

From the Pastor

Dear Members and Friends of Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church, Terryville, CT:

Christ is in our midst!

I realize that I have been remiss in not directly and promptly sharing the following official Statement of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America related to recent tragic events. Here is that statement, dated May 31, 2020, and publicly available since that date on the website of the Orthodox Church in America. It merits our attention.

A Statement on Recent Tragic Events

We, the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, mourn the tragic death of Mr. George Floyd on May 25, 2020. We too have looked with horror at the footage of this episode, and condemn the brutal actions that caused his violent death. We look to the civil authorities to bring to justice those who participated in this senseless tragedy.

We categorically reject racism in any form. Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27), and was created to exist (Wisdom of Solomon 1:14). We are all, each of us, “one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).” As such, there should be no hatred, no enmity, no hostility between us, but reconciliation.

In the face of civil unrest, we call upon the members of the Orthodox Church in America, and to all the communities they live in, to engage in the service of righteousness and peace in the Holy Spirit. We exhort everyone to “pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding (Romans 14:17, 19).”

Finally, we offer our prayers to God for Mr. Floyd, his family, and to those communities that are experiencing anxiety, sadness, and despair, because they have seen destruction of life and property.

– *The Members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America*

I hope and pray that we all have been thinking and praying, seriously and sincerely, about the specific matter of Mr. Floyd’s death, and the broader societal issues related to it. The best thing that we can do right now is *listen*, with open hearts and with receptive minds, to the voices of those who yearn to be heard and understood.

We may not agree with everything that is said or done, or with how something is said or done. We must, however, endeavor truly to hear and see what is said and done. We must hear and see with ears and eyes that are being opened by God for the purposes of discerning and understanding what is true.

We know that God is Truth (John 14:6). So, we ask Him, the Compassionate Lord, to reveal the truth to us, so that we might know the truth and live the truth. For “the truth shall make you free (John 8:32).”

Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us, sinners, and save us.

With love in Christ,

Fr. John H.

Archpriest John Hopko, Pastor