

--- In [Orthodox-Forum@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Orthodox-Forum@yahoogroups.com):

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Office of the Archbishop

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His Beatitude, the Most Blessed HERMAN  
Archbishop of Washington and New York,  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada  
PO Box 675  
Syosset, NY 11791

Your Beatitude and dear Vladyka HERMAN:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

I feel compelled at this time and bound by conscience to offer a clear and concise account of! my position on the crisis that now plagues our Orthodox Church in America, especially since references to me have appeared in the public forum. Contrary to that which has been stated, this matter is not closed---far from it!

Your Beatitude, as is most often the case in discussions about virtually any aspect of the life of our Church, the issues involved give way to debate over personalities, and their popularity or lack thereof. Needless to say, there are very strong personalities involved here, both popular and unpopular. During the fall session of the Holy Synod, when information made available to each hierarch was brought up for discussion, attacks regarding the character of the person who made the information known were launched, while the issues were essentially ignored. In my mind, whether the accuser or the accused are saints or sinners, reputable or disreputable, magnanimous or malicious---is immaterial. What truly matters is the nature of the allegations. What continues to perplex me is that the simple and most appropriate question was not asked---not by the Holy Synod, not by the Metropolitan Council, nor by others commenting on the situation:

Are any of the allegations true, or are they false?

If this question is not asked---let alone answered---how can there be resolution to the problem? Obviously, there must be investigation.

Also, I take exception to the explanations given that the financial concerns first brought up in 1999, and now resurrected and augmented in 2005, were discussed and resolved by the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council as early as 2000. Your Beatitude, the only matter brought to the attention of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council was the Metropolitan's "discretionary account." No details were provided as to the amount of the money contained in the account. As a hierarch of the Holy Synod, I dealt only with maintaining a principle regarding the nature of a discretionary account.

Your Beatitude, I find myself compelled to ask how the matters brought to the attention of the hierarchs of our Church only last month could have been resolved five years ago?

The allegations include: Church funds being used for private purposes; unreported bequests; misuse of restricted funds generated from the Mission, Seminary, and Charity Appeals; a sizable donation by the US Department of Chaplains for bibles for Russia; unsupported credit card expenditures; the Saint Sergius Chapel Account; the Andreas Conference and Communications Center, and others. Again I ask

Are any of the all! egations true, or are they false?

The answer to this question is of utmost importance. If the allegations are false, financial records will prove them to be false. If they are true, then much work must be done -- not only regarding facts, figures, and finances, but the restoration of credibility, honesty, truth, righteousness, integrity, and honor.

Vladyka, forgive me for saying this, but an independent audit of the finances of the Church for only ["only"- highlighted] the last two years will not ["not" highlighted] provide the necessary answers. For this purpose, a thorough investigation is necessary.

As a senior member of the Holy Synod, I go on record urging Your Beatitude to initiate a thorough investigation by appointing a Synodal Commission---consisting of no fewer than three hierarchs---which, upon conclusion of said investigation, will report directly to the Holy Synod.

Although it has been stated that the members of the Holy Synod consider this matter to be closed, I once again take exception: this ["this" - italicized] member of the Holy Synod accepts no such closure at this time. It is my pastoral duty to lead the faithful flock entrusted to my spiritual care and, when necessary, to protect it. I can do neither adequately unless this crisis is resolved and answers are provided. I realize that my reticence to accept the "status-quo" puts me in an extremely vulnerable position, but I cannot violate my conscience or my responsibility.

I further realize that others reading these words unfortunately will base their judgement on whether or not they "like" me, or whether or not they respect my opinion. I do not claim to be a good man, but I like to think that I am an honest man. I am greatly concerned about the Holy Synod. If the allegations are true, then the Synod has been deceived, manipulated, and the hierarchal principle has been compromised.

Dear Vladyka HERMAN, I do not want to be a constant source of irritation to You. I ask Your forgiveness if I have offended You by means of this communication, but I perceive a great deal of fear in our Church. In his first epistle, Saint John the Theologian tells us:

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." (1 John 4:18)

It is indeed a time for increased love, a time for courage. A saying by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. seems most appropriate: "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." Vladyka, these things that disturb the Church matter ---we cannot afford to be silent. Otherwise,! we will be confronted with the ultimate question:

Do we really expect God to bless any of our endeavors?

Let us stand for truth and righteousness, and state with the Psalmist, "I will not die, but I will live and declare the works of the Lord."

Asking Your holy prayers for my unworthiness, I remain

With love in Christ,

Your brother and concelebrant

+JOB

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

cc: Hierarchs of the Holy Synod  
Protopresbyter Robert Kondratich  
Archpriest John Zdinak  
Archpriest Thomas Mueller  
Archpriest Peter Pawlack  
Archpriest Daniel Rentel  
Archpriest Thaddeus Wojcik  
Archpriest Andrew Yavornitzky  
Priest Timothy Sawchak

