

## Minutes of the January 13/26, 2021, Meeting of the Holy Eparchial Synod

On Tuesday, January 13/26, 2021, the Holy Eparchial Synod of the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of America, under the presidency of His Eminence, Metropolitan Demetrius of America convened via video conference.

The following Hierarchs were present: His Eminence, Metropolitan Demetrius of America and President of the Synod; His Eminence, Metropolitan Photios of Demetrias; His Eminence, Metropolitan Moses of Toronto; His Eminence, Bishop Auxentios of Etna and Portland; His Grace, Bishop Christodoulos of Theoupolis; and His Grace, Bishop Maximus of Pelagonia.

The Eparchial Synod discussed the following items:

1. The numerous and differing views expressed by Hierarchs and clergy regarding the current pandemic and the social measures pertaining to it.
2. The process of recognizing the holiness of people in a local church and the related question of official glorification. The common understanding is that it is God who glorifies the Saints; it is the Church that officially proclaims them. It was also acknowledged that even before an official proclamation a local Diocese may recognize a holy person as a Saint.
3. A large group of people in Nigeria have petitioned the Holy Synod to join our Church, and they have been patiently waiting for a Priest to visit. Because of the current travel restrictions, it is difficult to visit Nigeria. The Hierarchs will continue correspondence with them and will pray for them and for their entrance into the Church.
4. The Saint Photios Orthodox Theological Seminary is approaching a decision on its accreditation. The accrediting agency will announce its decision on Friday, February 6/19, the feast of St. Photios, its Patron Saint. The Eparchial Synod will appeal to all of the parishes to serve either a moleben to Saint Photios or a supplicatory canon to the Theotokos for their intercessions for approval.
5. The Saint John of Damascus Orthodox Educational Initiative is now renting space to be used as a chapel and an office in Hillsdale, Michigan. Things are progressing and remain positive. The Hierarchs are asking for your prayers and continued support for the growth of the Saint John of Damascus Orthodox Education Initiative. We remind you all that the ultimate goal of the Initiative is no less than to offer a comprehensive online curriculum for primary, middle school, and high school students, approaching every branch of knowledge from the Orthodox viewpoint, as well as to offer enrichment classes for interested adults.