

Faithful Stewardship - Our Words, Commitments and Actions

Votre Béatitude, Très Chers Pères , Frères et Sœurs en Christ, c'est avec une grande joie que je vous accueille à notre Assemblée Archidiocésaine en cette ville de Gatineau.

The theme of our gathering in this beautiful region of Gatineau, is ``Faithful Stewardship – Our Words, Commitments and Actions``. I can imagine some of us asking themselves if we are going to talk mainly about money. Well, in fact we will have to do that as this is an unavoidable part of our very existence as an Archdiocese. But mainly, our gathering is our periodic occasion to assemble together as a Church, as the Body of Christ in this land, as the Orthodox Church of Canada. We assemble for prayer, communion and fellowship, trusting that by the Grace of God, we will return to our respective homes, strengthened and in the peace of Our Saviour Jesus Christ.

I remember, when I first entered the Archdiocese in 1986, our Administrator at the time was the Very Reverend Archpriest John Tkachuk, and Metropolitan Theodosius was the Locum Tenens of the Archdiocesan See. Already, under the leadership of Father John, the Archdiocese of Canada had gone on a movement of growth. New missions and parishes were founded and blessed . Under the leadership of our Archpastor Vladyka Seraphim, the movement continued. We began celebrating centennials of parishes from Western Canada to Montreal. By celebrating these we discovered our history and began recognizing the outstanding mission work that was accomplished in those days by all those God-loving, dedicated pioneers and pastors, self-sacrificing labours which continue to this day. All these predecessors of ours have shown us what true stewardship is.

. I take this moment to recognize the many years of Father John Tkachuk in this Archdiocese. Father John is retiring from his pastorate at the Parish

of the Sign of the Theotokos, in Montreal, this coming September 1st. Father John , Masha , on behalf of this Assembly and the Archdiocese, I wish to express my gratitude and thanks for all that you have done for your flock and your fellow pastors in this Archdiocese. May you enjoy a happy retirement and many more years of blessed happiness to both of you.

Since our last meeting in Victoria in 2010, the Archdiocese has continued to undergo change and growth. Unfortunately we have also suffered loss. But not all losses are necessarily sad events. Our long time Chancellor, Father Alexander Pihach was transferred to the Omophorion of His Beatitude and is now happily settled in Moscow as the Orthodox Church in America's representative to the Church of Russia, and rector of the Representative church of Saint Catherine in the Fields. To Archimandrite Alexander, I also wish to offer my gratitude for his helping and supporting me in the last years, as I was learning my new obedience as Administrator of the Archdiocese.

Among the new acquisitions of the Archdiocese is the new Archdiocesan center and office, which will be inaugurated in a few days. This Archdiocesan Center was acquired through the untiring labour of the Archdiocesan Secretary, and Mr Nikita Lopoukhine. I also wish to express my heartfelt thanks to both for being always present in giving me direction in my task of Administrator.

During these three years, I have visited most of our parishes, missions, monasteries a number of times. I find great joy in meeting and getting to know the faithful and God-loving clergy of our churches. I am grateful for their patience and support and especially prayers. I wish to tell all of them that I always appreciate your input, and advice.

Our Archdiocese is particular in the fact that in the image of our Country, we are also multi-ethnic. Services are held in most of our churches in English, but we have Slavonic parishes and French parishes. Most of our

parishes are multi-ethnic in the flock they serve and our clergy do their best to serve their flock , leading them to the unity of the Orthodox Truth.

I wish to make a special mention of the organizing committee for this Assembly, Mrs. Mary Anne Lopoukhine and her helpers who have dedicated innumerable hours of work during the past months to bring this Assembly to its successful gathering. May God's blessing continue to accompany you and all your loved ones for many years.

Je voudrais remercier les membres de notre Conseil Archidiocésain, les Doyens, les représentants laïcs et tous les bénévoles qui ont travaillé durant des mois pour l'organisation de cette Assemblée, et tout spécialement Madame Mary Anne Lopoukhine, et son comité qui a rendu cette réunion possible.

Durant ces trois ans nous nous sommes efforcé de poursuivre la coopération entre les différents diocèses orthodoxes dans ce pays. Que ce soit avec Son Éminence Le Métropolitite Sotirios , Son Éminence le Métropolitite Yurij, L'Archevêque Gabriel et L'Évêque Alexandre, et l'Évêque Jean Cassien, nous entretenons des relations plus que cordiales et en communion de prière. Je voudrais assurer nos frères dans la foi de notre continuation dans la collaboration fraternelle pour le bien de la Sainte Église du Christ, ici au Canada.

But the work which has been accomplished in the past century must be a pledge to the future. Our Archdiocese was founded by the Holy New-Martyr Tykhon and many more holy men and women after him. We live in much different times, but our task is just as great. Each one of us is an indispensable part of the task. May this Assembly give us the tools , spiritual and material to continue the good work.

I ask you all to use the time together in prayer to beseech from God the means to accomplish His holy Will for the welfare of His holy Church and our salvation.