



The Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
The Right Reverend Bishop Mark, Bishop of Philadelphia

August 3, 2015

Dear Rev. Frs. And faithful of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern PA,

Christ is in our midst! I pray you are having a blessed summer and enjoying the many blessings here in the good ole' US of A. Though we may be critical of our government and the direction our country is heading, there are still people coming here to improve their lives and enjoy freedoms they do not have in their countries of origin.

This morning, I met with Fr. George Volkovinsky, who serves St. John the Baptist in Edwardsville, PA. Fr. George and his family are from Belarus. Under the leadership of Archbishop Melchisedek, the Diocese paid for his workers permit a few years ago and Matushka Maylynn Pac Urar, Esq., did her work pro-bono to assist Fr. George in being able to serve the Church in our Diocese. Fr. George's family came almost a year later, but none are eligible at present for worker's permits.

At this juncture, Fr. George's Work VISA expires in February and he needs to file an I-360, which will cost \$405.00 plus attorney fees of \$2000.00. This needs to be done immediately. After that is approved, in approximately 5 months, he will immediately need to file an I-485 form, which costs \$1070 each, for him, his wife and two children, plus attorney fees of \$2500.

The Diocese, as the one sponsoring him, will also need to file an I-361 verifying we will continue to support him. Presently, he is listed as an employee of the Diocese and St. John the Baptist in Edwardsville, sends us the money to cover his paycheck, pension and social security.

In the past, I am sure immigrants of Eastern Europe helped to bring others over, especially their own family members. Fr. George is an excellent priest with deep convictions and we are blessed to have him in this Diocese.

If you would like to help the Volkovinsky family, pray for Fr. George and his family. If you know of an attorney who would be willing to do the work pro-bono, contact the Diocesan Office. Finally, if you are able to help the Volkovinsky family financially, please send a check to the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, designated "Clergy Assistance-Volkovinsky". Perhaps, we know how difficult it was for our parents, grandparents or great-grandparents to come to America. Let us help as we are able.

Your unworthy father-in-Christ,

+ Mark

+Mark

Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania