



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF BOSTON
ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΒΟΣΤΩΝΗΣ

January 21, 2010

**To the Faithful Stewards
of the Saint Athanasios Parish
in Arlington, MA**

Dear Brethren,

Following the Great Vespers Service this past Sunday evening, I announced that I would be meeting with the members of the Parish Council and Elections Committee to discuss your beloved Parish. I had received a number of telephone calls and letters expressing concern over recent developments in the community. Indeed, that meeting took place at the Metropolis. We had an open and honest discussion during which everyone was afforded the opportunity to voice their opinions respectfully and in a dignified manner.

During the meeting, it became apparent that there was a lack of communication and transparency among the Parish Council members. For example, when I inquired about the size of the community--- the number of families, the number of financial stewards, the budget, and the remaining mortgage, I heard three or four different responses. The same was true when I inquired about the last two General Assemblies. It was clear to me that some Parish Council members did not understand the content of the proposals presented. There was considerable controversy revolving around the "outside consultant" whose letter was read at the General Assembly, even though its contents were never discussed previously at the parish council. It was alleged only a handful were privy to the facts. Obviously there is an absence of process and procedure in the administration of the Parish

Council and by extension the entire community. Plainly stated, the right hand does not always know what the left is doing. This state of affairs results in confusion and, unfortunately, hostile feelings which negatively affect the Community.

No one can deny that there was electioneering (or campaigning) prior to the Parish elections. Regrettably, some individuals were ostracized via e-mails because they either agreed or disagreed with the positions of the Parish Priest or Parish Council President. This is unacceptable. Everyone serving on the Parish Council must be afforded the courtesy of knowing and understanding all the facts prior to making a decision on a particular matter. There will always be differences of opinion. No one, however, should be demonized because he/she does not agree with certain positions. I asked everyone present to stop sending emails. We are brothers and sisters in the household of God who must communicate with each other face to face with honesty and respect. Trite clichés, hypocrisy, innuendo, gossip, and character assassinations have no place in a Christian Community.

After careful thought, I have come to the following decision which I pray will benefit the Community:

The present Parish Council will remain in office and serve together with those individuals elected on January 10 until Sunday, May 2, 2010. Elections will take place that day, the Feast of Saint Athanasios. This will give the opportunity to stewards of the Community vacationing in Florida or Arizona for the winter months to vote. At the last election both Absentee Ballots and proxy votes were accepted. Though permitted, a procedure for absentee ballots must be submitted by the Election Committee and Parish Council to the Metropolis for approval. Clearly, “proxy votes” permitted in the recent elections are in violation with the Uniform Regulations of the Archdiocese.

My decision has solely one purpose, i.e., to encourage you to work together for the benefit of the Community, which has a large mortgage that will not be retired unless everyone offers their support. You all have visions for the future of the community which will not be realized unless and until you are all united in purpose.

I am confident that this interim Parish Council will work harmoniously with your Parish Priest--and he with them--so that the St. Athanasios Community will continue being a radiant light of our Metropolis and Archdiocese. The Metropolis of Boston is proud of the many achievements of the St. Athanasios Parish and prays that the future be blessed with much success.

With fatherly love,

Methodios Malcolson

**METHODIOS
Metropolitan of Boston**