



E. No. 58/18
January 15, 2018

**INVITATION
TO THE
ANNUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE GOD-PROTECTED DIOCESE OF EASTERN AMERICA
FEBRUARY 16th – 17th, 2018
ST. GEORGE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
IN CLEARWATER**

*Speak to the entire **assembly** of Israel and say to them:
'Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am Holy' (Lev. 19:2).*

TO ALL CLERGY AND ORDAINED MONASTICS;
TO ALL CHURCH-SCHOOL CONGREGATION EXECUTIVE BOARDS;
TO ALL MISSION PARISH BOARDS AND MONASTERY ADMINISTRATIONS;
TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL AND THEIR ALTERNATES;
TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN AUDIT BOARD; AND
TO THE FEDERATION OF THE CIRCLES OF SERBIAN SISTERS
OF THE HOLY DIOCESE OF EASTERN AMERICA

Beloved Clergy and Faithful,

Joy and peace to you at the beginning of the wreath of this New Year of the Lord's Grace!

On the basis of a decision of the Diocesan Council at its extraordinary meeting of August 05, 2017 and on the basis of the *Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church in North and South America* Article 21.3, We herein summon the ANNUAL DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY to its regular convocation from Friday, February 16th to Saturday, February 17th, at the St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, 15250 58th Street North, Clearwater, FL 33760, (T) 727.531.0052, per the following schedule:

❖ **FRIDAY,**

FEBRUARY 16th:

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Arrivals and Registration
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Vespers and Invocation of the Holy Spirit
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM – 10:00 PM	Reports and First Working Session

❖ **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17th:**

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Hierarchical Divine Liturgy
11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	Continental Breakfast
12:30 PM – 2:00 PM	Final Working Session and Departures

This year, as an exception, given that the Annual Diocesan Assembly immediately follows the Orthodox Institute of Sts. Sebastian and Mardarije, which will be held at the same location from February 13-15, there will not be a thematic presentation.

ASSEMBLY MEMBERSHIP: In accordance with the *Constitution* Article 21.2, the Diocesan Assembly is comprised of: The Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan Council and Auditing Board, all active and retired Priests, Ordained Monastics and Deacons, Presidents of Executive Boards of Church-School Congregations (or their alternates) and one Delegate elected at a Congregational Assembly, and two Delegates from the Diocesan Federation of the Circles of Serbian Sisters.

QUALIFICATIONS: An essential qualification for participation in the Assembly is that all said members of the Assembly must be in good standing with their local parish. As members of the Church, it is incumbent upon everyone present to participate in the Invocation of the Holy Spirit and thereby prepare themselves to receive Holy Communion at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. (Clergy are asked to bring gold/white vestments.) Only by participating in the Life-giving Mysteries of our Church will we manifest ourselves as an Assembly, i.e. the sacred Community, the Holy People of God, true members of our Local Church, which is one in Christ.

STEWARDSHIP: In order to participate in the Assembly, every Church-School Congregation must also strive to meet its Annual Assessment and all other obligations towards its Diocese.

CREDENTIALS: Enclosed, please find a singular Credential Form for the Parish Priest, Executive Board President (or alternate) and Congregational Delegate. This form must be completed in advance of the Assembly so that it can be submitted upon arrival at the Registration Desk to the Credentials Committee for processing.

REPORTS: Under separate cover, in one envelope, three sets of Reports will be sent in care of your Parish Priest for the perusal of your representatives. Kindly bring these with you to the Assembly as no extra copies will be provided. A detailed Agenda will be provided at the Assembly.

AIRPORT INFORMATION: St. Pete–Clearwater International Airport.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Hotel rooms can be reserved at any of the three designated hotels:

1. *SLEEP INN*

3939 Ulmerton Rd, Clearwater, FL 33762 (T) 727.573.5049
Distance from the Church 3.0 miles; 7 min)
(Distance from Tampa Airport 13.2 miles; 17 min)
(15) Non-Smoking kings at \$109.00 (includes breakfast)
(10) Non-Smoking doubles at \$129.00 (includes breakfast)
Call for reservation and refer to St. George Church\Fr. Dragan Lj. Zaric

2. *COMFORT INN & SUITES*

3910 Ulmerton Rd, Clearwater, FL 33762 (T) 727.573.3334, or 727/572-4845
(Distance from the Church 2,8 Miles; 7 Minutes)
(Distance from Tampa Airport 14.9 miles; 20 min)
(35) 2 Double Beds, no smoking at \$ 99.00 (includes breakfast)
(10) 1 King Bed, no smoking at \$99.00 (includes breakfast)
(5) 2 Queen Beds, No smoking at \$99.00 (includes breakfast)
Call for reservation and refer to St. George Church\Fr. Dragan Lj. Zanic

3. FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES

3070 Gulf to Bay Blvd, Clearwater, FL 33759 (T) 727.724-6223
(Distance from the Church 5.4 Miles; 11 Minutes)
(25) 2 Double Beds, no smoking \$89.00 (includes breakfast) - rates for Feb 13 to Feb 16 -
Rates for other days \$169.
Call/text/email church representative directly to reserve rooms in this hotel (Nevena
Bunijevac (M) 727.623.2875, or nevenabg@yahoo.com)

Again, beloved, as the Assembly is first and foremost a SPIRITUAL GATHERING OF THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL AROUND THEIR BISHOP, which is, according to the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch, an **iconic likeness of the Kingdom of Heaven**, you are asked to prayerfully prepare for the work of our Assembly, so that we can worthily begin our common work by communing with the Body and Blood of the very Lord and only-begotten Savior Jesus Christ, and labor in love through the prayers of St. George the Great-martyr and Victory-bearer, and Sts. Sebastian of Jackson and Mardarije of Libertyville.

ST. SIMEON THE MYRRHFLOWING SLAVA IN MIAMI:

For those who are able to stay and join us on Sunday, February 18th for the Patronal Feast Day Celebration in honor of St. Simeon the Myrrhflowing, at 175 NW 154th Street, North Miami, FL 33169, please contact Fr. Milan Krstic for further information at (T) 724.302.9236, or protamilan@gmail.com. Welcome, indeed!

With Archpastoral Blessings and Paternal Love,

BISHOP OF EASTERN AMERICA

