



Orthodox Church in America  
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

1 September 2019  
Beginning of the Liturgical Year  
№. 132

To all Rectors, Priests-in-Charge, Deacons, Monastics and Laity of the Midwest,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

We embark upon another new school year at St. Vladimir's (SVS) and St. Tikhon's Seminaries (STS). At this time of the year we call upon our parishes to collect funds to "Support our Seminarians."

**Attending STS this year are:**

- Deacon Ephraim Tauck (3<sup>rd</sup> year)
- Sub-deacon Peter Simko (2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Matthew McDonald (2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- *It is my expectation that this semester, Deacon Ephrem will be ordained to the Priesthood, and Sub-deacon Peter, and Matthew will be ordained to the Diaconate.*

**Also beginning M.Div. studies at STS this year are:**

- Reader Jacob Ponomarenko from St. Theodosius Cathedral in Cleveland, OH
- Matthew Pings from St. Matthew Orthodox Church in Green Bay, WI
- Payton Saunders from Holy Ascension Orthodox Church in Albion, MI

This past year,

- There were no graduates from STS.

**Attending SVS this year is:**

- Aaron Rutz (3<sup>rd</sup> year)

No students have enrolled at SVS for the upcoming year.

This past year,

- Deacon Basil (Brian) Crivella graduated from SVS with an M.Div. He is attached to his former Parish, St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Mentor, OH to serve as a

## Support Our Seminarians Month

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deacon for a short while with the hope that ordination to the Priesthood will happen a year from now.

As your bishop, I am beginning to “feel the pinch,” so to speak, for candidates to fill present and future positions. We have several new mission opportunities. We have an opportunity for one parish in decline that has liquidated some properties so that we can assign a priest there to see what can be accomplished in the next four years. This is in addition to several parish vacancies that will occur by the summer of June of 2020. The problem is I don’t have anyone to put in these places for now. All the more why we need to encourage our parishes to bring potential candidates for seminary to my attention. We need this annual seminary collection to further support the seven students that are attending this year. These \$1,000 diocesan scholarships per semester are greatly appreciated by our students. I often have received thank you cards or messages of gratitude from students when they receive this support.

There are many options parishes can pursue to collect these funds. Our youth can plan and offer bake sales, car washes, or talent shows. Parishes can put out an extra basket for the month of September for our seminarians. Or parishes may have “Support our Seminarians” as a line item in their budget. Do what you can to help our students. I am grateful to our Lord for whatever you can do.

The blessing of the Lord be upon you.

With love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**+PAUL**

Bishop of Chicago and the Midwest