
JOINT DIALOGUE COMMISSION (JDC)

As Chairman, I have maintained brotherly contact with the Chairman of the ROAA JDC via telephone or email. Other members have also had occasional encounters.

In July, 2008, "The Proposal to Establish the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate in North America" was endorsed by Congress as an acceptable basis to continue the process. In July 2009, the JDC reported to the Clergy, Episcopate Council and Congress that further review of one point had been requested. The final text of the Proposal was presented to Council on October 10, 2009.

Work on an annotated version of the Proposal began in November. Its purpose was to explain how both sides, the ROEA and ROAA, understand the Proposal and their common vision of working together toward the administrative unity of all Orthodox jurisdictions in North America. The Annotated Proposal text was completed and reviewed by Council in June, 2010.

To be sure, Due Diligence studies remain to be completed. Yet, as the Archbishop asked the Episcopate Council just prior to the Fall Congress in Cleveland, Ohio - "Do you want a unity if it's possible? ... We can't live in the past, 1951. This is a *Church* issue not a corporate issue!" - the response was affirmative. Thus, recognizing the Proposal as an essentially ecclesiological document, the Episcopate Council recommended and the Congress voted overwhelmingly to accept the historic document saying, "*We find the Joint Dialogue Commission's merger proposal and its Annotations of 2010 with the recommended change in Point XI to read, "...the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church shall issue the Gramata..." acceptable as a preliminary step and a good theological basis for establishment of the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitanate in North America.*" As noted in the ROEA Press Release following the Congress and the subsequent Statement of Clarification submitted by our Archbishop, the Congress decision of October 1, 2010 effectively benchmarked the text as being final, and represented further progress toward the reconciliation of our two sister eparchies.

The purpose of uniting the ROEA and ROAA – whose separation was brought on by the unprecedented tide of atheistic communism, and has bred duplication of efforts, competitive missions, rogue clergy, derogative attitudes, negatively impacting the Church – is to heal the separation of these two estranged Romanian eparchies and thus *strengthen* the common mission of their clergy and faithful in and to North America. It would create an *undivided* body representing the entire Romanian community (and all who are part of that family) and its (historically unique) spiritual and theological ethos. As one body, it could more purposefully advance our stated common goal of overall Orthodox unity in North America.

As stated before, the proposed Metropolitanate would have a unique status, a maximal degree of autonomy *beyond* that of other autonomous eparchies. All spiritual and administrative care for Romanian Orthodox in North America would be given over to it. It would be in canonical communion

with the universally recognized Church of Romania and would receive Holy Chrism from it, while not being subject to its administrative jurisdiction. Interference by the government or Church of Romania is precluded. Its statutes would not be subject to Romanian civil or church law. It would elect its own Synod of bishops who would not sit on the Holy Synod of the Romanian Church. It would fund itself. We would be free to continue our life here but in a new, sisterly relationship with the OCA and all others.

God desires that all of His children should live in the *fullness* of unity, and put into practice what we sing at Pascha: “... **Let us embrace one another. Let us call even those who hate us, brother, and forgive all by the resurrection.**” The work of the Joint Dialogue Commissions over the years, with the blessing of our hierarchs and concurrence of our congresses, has been about finding a workable framework in which this brotherly love required of us by the Lord – a unity in the bond of peace - could be put into practice *once and for all*. The “Proposal” outlines that framework.

Today, in the second half of 2011, we pray and live in hopeful anticipation that the unfortunate sin of our division, smoldering for over six decades now(!), will not *again* simply be passed to another generation.

Archpriest Laurence Lazar, Chairman
Archpriests Remus Grama, Catalin Mitescu,
Ian Pac-Urar, Romey Rosco

VATRA ADMINISTRATION

(January 1 to December 31, 2010)

Finance Committee - The Finance Committee members are: Archbishop Nathaniel Popp, Bishop Irineu Duvlea, Rev. Fr. Calinic Berger (Treasurer), Archdeacon David Oancea (Chancellor) and Mr. Mark P. Chestnut (Asst.Treasurer). The main purpose of the meetings is for the presentation of financial reports and to discuss, suggest and bring to resolution problems both financial and administrative in nature. Furthermore, the meetings serve as a communication vehicle between the Archbishop, the Treasurer and the Finance and Publication Departments. Telephone conferences are used when necessary between scheduled meetings.

CPA Six-month Audit & Annual Audit – The *Lally Group PC* conducted an examination of financial records from January 1 to June 30, 2010, utilizing bank reconciliations, cash receipt transactions and testing cash disbursements. Bank reconciliation balances were traced successfully to the general ledger along with the verification of outstanding checks and reconciling items. Random cash receipt and disbursement transactions were traced successfully to corresponding bank deposit slips and/or invoices. It was duly noted that the additional independent observer for bank reconciliations continues on a monthly basis. During the week of June 6, 2011, the annual audit by Lally Group, Jackson, MI was completed. The audit included examining, on a test