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SVOTS welcomes 8 hierarchs for discussions about Seminary life



On Wednesday and Thursday, eight hierarchs from three Orthodox churches visited St. Vladimir's Seminary (SVOTS) to get a closer look at the Seminary's operations, curriculum, and future plans: Metropolitan Tikhon, Archbishops Benjamin, Melchisedek, Michael, and Alexander, and Bishop Paul from the Orthodox Church in America (OCA); Bishop John from the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America (AOCANA); and Bishop Saba of the Georgian Apostolic Orthodox Church in North America.



The hierarchs were officially invited to campus by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon at the request of the Seminary. The group met with Seminary President Archpriest Chad Hatfield and other faculty and staff over the two days.

At the opening session His Beatitude welcomed the bishops and thanked them for taking time out of their busy schedules to discuss the state of residential theological education in the Orthodox Church in America. His Beatitude reminded his brother bishops of the responsibility and the important role the Church as a whole (not simply individuals, but dioceses and parishes) has in the sacred enterprise of theological education.

“Our seminaries have been, and remain, crucial to the formation and training of clergy and lay leaders and this needs to remain a reality. However, one of the main burdens weighing on the seminaries is maintaining necessary residential programs with present realities,” said Metropolitan Tikhon in his opening address to the bishops. “I look forward to benefiting from the unique insight, expertise, and wisdom of from my brothers gathered here, as we search for ways to strengthen theological education as we seek to form a coherent vision and identity for the seminary as a center of theological education.”



Addressing the bishops Archpriest Chad Hatfield said, “We are very much interested in working closely with hierarchs to give them a better sense of how seminarians from their respective jurisdictions are being trained, as well as to give them a platform for their essential input and cooperation,”

Due to scheduling conflicts, not all hierarchs invited were able to be present for the discussions. The Seminary plans to continue working with them, however, as well as all hierarchs who have seminarians at St. Vladimir’s or who are interested in sending students in the future.

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