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April 1, 2024

VIA E-MAIL TRANSMISSION TO:

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Mr. Matthew Oster
Wolf, Rifkin, Shapiro, Schulman & Rabkin, LLP
11400 West Olympic Boulevard, 9th Floor,
Los Angeles, CA 90064

**Re: Notice and Demand to Holy Trinity Romanian American Orthodox Church
and Fr. Constantin Alecse**

Dear Mr. Oster:

As you know, we represent the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America ("ROEA") in the matter regarding the Holy Trinity Romanian American Orthodox Church (formerly known as the Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church) and Father Constantin Alecse.

This notice restates and implements the Decision of the Episcopate Council of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America (ROEA) dated November 17, 2022.

The ROEA is a hierarchical church and is a diocese of the hierarchical Orthodox Church in America (OCA). (OCA Statute, Art. XII, section 1(b); ROEA Constitution, Arts. III(b) and V.) The governance documents of the Orthodox Church in America and the ROEA clearly establish that the Parishes, including the Holy Trinity Romanian American Orthodox Church formerly known as the Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church in Los Angeles, California (HTRAOC/HTROC), are in a hierarchical relationship with, and subject to the authority and the jurisdiction of, the superior ecclesiastical and hierarchical organs of the Orthodox Church in America and the ROEA (OCA Statute, Art. XII, section 1(b); ROEA Constitution, Arts. IV and V; ROEA By-Laws, Art. IX, section 1.)

The governance documents of the Orthodox Church in America provide that "all Parish property, assets and funds are and shall be owned and held by the Parish or Parish corporation in trust for the use, purpose, and benefit of the Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America of which it is a part." (OCA Statute, Art. XII, section 9(b).) The governance

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documents of the ROEA provide that Parish property “cannot be sold, alienated, or mortgaged without the written permission of the Episcopate Council.” (ROEA Constitution, Art. VI(b); also ROEA By-Laws, Art. IV, section 2(c) and Art. IX, section 12(b).)

The HTRAOC/HTROC is a Parish under the ROEA’s authority and jurisdiction since 1940. The ROEA Constitution and By-Laws are incorporated by reference into the articles of incorporation of each Parish. The amended Articles of Incorporation of the HTRAOC/HTROC dated May 31, 1998 provide that the HTRAOC/HTROC “submits itself to the administrative and canonical jurisdiction and supervision of the ROEA,” and that it will “govern itself according to the Constitution and By-Laws” of the ROEA and “conduct and manage its affairs in accordance with the said By-Laws.”

According to the OCA Statute, ROEA Constitution, and ROEA By-Laws, all property of the HTRAOC/HTROC, including real property, funds, and other assets, was and is held in trust by the Parish for the benefit of the Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America of which it is a part (the ROEA) and cannot be alienated without the written permission of the Episcopate Council.

The actions of the former Parish priest, Fr. Constantin Alecse, and members of the Parish Council in meeting on August 14, 2022 and voting “to formally and irrevocably disassociate in all respects from the ROEA... effective immediately” (per October 25, 2022 letter from attorney Anthony C. Grossman to ROEA) and in holding a Special Parish Meeting on October 30, 2022 violated the OCA Statute, ROEA Constitution, and ROEA By-Laws. As a result, all HTRAOC/HTROC property that was or is held by the HTRAOC/HTROC must be distributed to the ROEA.

In order to accomplish the distribution of property to the ROEA as required by the OCA Statute and ROEA Constitution and By-Laws, the following steps must be taken:

1. Please transfer title for the real properties located at 3301 Verdugo Road, 3313 Verdugo Road, and 3315 Verdugo Road, Los Angeles, CA 90065 (Assessor’s Parcel Nos. 5457-022-009 and 5457-022-028) to the ROEA.

2. Please provide ROEA with an accounting and audit (per By-Laws Art. IV, section 2(p)) together with copies of statements for all bank accounts, investment accounts, and other accounts that were or are in the name of HTRAOC/HTROC from August 2022 to the present so that ROEA may determine the amount of the funds that should be transferred to ROEA.

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3. Please provide ROEA with an inventory of the personal property that was or is in the name or possession of HTRAOC/HTROC as of August, 2022 and identify any personal property transferred to a third party after August 14, 2022.

After these steps have been taken, we will then make arrangements for the transfer of the funds and the personal property to the ROEA.

Very truly yours,

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Paul E. Gaspari

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Cc: David Oancea, Chancellor

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