



The Most Reverend Archbishop DAVID
Chancellor & Office of the Archbishop

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October 3, 2020, Saint Eustathius

To the Beloved and Faithful Clergy, Monastics and Laity of the God-protected Diocese of Sitka and Alaska

Grace and Peace be unto you all.

“Throw your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you.” [Psa. 55:22a]

I have served this Holy and God-fearing Diocese of Sitka and Alaska for over seven years now. I have been blessed to share many joys and sorrows with you all; in different places and at different times. I have joined in the joy of many Baptisms, Chrismations and weddings. I have also wept with you at times of tragedy and death. Through it all we have acted as we ought, as the One, True, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Orthodox Church.

Now, I face a new challenge that will cause me to leave you for a while. Many of you have observed me at Liturgies recently, sitting for much of the service. Now, I can tell you why this is so. I have been diagnosed with cancer of the kidney (commonly called renal cancer). The doctors here in Anchorage have done their utmost to diagnose me but were not successful in pinpointing the exact type of cancer it is. They have told me that I need to go somewhere that is better equipped to diagnose and treat me. Upon their advice, with the Blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, and my own personal choice, I will be heading to the state of Indiana where I will reside with my son's family while I am being further diagnosed and treated for this disease. The Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis is well known for its treatment of Renal and Bladder Cancer, one of the leading in the nation. Only the Lord in Heaven knows how long it will take, or what treatments I will need.

So, my beloved Children, I must leave you for a while to receive the best care I can get. I know you would want me to do this as well and I ask for your prayers. I will, for the time being, continue to execute my leadership over the Diocese of Alaska with the help and cooperation of my very capable staff and leaders throughout the Diocese. Our Chancellor, Fr Innocent Dresdow, along with the Vice-chancellor Fr Daniel Charles and my Administrative Assistant, Subdeacon Thomas Rivas, and the Deans of the various Deaneries throughout our state will make sure the diocese functions at top efficiency. I will continue to pray for you and ask your prayers for me. Believe me when I say that we are in this situation together, and together we will all carry our crosses with one helping the other at all times. Remember the words of Saint Nicholai of Zicha, “I cannot be saved without you, and you cannot be saved without me.” Let us live those words daily.

Please do not forget me and pray for me that the Lord God will return me to good health. I will never cease praying for all of you, my Beloved Children. As my situation changes, you will be kept abreast of my progress. Until we are together again, may the Lord bless and keep you. God bless you all! Amen.

Your servant of Servants,

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+ David, Archbishop of Sitka and Alaska