



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA

Congratulations! It is with great joy we write to inform you that your parish has been selected as one of the pilot parishes for the On Behalf Of All program, funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. We are excited to begin the work of providing engaging and inclusive worship practices for children with special needs and their caregivers who currently attend our parishes and for those whom we will be better equipped to serve in the future.

The program name, “On Behalf Of All,” was chosen not only because the words appear in our Liturgy but because they denote the need of community, both social and spiritual, for our salvation. “Love for God is proven by love and mercy for your neighbor, and mercy, charity, condescension for your neighbor,...” said St Ambrose of Optina; we believe each of you already knows this as you took the initiative to apply for this program, and we thank God that we now have the opportunity to begin, or continue, these works of love for the youngest neighbors in your parishes.

In the coming weeks, we will provide more information regarding the work ahead of us, including the development of the program website and information regarding the “Gathered In One Body” conference. For now, please **mark your calendars for May 1-3, 2025** and prepare for two representatives — ideally the parish priest and a liaison — to attend the conference **in Boston, MA**. This gathering will be a launching point, and provide training for, the pilot parish efforts. In the meantime, please join us in praying for your community and the other pilot parishes listed below.

- St Stefanos Petersburg, FL - GOA Atlanta Metropolis
- Assumption of the Theotokos Danbury, CT – GOA Direct Archdiocese District
- St John the Baptist, Des Plaines, IL - GOA Chicago Metropolis
- St John the Baptist Blue Point, NY - GOA Direct Archdiocese District
- St Anna's Salt Lake City, UT - GOA Denver Metropolis
- St Nicholas Grand Junction, CO - GOA Denver Metropolis
- St Demetrios Saginaw, MI - GOA Detroit Metropolis
- Annunciation Cathedral Columbus, Ohio - GOA Pittsburgh Metropolis
- St. Basil, San Juan Capistrano, CA - GOA San Francisco Metropolis
- Saints Constantine and Helen, Cardiff By the Sea, CA - GOA San Francisco Metropolis
- St Mary's Orthodox Church, Brooklyn, NY - Antiochian Metropolis of North America
- Protection of the Holy Mother of God Orthodox Church (St Mary) Falls Church, Virginia - OCA-Romanian Episcopate

If you have any questions do not hesitate to reach out to us.

On Behalf of All,

Presvytera Melanie DiStefano, Director of On Behalf Of All; PresMelanie@goarch.org

Jeremy Swartz, Assistant Director of On Behalf Of All; jswartz@goarch.org