



THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX EPISCOPATE OF AMERICA

The Most Reverend Dr. NATHANIEL Popp, Archbishop

February 8, 2023

Great Martyr Theodore Stratelates; Prophet Zechariah

To: The Council of Orthodox Christians of Akron, and the team from Presentation of Our Lord Romanian Orthodox Parish, Fairlawn, Ohio

Re: Formation of an Inter-Orthodox Parish Association in the Akron, Ohio area under the auspices of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA

Dear Very Rev. Fr. Ian Pac-Urar and all participants:

First of all, we want to thank you for your willingness to work together through your representation of your parish and diocese in the metropolitan Akron area to form an Inter-Orthodox Parish Association (IOPA) through the blessing and encouragement of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA. As you may know, administrative unity of the Orthodox Church in North America has been one of our overarching goals for decades. We have included the phrase "PRAY AND WORK FOR ORTHODOX UNITY IN NORTH AMERICA" at the bottom of each page of our Archdiocesan publication (Sofia - The Herald) for more than 20 years. I have also personally served as a spiritual advisor to Orthodox Christian Laity (OCL) for decades, since that organization's primary mission has been to support and encourage all efforts toward Orthodox unity which has the potential for the strengthening of the Orthodox Christian witness and impact in this part of the world.

We wholeheartedly support the initiatives of the Assembly of Bishops to create this IOPA as well as other inter-Orthodox parish associations throughout the nation. We encourage you to participate to the fullest extent in the IOPA and to educate, inspire and involve the parishioners in the Association's activities which will help create the grassroots unity that is essential for the foundation of an eventual administrative Orthodox unity in America.

We look forward to receiving reports of your activities on a regular basis.

With blessings and all good wishes in your work,

+NATHANIEL

Archbishop of Detroit and The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America
Orthodox Church in America