



Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America

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*Metropolitan Tikhon, Locum
Tenens of Boston, New England
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*Igumen Nikodhim
Interim Chancellor*

March 18, 2021

To the Clergy and Laity of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America -

By now you have seen Metropolitan Tikhon's note regarding a change in the administration of our Archdiocese, with Fr. Arthur Liolin taking the role of Chancellor Emeritus and Fr. Nikodhim Preston rising to serve as Interim Chancellor.

Last year, we commemorated the 50th anniversary of Fr. Arthur's ordination. Due to COVID-19 restrictions we could not celebrate this milestone as we had hoped, though we will schedule an event as soon as health and gathering requirements allow. At that time we will more fully elaborate on Fr. Arthur's significant impact on our Archdiocese and our lives, but for now I want to share a few thoughts.

For decades, Fr. Arthur has served as the institutional historian of our Archdiocese, quick to remember a fact, notable moment, or analogy to help guide our response to a pressing challenge. His accomplishments as Chancellor are too numerous to list, but his steady hand allowed our Archdiocese and its churches to make great progress and to tackle significant issues. During most of the 1980s and 1990s, in the absence of a permanent bishop, Fr. Arthur served as our de facto leader. Fr. Arthur also ably represented our Archdiocese to the outside world. One meaningful accomplishment that transcended the Archdiocese was Fr. Arthur's central role reintroducing Orthodoxy to Albania after a quarter century of the banishment of religion.

Fr. Arthur's ministry was supported by his Archdiocesan brethren, but more importantly by his biological family. His dedication to our Archdiocese was inculcated at an early age when he and his brother, our beloved departed Archbishop Nikon, took their lessons in service from their parents Evans (former Archdiocese Lay Vice Chairman) and Helena (former Choir Director at St. Nicholas). During his time as our Chancellor Fr. Arthur also had a core of supporters close at hand. We thank Prifteresha Margaret, his children Evans, Elena and Emily, and his brother James for "lending" us Fr. Arthur so we may all benefit from his enormous talent.

I have truly appreciated Fr. Arthur's wisdom and guidance and look forward to our continued work together. I am also happy to welcome Fr. Nikodhim as Interim Chancellor. Fr. Nikodhim has already made significant contributions to the life of the Archdiocese as co-chairman of the Student Fund. In addition to that work and his position as Interim Chancellor, Fr. Nikodhim will continue as rector of St. Nicholas parish in New York. With Fr. Nikodhim's leadership and Fr. Arthur's guidance, we continue to be in good hands.

Per shume vjet At Liolin dhe At Nikodhim!

Michael Gregory
Lay Vice Chairman
Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America