

ARCHPASTORAL ADDRESS OF HIS EMINENCE,
THE MOST REVEREND KIPRIAN,
ARCHBISHOP OF PHILADELPHIA AND PENNSYLVANIA

Venerable Fathers and Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Members of the Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania:

CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST!

I welcome each and every one of you to our Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk on this, the occasion of our Diocesan Assembly.

In the twelve months that have passed since our last Diocesan Assembly, much has taken place in our Diocese, as we continue on our pilgrimage to that Heavenly City to which we are all called in Christ.

This year of unprecedented growth for the Diocese has seen the establishment of three diocesan missions: St. Herman's Church in Shillington (July, 1973); St. Herman's Church in Delaware County (August, 1973); and Holy Trinity Church in Doylestown (October, 1973). Due to the success of our diocesan mission collection, we are able to financially subsidize each of these missions every month.

The parishes of the Diocese, too, are expanding, and new buildings continue to be erected, to the glory of God and of Christ's Church. Last August 19, I blessed ground for the new St. Stephen's Church, Philadelphia. On September 7 I shall consecrate this church, and on November 10 I shall consecrate a chapel in St. Stephen's Church, to be named after St. Michael the Archangel. Also, on April 28 of this year, Bishop Herman and I blessed the new rectory of Holy Resurrection Cathedral.

As to the clergy of the Diocese, we must sorrowfully record the passing of the Rev. Nicholas Muzika. At the time of his death, Fr. Muzika had been residing in Dunmore, in retirement. He was laid to rest in our St. Tikhon's Cemetery on December 8, 1973, Bishop Herman officiating.

We are happy to record the elevation of Fr. Gregory Stefchak to the rank of Rt. Rev. Archpriest. Fr. Stefchak was awarded the mitre on the occasion of his 50th anniversary in Holy Priesthood, at Divine Liturgy in his parish of Holy Dormition, St. Clair, on May 11, 1974.

And, we now have the following newly-ordained clergy serving in our Diocese. The Rev. John Adamcio, now serving in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, was ordained deacon by Bishop Herman on October 14, 1973, and he served in our diocese until his ordination to the priesthood by Bishop Herman at Holy Trinity Church, Wilkes-Barre, on the Day of Pentecost, June 2, 1974, at which time he was assigned to the Pittsburgh Diocese. The Rev. Theodore Boback was ordained deacon by myself in St. John the Baptist Church, Edwardsville, on June 24, 1973. I ordained Fr. Boback to the priesthood here at St. Tikhon's Monastery on September 10, 1973, and I installed him as acting Rector of St. Basil's Church, Simpson, on September 16. I ordained the Rev. Thomas Jones to the diaconate December 19, 1973, at St. Tikhon's Monastery. I ordained him priest in St. Michael's Church, Old Forge, on April 21, 1974. Also for the Diocese of Pittsburgh, I ordained the Rev. Andrew Matychak deacon on November

25, and priest on December 2, 1973, at St. Tikhon's Monastery. On October 14, 1973, I ordained the Rev. Michael Sekela to the priesthood at St. Tikhon's Monastery. On June 8, 1974, Bishop Herman ordained the Rev. Dionysius Swencki to the priesthood, at St. Tikhon's Monastery. On November 25, 1973, at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre, the Rev. Peter Telencio was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Herman, and Bishop Herman ordained him priest at St. Tikhon's Monastery on January 26, 1974. On November 11, 1973, at St. Tikhon's Monastery, I ordained to the priesthood the Rev. Dimitri Voytilla.

And, during this past year, Fr. Sekela was assigned to St. Andrew's Church, Baltimore; Fr. Telencio to St. Nicholas Church, Coatesville; and Fr. Voytillasto St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem.

Many parish visitations were conducted by Bishop Herman and myself, especially during the season of Great Lent. Our Sunday of Orthodoxy service held March 3 in Coaldale, our Lenten Mission held April 3 at St. Tikhon's Monastery, and our traditional service of the Washing of Feet, held April 11 at the Monastery, were very well attended, as were the Lenten Missions in the various parishes. Also, this was the year of the 70th annual Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery, and an unprecedented crowd estimated at 14,000 made it a truly memorable occasion in the life of our Diocese and Church.

And so we see from all of the above that our Diocese of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania continues to enjoy the rich blessings of Almighty God, leading the way in spiritual and material growth for the entire Orthodox Church in America as we continue to build new churches, establish new missions, and receive new converts to Orthodoxy. With the continued grace of God, and the cooperation of our Faithful Flock, we shall continue along the path to that spiritual perfection to which Christ unceasingly calls us in his Holy Orthodox Church.

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KIPRIAN, Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Pennsylvania