

WEEKLY MEDITATION

.... but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles (1 Corinthians 1:23)

As announced at church last Sunday, Metropolitan Herman has been granted retirement by our Holy Synod. He had been primate of the OCA since 2002. The last several years of his tenure have been marked by allegations - and findings - of scandal in the national office of the higher church administration. The report of the Special Investigative Committee (SIC) concerning these has been published on www.oca.org. This report makes for very sad reading. It suggests that a mixture of managerial incompetence on the part of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council, the personal vulnerability of some in the hierarchy, and a lack of appropriate financial management systems, was exploited by retired Metropolitan Theodosius, the Chancellor of the OCA (Protopresbyter Robert Kondratick) and others, allowing a substantial amount of church monies to be diverted for personal use and gain. Such use of church monies for personal gain is sin as well as a crime. The report also notes that there was some degree of enabling behavior on the part of many in church leadership positions.

Archbishop Dimitri of Dallas, as senior bishop on the Holy Synod, has been named *locum tenens*, which means that pending the election of a new Primate he will fulfill the duties of the office of Metropolitan. In this he will be assisted on the administrative side of things by Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa. Given the amount of work that goes in to preparing for an election of a new Metropolitan, it is not likely that this will take place at the All-American Council (AAC) in Pittsburgh in November.

As a parish, through our participation in the upcoming Diocesan Assembly in October and the AAC, we will actively support all plans and proposals to ensure that the principles of accountability and transparency are firmly established and working in our higher church administration. It is important to understand that with this crisis comes an opportunity to get things right and to make things better. We need to pray about the outcome of all of this, so that God will be glorified, the faithful strengthened, our ministries and outreach given new life.

The scandal of the Cross should be the **only** scandal in the life of our Church!

~Fr. Andrew



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