

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
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Grant O Lord, peaceful and prosperous life, health, salvation and all good things to the faithful clergy and laity of the Orthodox Church in America, and grant them MANY YEARS!

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Have Mercy on Me a Sinner

Brothers and Sisters in Christ – Glory to Jesus Christ!

Today, April 10, is the anniversary of the granting the Tomos of Autocephaly to our Orthodox Church in America, in 1970, by Patriarch +Alexei I of Moscow.

From 1926 to 1970, our Church had been ‘independent’ of any “Mother Church.” But in 1970, His Holiness Patriarch +Alexei of Moscow granted a Tomos of Autocephaly to Metropolitan +Ireney and to our Orthodox Church in America. I was a young man in those days and was very excited that this should be happening. I saw all sorts of possibilities for our Church and hoped to see other ‘jurisdictions’ of Orthodox joining our newly-established purely American Church. Indeed, the Albanian Diocese, Bulgarian, and Romanian dioceses quickly joined us in this vision for the future. And soon, a diocese in Mexico also became part of our Church.

In 1995, after 25 years of Self-rule, not too much had changed or advanced. And in fact, many of our American Orthodox neighbors were upset with us that we had taken on the name of an Autocephalous Church. Probably, there was a lot of background ethnic history which prevented others from ‘joining up.’ I said something about the bell one hears ringing at the event being both a bell of joy and an alarm.

Now, after 41 years, we can begin to look forward to the formation of a single Church in the United States, if not all of North America, under the aegis of the “Episcopal Assemblies” organized by the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The first such assembly for North America met in May, 2010.

You can read a recent statement about the Tomos of Autocephaly on the internet at: <http://www.oca.org/DOctomos.asp?SID=12>

On this Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt, it’s important that we remember the simple but extremely powerful prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” If we repent of our sins, whatever they are or were, we can still hope on Our Lord’s promise of our resurrection into the Kingdom of Heaven. Perhaps the ecclesiastical politics can be overthrown and even annihilated if we strive, as a Church body, to become who we are called to be: The People of God.