

## Consecration Address of Archimandrite Luke as Bishop of Syracuse



Your Eminence, Very Most Reverend Master Metropolitan!  
Your Eminences, Your Grace, divinely wise archpastors!

"Fear and trembling are come upon me, and darkness hath covered me."  
– Psalm 54:6  
"I am straitened on every side."  
– Daniel 13:22

With fear and trembling in my heart, with great turmoil I come to your summons, for if according to the words of the Holy Hierarch John Chrysostom, few priests will be saved, what can await me in the future life?

By God's will and the decision of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad, though clearly unworthy, I am called to this obedience of hierarchical

service, and I return thanks, I accept, and say nothing contrary thereto.

I have seen the Hand of God, Providence, leading me throughout my life. All of my ancestors hail from the same region of Carpathian Russia. My paternal grandfather organized parishes under the Russian Church when he arrived in America. It was he who brought me into the altar for the first time to serve when I was four years old. On my mother's side, there are many generations of priests and four bishops, one who was a confessor for Orthodoxy against the Uniate heresy. My parents guided with simple Christian wisdom, and my father piously and conscientiously worked out his salvation as a funeral director, by burying all of the Orthodox Christians in Philadelphia. The memory of death was always present at home with the fragrance of incense and the singing of panihidas.

While studying at a local university since 1970, I attended services at the monastery, and in 1975 I entered the monastery with the firm intention to become a monk. My first years were spent studying in seminary and working in the garden under strict obedience to Monk Germogen. I was able to learn much about the spiritual life, piety, and Church life from many of the fathers who are now reposed. This was especially true of my almost daily conversations for guidance about life in the monastery and seminary with Metropolitan Laurus, who was exceedingly patient, never hastily making decisions and always seeking first a blessing from God. Their advice and wisdom have guided me to this day. Although I never wrote any of their words down on paper, they remain in my heart. However, now I will write this down. Once, when out of vanity, I mentioned to Hieromonk Hilarion, now Metropolitan, that "St. Luke, my Heavenly patron, had so many talents to emulate. He was a missionary, apostle, historian, physician, iconographer, and martyr." Vladyka responded, "All true, but you must emulate his holiness!"

Immediately after finishing seminary, Vladyka Laurus gave me the obedience of teaching. Gradually, my involvement increased both in teaching – which allowed me to further my own education – and in administrative duties. Although I never sought to be a clergyman, and any form of administrative or office work is the complete opposite of my natural inclinations – not my will, but God's will has been done in me, including this present, very awe-inspiring day. Providence has also arranged that this consecration take place on the Feast of the Three Hierarchs, the Heavenly patrons of our seminary. Their God-inspired writings and lives are for us the source of guidance for our spiritual improvement and advise us in making decisions concerning Church life in our present stormy and confusing circumstances.

Although "I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me" (Psalm 50:5), yet my



hope is expressed in the words of the Holy Apostle Paul: “For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God...” (II Cor. 13:4). I hope that, through the mercy of the Most Holy Trinity and by the prayers and intercessions of the Most Holy Mother of God, the Three Holy Hierarchs and all the saints, I will be given the strength to carry out this new obedience in a worthy manner, and that it will be to my salvation and the salvation of those for whom I must answer at the Dread Judgment, uttering the words of the Apostle, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing” (II Tim. 4:7-8).

Amen.



(Source: eadiocese.org)