

Morning, Good Fathers...

I hope that all of you had a most blessed and joyous Feast of the Dormition and trust that the next few weeks will give you one last opportunity before the new ecclesiastical year starts to enjoy some restful time.

My reason for writing is to address the matter of "private chapels". There are some faithful in our District who have taken the initiative, without consulting with us, to erect a small private chapel on their property. Unfortunately, they don't consider what will happen when the decision is made to sell the property and I am reminded of an incident I experienced a few years ago. While visiting a parish in Connecticut I was approached by a woman who asked my assistance in finding someone Orthodox to buy her home since she had erected a chapel on the property!

In any case, we all know our people are going to do (in this case innocently) what they want. Nevertheless, I wanted to ask that none of you accept an invitation to officiate at any services at these private chapels. You should direct those individuals to the Chancellery. If possible, we want to avoid "adding" to the sanctity of the structure and elevating it to another level and changing its nature by conducting a service in it.

I have already discussed the matter with His Eminence to get some guidance, especially since he is familiar with these phenomena in Greece and he shared with me that the Metropolitans even there discourage these chapels, and services being done in them.

We will deal with each request accordingly and give guidance to you as to what may or may not be done...

I convey the paternal agape and best wishes of His Eminence that you and the faithful of your respective communities enjoy a productive and uplifting new church year.

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+Bishop Andonios of Phasiane  
Chancellor of the