

Metropolis of Chicago Launches a New Women-Led Initiative



Metropolis of Chicago launches new, women-led initiative to expand ministries at the parish level

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago announced today the launch of a new initiative, the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women, which seeks to recognize, promote, and amplify the individual and collective voices of women in service of Christ and His Church. Under the initiative, a two-year fellowship has been established to which women across the Metropolis can apply to receive funding for the development and implementation of a new ministry in their home parishes.

Fellowship applications for the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women will be available in October. Applicants who are selected will attend a retreat in spring 2021, and ministries will launch in September of subsequent years.

Women who are selected will:

- Participate in a 2-day workshop where they will develop a preliminary proposal for a ministry based on the needs of their parish;
- Collaborate with ministry mentors to refine initiatives and evaluate benchmark progress toward goals, assessing effectiveness of programming
- Present best practices to the Metropolis and the cohort of fellows at an end-of-year reception

Upon completion of their fellowship, individuals will receive the blessing of His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael into the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women.

“The Scriptures present the Myrrhbearing Women as loyal and courageous disciples of Christ. They followed the Lord during His public ministry; they went to the tomb to care for His Body; and they shared the Good News of His Resurrection with the world. Like them, the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women of the Metropolis of Chicago will offer young girls and adult women bold examples of Christian service

and discipleship for the 21st century,” said His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael.

The Order of the Myrrhbearing Women is designed to promote and enhance the leadership and spiritual growth of women throughout the Metropolis of Chicago by creating places for women across all stages of life to continue to care for the Body of Christ. Core objectives of The Order include increasing the number of women who serve in leadership roles in their parishes; enhancing the visibility of their contributions; creating new ministries that facilitate the spiritual and personal development of women; and encouraging intergenerational engagement.

“We have benefitted from the example set by countless women in our parishes and in our families. They have shaped our desire and commitment to draw closer to Christ as His servant-leaders. The Order of the Myrrhbearing Women offers its members the opportunity, through the structure and resources extended to this new alliance, to further encourage and cultivate the potential of women within the Church,” said Joan Berg, inaugural member of the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women.

The inaugural members of the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women were selected by His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael in recognition for their dedication to the Orthodox Church, tireless work to establish the new order over the last year, and their commitment to oversee the growth of the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women.

The inaugural members include:

- Anne Marie Adams, Saints Peter & Paul Church, Glenview, Illinois
- Joan Tolios Berg, Holy Apostles Church, Westchester, Illinois
- Efrosine (Lori) Chiampas, Saint Demetrios Church, Chicago, Illinois
- Georgia Loukas Demeros, Holy Taxiarchai and Saint Haralambos Church, Niles, Illinois
- Anna Kallis, Saints Peter and Paul Church, Glenview, Illinois
- Vicki Pappas Karl, Saints Peter & Paul Church, Glenview, Illinois
- Cindy Karos, Saint Mary's Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Dr. Valerie Karras, Saint Nicholas Church, St. Louis, Missouri
- Mary Ann Langas, Saints Peter and Paul Church, Glenview, Illinois
- Lainey Manos, Saint Demetrios Church, Elmhurst, Illinois
- Rachael Pontikes, Saint George Church, Chicago, Illinois
- Mary Scott, Saint Andrew Church, South Bend, Indiana and Saint Sophia Church, Elgin, Illinois
- Chrysanthy Tiggas, Saint Mary's Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Dr. Gayle Woloschak, Saints Peter and Paul Church, Palos Park, Illinois

Additionally, Fr. Stephen Bithos and Fr. Timothy Sas will serve as spiritual advisors to the Order.

His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael will preside at an Investiture of the Myrrhbearing Women in 2021. A date will be announced in the coming weeks. For more information about the Order of the Myrrhbearing Women, please visit: chicago.goarch.org/myrrh.

About the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago

Tracing its roots back to 1923, the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago is the diocese of Greek Orthodox faithful in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, northern Indiana, and southeastern Missouri, consisting of 58 parishes and two monastic communities. The Metropolis is one of nine regions in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and is presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael. The general offices of the Metropolis are temporarily located in Lombard, Illinois. For more information and to get involved, visit our website, join a Strategic Planning Team, and sign up to receive Metropolis news.

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