



The Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA
The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia

December 07, 2018

Dear Rev. Fathers, Diocesan Council Members, and Department Chairs,

The 55th Diocesan Assembly will be held on Thursday and Friday, **January 24 and 25, 2019** at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, in Bethlehem, PA. All our active clergy, delegates and department chairs are required to attend this Assembly. Registration will begin on Thursday at 3:00 p.m. followed by the formal opening of the Assembly at 4:00 p.m. Great Vespers will be at 5:00 p.m. and dinner at 6:00 p.m. The agenda is attached and will also be posted on our website (www.doepa.org).

All those attending may make their reservations at the Best Western located at 300 Gateway Dr, Bethlehem, PA 18017. Their phone number is (610) 866-5800. **They are holding a Block of Rooms in the name of ST. NICHOLAS RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH at \$72.00 and reservations must be made by January 1st to get that rate.** Be sure to mention you are part of the group for St. Nicholas Church when booking your room. We cannot guarantee the room rates after that date.

The registration fee is \$50.00 for each clergy, each lay delegate and each observer, which covers our planning costs, copying, and meals. Please send your Document of Certification for your Delegates and Observers directly to the Diocesan Chancery. Checks should be made payable to OCA Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania.

Please complete the attached Document of Certification for your Lay Delegate for the 55th Diocesan Assembly and submit it to the Diocesan Office as soon as possible, but no later than December 21, 2018. Assembly observers are welcome to attend with the blessing of the parish priest. The Document of Certification for Observers should also be completed, signed and returned to the Diocesan Chancery no later than December 21, 2018.

We ask that the Deans, Treasurer, Auditors, Metropolitan Council Representatives, Finance Committee, Diocesan Council Secretary, Liturgical Life Committee, Missions, Office of Young Adult Activities, Office of Church School Programs and Curriculum, Health Insurance, and the Communications Department prepare their reports and forward them to the Diocesan Chancery electronically (dioceseoepa@gmail.com) no later than December 15, 2018 for posting on the Diocesan Website.

At our Assembly, the Deans will be elected and the Diocesan Council. If you know of worthy candidates for the Diocesan Council, please ask them to submit a brief biographical sketch, including educational background and work experience. We would like each candidate to answer the following questions in their biographical sketch: 1) *What is the greatest benefit of being an Orthodox Christian?* 2) *What is the greatest need in our diocese and what is one thing you would like to do about it?* 3) *What is the greatest strength of our diocese and what is one thing you would like to do to maintain it?* Candidates should also have the recommendation of the Parish Rector or Dean. Duties and Responsibilities of the Diocesan Council may be reviewed in our Diocesan Bylaws found on our Diocesan website at <https://doepa.org/files/By-Laws/Final->

325 N Walnut Street * Bath, Pennsylvania 18014
Telephone: 484-281-3406 * <http://www.doepa.org> * Email: dioceseoepa@gmail.com
Chancellor: Very Rev. Raymond Martin Browne * Mobile: 570.906.1388
Diocesan Treasurer: Joseph Tosca * treasurer@doepa.org

[Diocesan/Approved-DOEPA-Bylaws-01-29-2016.pdf](#) (Article X, which begins on page 11.). Please remember that in order to participate in the Assembly meetings parishes must be current with their monthly diocesan support.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these matters. I hope everyone had a Happy Thanksgiving, May you enjoy a Joyous Nativity and a Happy, Healthy and Blessed New Year!

Yours unworthy father in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+Mark". The plus sign is a simple cross, and the name "Mark" is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

+Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

cc: V. Rev. Martin Browne, Chancellor

Enclosures: Proposed Agenda
Document of Certification for Lay Delegate
Document of Certification for Observers