



THE MONASTERY OF SAINT TIKHON OF ZADONSK

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October 26, 2009

Beloved in the Lord,

With the blessing of Metropolitan Jonah and Bishop Tikhon, it is with great joy and thanksgiving to God that I tell of a historic moment in the life of the Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk. On the night of October 24th, 2009, I was elected Abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery, America's oldest Orthodox monastery. This is the first time in 47 years that the Abbot was elected by the Brotherhood from within the fathers of the monastic community.

The date for the installation as the Abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery is set for Saturday, January 23rd, 2010. We invite everyone to come to celebrate with us and participate in this monumental event which is important not only for the Monastery, but also for the entire American Orthodox Church, which the monastery is the flagship of and spiritual front runner.

This historic change will enable our Brotherhood to grow in a new and unprecedented direction, operating as a Stavropegial, self-determining, autonomous Monastery, directly and exclusively under the hierarchical authority of the Metropolitan. The Bishop of Eastern Pennsylvania, his Grace, Bishop Tikhon, will no longer function in a hierarchical capacity but as a primary adviser to the Abbot and community and will remain a very important part of the Monastery Brotherhood.

Historically, we see that no monastery has ever flourished without this kind of self-administration and autonomy that St. Tikhon's Monastery now possesses and that whenever these were restored, monastic life possessed the potential for authenticity, and enabled it to become a vital and life-giving leaven for the entire Church in the country in which it resided. It is with trust in God and with complete transparency to all that we ask for your support and your prayers as we move forward into a bright and new future. Be assured of our prayers and tireless labor for Christ and His Holy Body, the Church.

With great love in Christ,

Fr. Igumen Sergius
Abbot of St. Tikhon's Monastery