



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

Responses to Consolidated Questions Posted on November 3

1. Should we locate the Metropolis Center at SIRC?

Locating the Metropolis Center at SIRC was considered but, ultimately, the Metropolis requires a central, convenient, and accessible location for clergy, lay volunteers, staff, guests, and dignitaries. Moreover, locating the Metropolis Center at SIRC does not address the underlying financial condition.

2. Boston has a flourishing camp. Would it be possible for the SIRC Board to apply their model to SIRC?

The SIRC board has been and will continue to gather best practices throughout the GOA, including the Metropolis of Boston.

3. Can parishes provide less than what the 13th Assessment asks for since not all can afford it?

Assessments will be allocated as proportionately to the GOA assessment and requires the faithful participation of all of our parishes. That said, the Metropolis intends to engage each parish experiencing a demonstrable financial hardship individually.

4. Can we find 270 Donors to donate \$10,000 each to keep the center open?

The fundraising team, the SIRC board, and the Metropolis staff are working diligently to meet and exceed fundraising goals, including setting stretch goals and appealing to high-net-worth donors, including donors with the resources to eliminate SIRC debt.

5. The responses to the FAQs sound as though SIRC is in financial distress. Does the Metropolis believe that SIRC is not on solid financial footing?

SIRC has always relied on the donations from the faithful to stem the losses generated between operational income and total expenses. This amount averages to roughly \$500,000 per year, a financial reality that both the Metropolis and SIRC believe is untenable requiring moving in a substantially different direction.

6. Can we review the SIRC operational costs in an easy-to-understand format with a timeline of next steps?

Presentations focusing on a fundraising overview, financial report, and parish allocation process are now available on the SIRC discernment process webpage.

7. How has SIRC benefited us, the Parishes, the Metropolis, our community and the broader community?

This specific question is at the heart of the discernment process His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael has called for and one that parishes will be engaging in over the next several months.

8. Will the Metropolis provide an overview and analysis of a mandatory contribution?

Yes. This information has been presented and is available.



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9. Has our Metropolitan prohibited SIRC from fundraising, holding fundraisers, and soliciting donations as they have successfully done in the past?

No. SIRC continues to fundraise for operations excluding appeals and donations for new capital expenditures.

10. What is the plan for Fanari Camp if SIRC goes away?

The current plan is for SIRC to host Fanari for the foreseeable future. Fanari has been ministering to our youth for over 50 years at three different locations and, with God's grace, will continue for another 50 years.

11. Who is responsible for the health and solvency of SIRC? The Metropolis or the SIRC Board?

SIRC is governed by its board of directors who are tasked with the administration and overall operation of SIRC. The Metropolis is the sole shareholder and investor.

12. There are 5 other Metropolises that own and operate retreat centers with comparable missions including the GOA which has owned and operated the Ionian Village in Greece for over 50 years. Why and how does the Metropolis of Chicago doubt that the SIRC does not align with that overall mission?

There is a crucial distinction between supporting a youth ministry and *owning* and *operating* a retreat center property. Understanding, discussing, and debating this distinction is the focus of the discernment process.

13. In the past, parishes included a line item for SIRC in their budget. Why is this no longer the practice?

In 2019, after discussions with parish leaders, His Eminence ended the mandatory annual "13th assessment" that required parishes to fund SIRC. Since then, some parishes have continued the practice of budgeting a line item for SIRC support, but not all at the original level. We are grateful that we received these annual contributions.

14. Other Metropolises require their retreat centers to be used for all clergy events, retreats, meetings, youth programs and events, etc. Does the Metropolis of Chicago do this?

SIRC is open to third parties and that practice have been successful in renting the center. Where appropriate, events are held at SIRC, but not all meetings are held at SIRC (e.g., Metropolis Council meetings, which are held at the Metropolis' offices).