

**METROPOLITAN COUNCIL REPORT TO 50TH DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY
THE DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
SATURDAY, JANUARY 18TH, 2014
ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH, BETHLEHEM**

V. Reverend James Weremedic
Diocesan Clergy Representative
David M. Yeosock, PE
Diocesan Lay Representative

The Metropolitan Council Representatives of the Diocese attended the Spring and Fall Joint Session of the Metropolitan Council and the Lesser Synod. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, presided and the agenda for the council focused on Financial Development and Strategic Planning. The good news is that our assessments are dropping by motions carried both on the Diocesan and Central Church levels. In light of the reduced assessments, there is excitement about the future and how things will be funded. Our Chancellor and Diocesan Treasurer traveled to a third joint meeting of their counterparts from other diocese and had some frank discussions about the demographic and geographic consequences of a one size fits all approach across the Church. Each diocese's approach is different and what works with one may not in the other. The process is slowly evolving and patience has been the key attribute of the funding task that lies ahead.

The Financial Development Committee is working to solicit funds from Church members and has rolled out a stepwise approach to providing additional incomes in the form of pledges and donations. This will be an education process that may take some time in our Diocese; but we have committed to the 2018 date. The motion from the floor of the 17th AAC also has a much shorter fuse and is forcing action as well. The response to the Stewards of the Orthodox Church fund raising appeal was positive yet it did not reflect the enthusiasm anticipated by the committee. We are grateful for all the people who responded generously and we will continue to encourage our dioceses, parishes and individuals to participate more fully in the funding of the Central Church Administration.

The legal issues discussed in Executive Session have declined considerably and the focus of the meetings are now turning to the important issues and topics that need to be in place if we are to grow the Church. The Metropolitan Council agreed to retain Thaddeus Wojcik, Esquire as General Council for the OCA and he, along with the legal team, have donated considerable time, effort and attention to this arena. A verbal report will be made during the council and the representatives will answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully Submitted
January 13, 2014