

Metropolitan Tikhon addresses 225 Anniversary Celebration of Mission to North America



The 225th Anniversary of the Mission to North America—marking the 1794 arrival in Kodiak, AK of Saint Herman of Alaska and his companion missionaries from Russian's Valaam Monastery—was celebrated at the Mother of God Church, Princeton NJ, on May 11-12, 2019. The gathering was cosponsored by Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary (SVOTS).

The weekend opened with the celebration of the Akathistos Hymn in honor of the North American Saints, at which His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, presided. Concelebrating were Archpriest Peter Baktis, Rector of the Mother of God Church; Archpriest Chad Hatfield, SVOTS President; and clergy from the New Jersey Deanery. A symposium followed, during which a historical account of the Mission to North America underscored the foundation for understanding the gift given to Orthodox Christians today in North America.

The highlight of the symposium was the inaugural presentation of Metropolitan Tikhon, who explained his vision for the future of the Orthodox Church in America, which carries the gift of the legacy given to us 225 years ago, in his 2018 publication, *Of What Life Do We Speak? Four Pillars for the Fulfillment of the Apostolic Work of the Church*. Jim Winkler, President and General Secretary of the National Council of Churches USA, then addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of "Of What Life Do We Speak" as a model for other Christian communions. The symposium ended with a time for questions and answers, Great Vespers and a reception.

On Sunday, May 12, Metropolitan Tikhon concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, host hierarch. A banquet followed at Princeton's historic Nassau Inn, at which Dr. Paul Meyendorff spoke, relating the 225th legacy of the first Mission to the granting of Autocephaly to the OCA in 1970. In particular, he highlighted the contributions of his father, the late Archpriest John Meyendorff, in the process of Autocephaly, the 50th Anniversary of which will be celebrated in 2020.

Audios of the weekend's proceedings are available from Ancient Faith Ministries.

— Source: [Orthodox Church in America](#)