



## Clergy of the Metropolis of Chicago to benefit and grow through newly expanded leadership initiative

**LOMBARD, IL, APRIL 25, 2023** – The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago announced today the expansion of its *Higher Calling* initiative, with the launch of three new programs.

*Higher Calling* provides the clergy of the Metropolis of Chicago with opportunities for continuing education and leadership formation. The ultimate purpose of programming under *Higher Calling* is to help clergy deliver better spiritual guidance, pastoral care, and Christian inspiration to the faithful and faith seekers across the Metropolis of Chicago.

The newly launched *Higher Calling* programs include:

- **Clergy Sermon Retreat.** The Metropolis of Chicago is organizing a [two-day retreat](#) for 20 of its clergy. The retreat will focus on strategies for preparing and delivering high-quality and engaging sermons. After surveying 750 parishioners of the Metropolis of Chicago, the Strategic Planning Task Force, “Enhanced Worship & Parish Engagement & Accessibility,” discerned that meaningful and impactful sermons are essential for enhancing the Sunday Liturgy experience.
- **Continuing Education and Ministerial Excellence.** All Metropolis clergy may apply for [educational expense reimbursement](#) for any qualified academic, theological, or technical continuing education undertaking. The program may also be used by applicants for student loan relief.
- **Leadership Training and Development.** Four clergymen will be selected on an annual basis to participate in a four-year program designed to improve soft skills necessary for effective leadership, including: creating work-life balance; shaping parish culture; setting and achieving goals; envisioning and establishing values; hiring staff and recruiting volunteers; managing teams.

“Every day, our clergy approach their sacred calling with gratitude and joy, even when it requires sacrificing personal aspirations and family obligations. We must therefore respond with the same spirit of Christian love by deepening our commitment to their long-term success as heralds of the Gospel,” said His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago. “I’m pleased by the steps our Metropolis has taken to invest in the growth of our clergy; however, I wish to emphasize that this is just the beginning of our work to strengthen and support those who are entrusted with the care of our peoples’ souls.”

The programs, which are in their inaugural year, are funded by the Metropolis of Chicago through the generosity of its benefactors and are meant to be annualized and grow in scale and scope in subsequent years.

### **About the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago**

Tracing its roots back to 1923, the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago is the diocese of Greek Orthodox faithful in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, northern Indiana, and southeastern Missouri, consisting of 58 parishes and two monastic communities. The Metropolis is one of nine regions in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and is presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael. The general offices of the Metropolis are temporarily located in Lombard,



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