

St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Cathedral  
March 10, 2013

+ Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Your Eminence, Archbishop Justinian:

It is a great joy for me today to concelebrate with you the Divine Liturgy in the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. Nicholas. I extend to you, to the clergy of the Cathedral, and to the parishioners the love of the hierarchs, clergy, monastics and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America.

St. Nicholas Cathedral stands as a living presence of the Moscow Patriarchate in New York City, and is the Representation of the Moscow Patriarchate to the Orthodox Church in America.

We have celebrated today with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. To him I extend the love of the Orthodox Church in America and our prayers for the well being of the Russian Orthodox Church in its witness and mission.

St. Nicholas Cathedral is a sign and symbol of the gifts given to Orthodoxy in America by the Russian Orthodox Church. We remember with gratitude St. Tikhon, Patriarch and Confessor of Moscow, who built and consecrated this Cathedral more than one hundred years ago. St. Tikhon was a true builder of the Church in America, a good shepherd, rule of faith and image of humility. We remember with love St. Alexander Hotovitzky, a collaborator of St. Tikhon in this Cathedral and in the missionary work in America, who later died a martyr in the time of persecution in Russia.

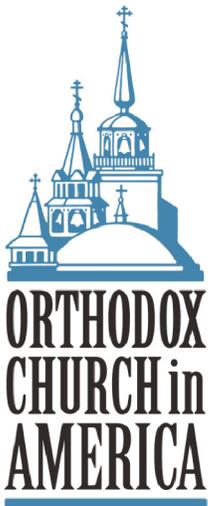
We remember with love and gratitude the gift of the Russian Orthodox Church to our Church in the person of St. Herman of Alaska, who preached the Gospel of Christ to the native peoples of Alaska with holy humility. It is a great blessing to Orthodoxy in America that holiness and humility are at the very sources of Orthodox witness and mission.

Today I present to St. Nicholas Cathedral, through Your Eminence, relics of St. Herman of Alaska. May his witness to the Gospel of Christ and his dedication to the peoples of this land be an inspiration to us all.

We remember with gratitude the gift of autocephaly, received by us in 1970 from the Russian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church in America treasures this gift with humility. The Tomos of Autocephaly granted by the Russian Orthodox Church to us commits the Orthodox Church in America to the task of mission in North America. It recognizes that Orthodoxy in America has now an American identity. We believe that building up this American identity of Orthodoxy is a gift to the whole Orthodox Church, affirming the Orthodox faith as a faith for all peoples and cultures and nations.

We are drawing near to the beginning of Great Lent. The journey of Great Lent is a journey towards the joy of the Resurrection of Christ. Let us be mindful of the spiritual gifts we receive in Great Lent and the joy we receive in the Resurrection. And let us share these gifts with this City and with the lands and peoples of North America.

Christ is in our midst! He is and shall be!



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