



The Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia

September 29, 2017

Dear Rev. Frs., Matushki and faithful,

Christ is in our midst! As you may remember when Metropolitan Tikhon was your Diocesan Bishop, the process began to officially divide the property of the St Tikhon's Children's Home. Once that process is completed, 1.93 acres will be gifted to the Diocese by the Children's Home Board and the remaining property, approximately 5 acres and buildings will be merged with St. Tikhon's Monastery. Hopefully, we are near the end of that process and will finally have title in October.

We had a certified appraisal done 3 years ago (\$426,500) and Abbot Fr Sergius also had one done a few months ago (\$411,000), but it failed to consider our change from electric baseboard heat to three new high efficiency propane gas furnaces and new high efficiency air conditioners at a cost of approximately \$26,000. Although we have not agreed on a price with the monastery, the assistant attorney general for the state of Pennsylvania was firmly opposed to such a transaction. Additionally, I have met with three realty companies and four realtors and discussed marketing the property, commission and the possibility of a bonus for a quick sale and / or a sale above a specific price point. At our Diocesan Council meeting yesterday, we discussed this quite thoroughly and will proceed as follows:

- A. Once we have the deed and our attorney officially files it, we will then attempt to agree on a price with Fr Sergius, pending approval by the assistant attorney general.
- B. Given approval from the assistant attorney general could be a very lengthy process, possibly taking years we will go ahead and list the property. Therefore, whether we agree on a price or not we will list the property with a realtor for \$425,000.00, (If we agreed on a price with the Monastery, it will be listed with the caveat that should the monastery receive approval from the assistant attorney general, we have the right to take it off the market and enter into a private sale).
- C. We are also forming a search committee and need volunteers to serve on this committee for a preliminary investigation of the most appropriate location for the new Diocesan Center, within the Philadelphia or Frackville Deaneries (Greater Philadelphia; Bethlehem and the Greater Harrisburg areas). The variables that need to be considered are as follows:
 - i. Location close to our parishes;
 - ii. Easily accessible to the main arteries connecting our Diocesan parishes;
 - iii. A house / offices not to exceed the expected proceeds from our current property;
 - iv. Possibility of Zoning restrictions;
 - v. Level of crime and types of crime in the area (Proximity to high crime area and potential for decline of market value;
 - vi. Market trends in the proposed area, i.e., are prices increasing or decreasing;
 - vii. Additional Home owner Association fees and projected costs of maintaining the property.

If you would like to volunteer to assist with the process, please contact the Diocesan Office. *Please be assured we want to move forward in the most transparent manner possible and have the confidence and support of our clergy and faithful as we make decisions that are in the very best interest of the Diocese.*

Yours unworthy father in Christ,

+ Mark

+ Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

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