

## **PATRIARCH ASKS DEMETRIOS TO INTERVENE IN CHICAGO AND DENVER**

*Wednesday, May 13 2015 by Theodore Kalmoukos, The National Herald*



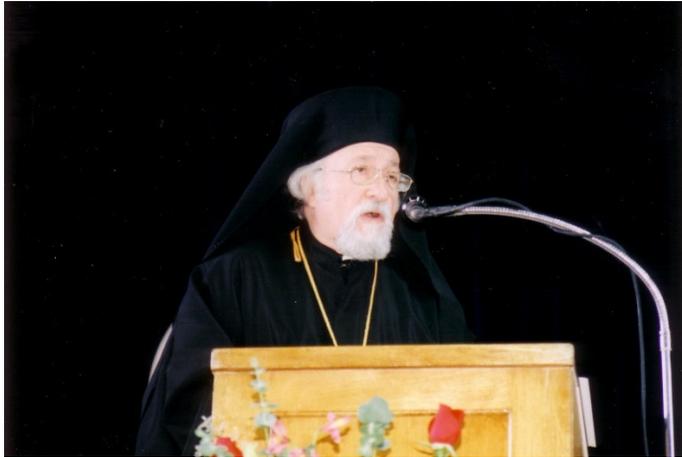
The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew appears to be particularly concerned with the state of ecclesiastical affairs in the Archdiocese of America and has asked Archbishop Demetrios to intervene. The “National Herald” has information that the Patriarch has communicated to Archbishop Demetrios the need to request the resignations of the Metropolitan of Denver Isaiah and the Metropolitan of Chicago Iakovos, and to recall the Bishop of Mokissos Demetrios to the Archdiocese in New York.

The Patriarch’s discreet intervention was not done officially via a Synod so as to avoid any leaks, but communicated privately with Archbishop Demetrios. It should be noted that some months ago Archbishop Demetrios went to Denver himself to address the issue with the parish of Holy Trinity at Salt Lake City in Utah.



The Patriarch seems to be particularly concerned because the Archdiocese of America is in every respect the biggest Eparchy abroad of the Ecumenical Throne. He is highly concerned and agonizes over the divisive situation created in Utah within the parish of the Holy Trinity in Salt Lake City, where the Metropolitan of Denver Isaiah has tried to break it up in two, as the “National Herald” has repeatedly mentioned in its articles.

Metropolitan Isaiah had even reached the point of closing both of the two churches of the parish for a month, and the situation was so out of control that police presence was required inside and outside the church of Prophet Elias during the Holy Liturgy.



Because Metropolitan Isaiah did not achieve his goal, he permitted and encouraged the creation of a new parish in the same city the so called “Missionary Community” as previously mentioned in the “National Herald.” In the mean time the problems in Salt Lake City continues to exist.

In Chicago the situation worsened with the case of the priest Fr. James Dokos who was formally charged by the Prosecutor [State’s Attorney of Milwaukee] with stealing money from a church trust fund of a former parishioner during his twenty year priesthood with the Annunciation parish in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Bishop of Mokissos Demetrios, who in essence is the Auxiliary Bishop of Archbishop Demetrios assigned to serve the Metropolis of Chicago as a Chancellor due to the advanced age of Metropolitan Iakovos, initiated the simultaneous transfer of Fr. Dokos and Fr. Evangelos Artemakis from Saints Peter and Paul in Glenview, Illinois, to the Annunciation parish in Milwaukee, and vice versa.

Fr. Dokos, as revealed by the “National Herald”, gave money from the trust fund to Bishop of Mokissos, Demetrios, as well as to Metropolitan of Dardanellia, Nikitas, who is also the Director of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute in California, and to Metropolitan of Buenos Aires, Tarasios.

There is already a movement within the clergy and the laity calling for the retirement of Metropolitan Iakovos and the recall of Bishop of Mokissos Demetrios back to New York. Signatures are being collected through an Internet petition, while the Syndicate (Syndesmos) of Priests in the Diocese of Chicago on April 1, 2015 sent a letter of support for both hierarchs Demetrios and Iakovos.



Priests from the Chicago area have talked to the “National Herald” about the situation in Chicago, with the condition they remain anonymous because of fears of retaliation from the hierarchs. Various “interested groups” have also been created in Chicago with participants who are members of the Archdiocesan Council and a variety of Committees of the Archdiocese, including that of Finance.

The influence of the monk Ephraim [presently at the St. Anthony Monastery in Florence, AZ] and his Monasteries is especially strong, both in the community and over many priests in Chicago, who adhere to the Ephraimite fundamentalist movement presently operating without any control in Chicago, but also in other Metropolises of the Archdiocese of America. This fundamentalist movement presents a kind of “anti-Church” [both as an alternative theology and in conflict to the local parishes], has made parents concerned about their children getting exposed to the *extreme doctrines* taught by some priests, as many have revealed to the “National Herald.”

Another element for concern is the sharp decline in church attendance in many areas in America, New England being foremost. Many churches in large parishes have become the abominations of desolation with only a few attending liturgy on Sundays, where even on Holy Friday and Holy Saturday there were empty seats in many churches. Many communities experience decline due to unfortunate administrative interventions and the faithful being driven away, while the child molestation case of the priest Adam Metropoulos, the head priest for thirteen years in the parish of St. George in Bangor, Maine, has given rise to even more questions. We should add that Hellenic Education in Boston and in the New England area at large is totally anemic and in a state of neglect.

Meanwhile the conversation between Clergy and Laity regarding what needs to happen with the succession of Archbishop Demetrios, when “his time comes” as they say, is intensifying. The Ecumenical Patriarchate has the exclusive privilege of electing the Archbishop and in essence it depends on the Patriarch.

[Translators’ notes are shown in brackets and are inserted for clarity or explanation.]