul Church, 210 Hill Avenue, Endicott, NY 13760.

Online donations are also gratefully accepted. These may be made via this link at the Diocesan website: https://nynjoca.org/operation-buffalo-2026 .

Beloved of our Diocesan Family: Thank you in advance for helping this venerable parish overcome the difficulties of time and northern winters. I ask the Lord to bless you in return for your generosity of time, talent and treasure, ensuring many more years of worship in this glorious temple and fulfilling the words of the Psalmist: *"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'"* (Psalm 122:1).

With my prayers, my blessings, and my love,

+Archbishop Michael

Archbishop of New York and New Jersey