



# GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF DENVER

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July 17, 2018

Protocol 18-03

The Reverend Clergy, the Monastics,  
and the Faithful Parishioners of  
The holy parishes of the Holy Metropolis of Denver

Beloved in the Lord,

As you have been informed, the biennial Clergy and Laity Congress of our Archdiocese took place from July 1, 2018 through July 5, 2018, in Boston Massachusetts. Many priests and members of the laity were present, as well as members of the Philoptochos Society of our Archdiocese. As usual, after the congress concluded and people returned to their homes, comments and reflections were heard concerning the congress.

Unfortunately, a number of the comments had to do with the results of the congress concerning the budget of the Archdiocese. Actually one important member of the finance committee which has done remarkable work in preparing the new budgets for future use and with no deficits, was most disappointed during the plenary sessions. Even so, we remain positive that the finances of our Archdiocese will soon demonstrate the belief among our people that better days will soon come upon us.

The surprising comments, however, had to do with a statement in one of the presentations concerning the growth of our Church in the United States. The statement was made that our Orthodox Church is demonstrating the reality of other Christian bodies in which an increasing number of people do not want to be connected to organized religious bodies any longer, and because of this, we are seeing the same problem of small attendance in some of our parishes. The explanation, which was given pertaining to this lack of growth, is the reality of mixed marriages among our young adults.

Having served the Church for many years, and noting that our Metropolis has seven new parishes which are incrementally growing, I can honestly say that the Holy Spirit has truly blessed the Church of our Lord with faithful parishioners who fall in love with the original Church and who are in the favorable position of inspiring our cradle Orthodox Christians who have had limited knowledge and understanding of our holy faith. This is the reason I inform our new members from other religions that they are not converts but are “coming home” to the one and only Church, which our Lord established through His supreme sacrifice, His burial, and His glorious resurrection. Our Lord Jesus Christ clearly states in the holy gospels that His Church can never be eliminated from this fallen world.

What is happening today in regard to the Church is that we are witnessing a latter day Pentecost as presented in the book of Acts by Saint Luke who quotes the words of the Prophet Joel concerning the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days (Acts 2:16-21). Consequently, we should not use the term "mixed marriage" when an Orthodox Christian enters into the holy sacrament of marriage with a Trinitarian Christian not of the Orthodox Faith. Sadly, moreover, some of our people erroneously call the marriage of two Orthodox people as a mixed marriage because one of them is not of a Greek background.

On the basis of these truths, no one should insist on remembering the statement to which I refer, that mixed marriages are problematic. We are now experiencing the New Pentecost, and as the hymn of the day of Pentecost declares: "when the Supreme One descended confusing the tongues, He divided the nations; but when He distributed the tongues of fire, He invited all to unity." Consequently, God's invitation into the eternal Kingdom is directed to all people no matter what their background is.

May our holy Orthodox Christian Church, the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which our Lord established almost two thousand years ago, continue to welcome all people of all nations.

With paternal blessings  
and  
Love in Christ,

*+Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver*

+Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver

NOTE: To be printed and included in your parish communication to your parishioners.