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N° 198e

November 18, 2013  
Martyrs Platon and Roman

### MEMORANDUM

FROM: the Administrator of the Archdiocese of Canada (OCA).

TO: the regional deans, reverend rectors, priests-in-charge, and parish executives of the Archdiocese of Canada (OCA).

Christ is in our midst

Although this memorandum concerns administrative details, I would like to take this opportunity to greet you all at the beginning of the Nativity Fast.

Several important matters have recently come to my attention. I would like to address these subjects now in the form of a memorandum to all the clergy and parish executives of the Archdiocese of Canada.

First, in order to avoid unnecessary legal difficulties for the Archdiocese of Canada, its parishes and institutions, along with their respective executives or boards of directors, and for each of you personally, I ask you to refrain from making any public statements on any controversial (or potentially controversial) topics, verbally or in written form to the media or to the general public without previous consultation with the archdiocesan hierarch, his administration and its legal counsel.

Second, with my blessing, on April 16, 2013, the Memorandum on "General insurance recommendations from the Administration of the Archdiocese of Canada (OCA)" was issued by the Secretary of the Archdiocese of Canada on the recommendation of the Archdiocesan Council. In this document the recommendations and requirements of the Archdiocesan Administration about insurance coverage were outlined for your guidance. Upon rereading the 2012 Parish



Reports, it came to my attention that some parishes do not carry the required “Directors and Officers Liability Coverage, Abuse Liability Coverage” or “Commercial General Liability Coverage”. In the event of a claim against the parish, the leaders of the parish, the directors and officers of the parish, and also the Archdiocese of Canada may be held legally liable by the complainants. In the event that the parish is incorporated, the liability would be limited to the parish council (including the priest). This is why this insurance coverage is important. If the parish is not incorporated, each and all the members of the parish may be held legally liable by the complainants.

As the New Year is approaching, it is crucially important that all archdiocesan parishes, missions and institutions have the proper insurance coverage. Copies of the insurance policy are to be submitted annually to the Archdiocesan Office, along with the Annual Parish Report. The concerned dean is to inform the bishop about any cleric or parish not carrying the required insurance coverage. If it is not possible to come to an agreement about this matter, and if it is necessary to apply discipline, then it would be enforced until an acceptable agreement has been reached. Not having the required insurance coverage may have very serious consequences not only for the parish or mission, but even more so for the parish officers and for the Archdiocese of Canada.

On the same topic, the establishment of a new mission is to include providing for the required insurance coverage. This is an important element in preparing the foundation of the mission, which would hasten my being able to give the blessing for the official opening of the mission.

Third, we have just successfully held our 2013 Archdiocesan Assembly. The main topic of the Assembly was “Faithful Stewardship: Our Words, Commitments, and Actions”. Our next Assembly will be held in 2016, which will also celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Archdiocese. As well, the All American Council is scheduled for the summer of 2015 in Atlanta. At this time I would like to encourage you to be faithful stewards by starting to prepare our communities for these important events. Please introduce a line item in your parish’s or institution’s budget in order to set aside the necessary funds for the registration and travel fees of the clergy and lay delegates to these two events.

Fourth, as indicated above, “Faithful Stewardship” was the topic of the 2013 Assembly. Our organizing committee arranged for a lively and fruitful discussion on this topic by inviting the renowned Orthodox theologian and speaker, Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko. In his presentation, Father Hopko stressed more than once the responsibility of each one of us to contribute to the administrative and financial needs of our parish and our diocese.

The Archdiocese of Canada made the decision about twenty years ago to annul the membership fee and to change to giving 10% of the total parish revenue as a minimum parish contribution to the Archdiocese. At the 2010 Assembly in Victoria, BC we reaffirmed this decision, and the entire Archdiocesan Assembly carried this resolution unanimously.

The first resolution of our 2010 Assembly in Victoria states:

*“WHEREAS the Canadian Archdiocesan 2010 Assembly recognizes the growth of the Archdiocese under the love and care of His Eminence, Archbishop SERAPHIM, and Recognizes that the continued growth of our Archdiocese, the same Church of the Acts of the Apostles, will require increased resources and stewardship, based on the principle of giving of “First Fruits,” or 10% of total revenues as a minimum, which is applicable to both the faithful and to the Parishes of the Archdiocese:*

***BE IT RESOLVED that each Clergy and Lay Delegate to the Canadian Archdiocesan 2010 Assembly shall commit to discuss with their Parishes the need to increase stewardship to the Archdiocese using the Principle of “First Fruits” and that Parishes will submit an annual statement on their percentage of contributions.***

*We also decided that Archbishop SERAPHIM will write a letter to every parish with a copy of all the resolutions and will encourage every parish to do their best on each resolution. This letter will be sent either in the first week of September 2010 or after the October 2010 Archdiocesan Council meeting.*

#### **24.1 Resolution 1: Stewardship of the Archdiocese**

*During the discussion, the definition of “First Fruits” was clarified to be the first fruits of the operating budget. Designated funds are not included in the calculation of first fruits.”*

As we know, due to unforeseen circumstances, this letter was never written by Archbishop Seraphim.

After our 2013 Assembly, and the first meeting of the newly-elected Archdiocesan Council on November 1-2, 2013, we reviewed the Archdiocesan Budget for the year 2014. The recommendation was made once again to bring the above 2010 resolution on stewardship to the attention of our parishes and respective parish councils.

Currently, there is a shortage of contributions from the parishes to the Archdiocese of Canada. For the second year in a row there has been a \$10,000 deficit in the archdiocesan budget. If your parish has not already done so, I strongly

encourage you to do the right thing as Orthodox Christians, and to take the necessary steps towards adopting the resolution about “First-fruits Giving”, or 10% of the total revenues of the operating budget of your parish as a minimum contribution to the Archdiocese of Canada.

I have directed our Archdiocesan Treasurer and Secretary to prepare for your inspection a reference document and chart based on the information received from Revenue Canada. This document and chart provide advice on how we might address this concern about regular and responsible contributions, and thus help our archdiocese to carry out its mission in this country. This document will be sent to each parish not later than January, 2014.

I also direct all the archdiocesan deans, rectors, priests-in-charge and attached clergy to devote the focus of at least one homily a year to the responsibility of “First-fruits Giving”, and to encourage both the parishes and the faithful people to adopt this principle in their lives.

Dear brothers and sisters, I assure you of my archpastoral love, prayer and care for each and every one of you. I ask you to understand that all these directives are carefully considered in consultation with the duly elected members of the Archdiocesan Council and appointed officers, with much prayer and with love.

My dear brothers and sisters, I assure you that my prayer, work and activity are undertaken only with the successful growth and development of our Church, our Archdiocese, our parishes and your personal spiritual growth in mind.

With archpastoral blessings and love in Christ, I remain yours,



**+ IRÉNÉE** Évêque de Québec/Bishop of Québec  
Administrateur de l'Archidiocèse du Canada (ÉOA)  
Administrator of the Archdiocese of Canada (OCA)