

The Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad convenes



On June 27-29, 2019, the Archbishop Anthony (Medvedev) Memorial Library at the headquarters of the Western American Diocese hosted a regular session of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, which coincided with the 25th-anniversary celebrations of the canonization of St John of Shanghai and San Francisco the Miracle-worker. The building was once an orphanage dedicated to St Tikhon of Zadonsk, which houses a chapel to the saint, as well as the humble residence of St John (Maximovich), the great archpastor of the Russian diaspora. Here, St John would bring the Bloodless Sacrifice “on behalf of all and for all.”

Participating in this session were: His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia; His Eminence Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Germany, Vice President; His Eminence Archbishop Kyrill of San Francisco and Western America, Secretary; His Grace Bishop Irenei of London and Western Europe; His Grace Bishop Theodosius of

Seattle and His Grace Bishop Nicholas of Manhattan, Deputy Secretary. The First Hierarch opened the meeting by greeting the hierarchs and congratulating them on the coming celebration of the 25th anniversary of the glorification of St John, wishing them Divine aid in their work.

Hearing the report by Vladyka Nicholas on the repose, funeral and burial of the late Archbishop Alypy (Gamanovich), long-time Ruling Bishop of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America, who died on Holy Pascha, the Synod members joined in prayer for his repose.

Hearing a report on the Fund for Assistance to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, the Synod of Bishops invoked Divine blessing upon the members of the organization, expressing to its Board of Directors and dedicated volunteers its gratitude for their labors in providing necessary aid and support to the clergy, ecclesiastical institutions, missions, parishes and monasteries of the part of the Russian Church located abroad.

Reporting on the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, Vladyka Mark told of the recently de-mined parcel of land belonging to ROCOR on the Jordan River, where the need now arises to draw people who wish to devote their spiritual life at the site. The Mission hopes that by renovating the site, that divine services can resume there and attract pilgrims who wish to immerse themselves in the waters of the Jordan River.

The Synod heard a report by Bishop Irenei and decided to unite the dioceses of Great Britain and Western Europe under his omophorion, granting him the title "Bishop of London and Western Europe." In view of his departure to that diocese, Vladyka Irenei was relieved of his oversight of the St Silouan-Mt Athos Monastery in Sonora, CA, appointed Hegumen James (Corazza) as its head, granting him the rank of archimandrite.

Hearing a report by Archbishop Gabriel on the work of Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY, and its seminary, the Synod decreed: "To confirm Nicolas Schidlovsky as Dean of the main theological school of the Russian Church Abroad, elected by the Board of Directors of Holy Trinity Seminary."

With the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Peter of Chicago and Mid-America, Protopriest Serafim Gan reported on the work of the organizing committee for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. The archpastors blessed the concept of having a jubilee icon painted, and approved the text of the announcement of a competition of icon-painting, calling

upon each ruling bishop to organize celebrations in their own dioceses next year, and to dedicate youth and music conferences, diocesan assemblies, clergy retreats, symposia and other church events to the anniversary. Bishop Nicholas proposed a plan for memorial panaghias and pectoral crosses to be made for the year 2020. The Synod of Bishops also decided to convene a Council of Bishops on the jubilee, appointing as members of the pre-Council committee: Archbishop Gabriel, Chairman; Bishop Irenei; Bishop Theodosius and Bishop Nicholas, Secretary. The Council of Bishops will convene at St Elizabeth Convent in Buchendorf, Germany, on June 10-15, 2020.

The Synod of Bishops also discussed candidates for the episcopacy, administrative and financial matters, and ecclesiastical awards for clergy and laity in each diocese.

The session of the Synod of Bishops concluded with the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the canonization of the “Abbot of the Russian Diaspora,” St John of Shanghai and San Francisco the Miracle-worker, on June 28-29, with all-night vigil and Divine Liturgy celebrated at the Cathedral of the Mother of God “Joy of All Who Sorrow,” in the presence of the Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God “of the Sign,” and the relics of St John.

– Source: synod.com