



## GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF DENVER

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March 28, 2011

Protocol 11-8

Beloved in the Lord,

It has recently been brought to my attention that there are questions regarding membership in our parishes and member participation in General Assemblies and other parish gatherings.

The matter is very clear and simple, since it is succinctly defined in Article 18 of the Uniform Parish Regulations (UPR).

Every person who is baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox Church is a "parishioner."

Being a "parishioner," however, does not in and of itself mean that one can participate in a General Assembly or be a candidate for election to the parish council. For that matter, merely being a "parishioner" does not — again, in and of itself — mean that one can receive the Sacraments, be a sponsor at a Baptism or Marriage, or receive an Orthodox funeral. All of these are afforded only to Orthodox Christian parishioners who are in "good standing."

As further defined in the Article 18 of the UPR, a "parishioner in good standing" is one who practices the religious, moral and social duties expected of him or her and who applies the tenets of the Orthodox Faith to his or her life. Specifically, these duties are: to attend frequently the Divine Liturgy and also the other worship services; to participate regularly in the holy sacraments; to respect all ecclesiastical authority and all governing bodies of the Church; to be obedient in matters of the Faith, practice and ecclesiastical order; to contribute toward the progress of the Church's sacred mission; and to be an effective witness and example of the Orthodox Faith and Tradition to all people

Furthermore, a "parishioner in good standing" must be eighteen years of age or over; must be current in his or her stewardship and other financial obligations to the Parish; must abide by all the stipulations of the UPR and of the Parish Bylaws; and must cooperate in every way toward the welfare and well being of the Parish.

Those who are not Orthodox, and who are therefore not parishioners in good standing, have been allowed to be present at our General Assemblies, especially if they are catechumens or seriously inquiring into the Orthodox faith. Obviously, however, they are not permitted to speak, participate, or vote on matters under consideration at the Assembly.

Similarly, non-Orthodox spouses have been allowed to be present at General Assemblies but, since they cannot be members in good standing as defined by the UPR, and since their names can therefore not be listed on the rosters of the assemblies, they may not speak, vote, or participate in any way.

I trust this clearly settles any question regarding this matter in the parishes of our Metropolis.

With Paternal Blessings,

✠ Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver