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The Renaissance Fund Awards Multi-Year Grant to Metropolis of Chicago and St. Iakovos Retreat Center



Generous grant will allow for relief of parish financial commitments to the Retreat Center, to help parishes revitalize stewardship efforts and will also provide future assistance.

KANSASVILLE, WI, June 8, 2020 – The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago and its

ministry, the St. Iakovos Retreat Center, announced the acceptance of a generous, multi-year grant of approximately \$500,000 from The Renaissance Fund, a charitable not-for-profit organization located in Chicago, Illinois.

As part of the grant agreement, parishes will be relieved of their 2020 and 2021 annual financial commitments to the Retreat Center that were previously approved at the 2019 Clergy Laity Assembly. While continued support for Retreat Center is welcomed, parishes are encouraged to use their Retreat Center financial commitments to support charitable and community causes, or to support other parishes in financial distress.

“Through our strategic planning process, and especially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, our Metropolis has been hard at work to revitalize what it means to be a steward of the Church,” said His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael. “We are truly grateful to The Renaissance Fund, as its support will help our parishes become less reliant on summer festivals and other transactional fundraising efforts. The grant provides the opportunity for parishioners to be spiritually, socially and financially vested in the Church and in each other.”

The grant to the Retreat Center includes a financial commitment of \$160,000 in 2020 and a financial matching commitment of up to \$160,000 for each of the years 2021 and 2022. The Renaissance Fund grant to the Metropolis covers the cost of a stewardship educational program offered through Indiana University’s Lake Institute on Faith and Giving for designees of the Metropolis of Chicago, its parishes, and the Retreat Center. The educational program is designed to help parishes focus on developing stewardship, tithing, and gifting models. Dates for participation will be determined in 2021.

“The Renaissance Fund’s grant is a gift and a blessing at a time when both are needed,” said Chrysanthy Tiggas, Director of the St. Iakovos Retreat Center. “We are humbled and honored that a forward-thinking organization like The Renaissance Fund is interested in engaging and challenging us to find new and creative ways to fulfill the Retreat Center’s mission.”

The grant requires SIRC to hire a professional development director; create a three-year strategic plan and make SIRC available to not-for-profit or community groups for an agreed-to length of time, free of charge or at substantially reduced fees. To date, the Retreat Center has fulfilled or made significant progress toward all these commitments.

“It’s not often an opportunity is presented whose promise is growth and

transformation. For that reason alone, we are thrilled to be partnering with The Renaissance Fund,” said John Balourdos, President of the Retreat Center’s Board of Directors. “We pledge to answer The Renaissance Fund’s generosity with our own commitments and with service to the Retreat Center’s guests, the parishes of the Metropolis, and our broader communities so they can grow and flourish.”

ABOUT THE ST. IAKOVOS RETREAT CENTER

The St. Iakovos Retreat Center is a 137-acre facility located in western corner of Kenosha county in beautiful Kansasville, WI. Settled on the 11-acre Friendship Lake with over 50 acres of pinewood forest. The St. Iakovos Retreat Center is a unique facility offering a quiet setting for overnight retreats and camps, as well as a joyful environment for celebrations such as weddings and family reunions.

[Source](#)