



Епархія Чикагская и Средне-Американская
Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей

Diocese of Chicago & Mid-America
Russian Orthodox Church Abroad

P.O Box 1367
Des Plaines, IL 60017

Tel: (847) 373-4002

Fax: (847) 789-8885

Email: dcma.rocor@gmail.com

Web: chicagodiocese.org

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Great Martyr Eustathius

Dear Fathers,

The events in Las Vegas have made me pause and reflect on the state of our country. Saint Paul commands us to pray for the land we live in and its civil authorities. Mind you, the great Apostle wrote this about a pagan land, with pagan leaders.

I was appalled to read what some had to say about the shooting and the victims; while others took advantage to politicize this tragedy before the victims were even buried. Our first reaction to such a tragedy as Orthodox Christians must always be prayer and not politics. I call upon you all to pray for the victims of this tragedy – both the living and the dead – and that the Lord may have mercy on them all!

We must support our civil authorities, and speak out against any attempts to undermine them. This has nothing to do if we agree with their policies, or not.

The Christians of the I, II and III centuries changed and re-vitalized the Roman Empire not by revolution, but by evolution.

We -- the leaders of the Church -- must lead by example. Let us call our fellow citizens to a higher level of discourse, to service towards others, to prayer, to sacrifice for our country, our fellow citizens, for strangers, for all.

This is not a question of whether we approve of a given candidate or office holder. This is a spiritual obligation that we, as leaders, must undertake, and teach our parishioners to follow.

May the Lord bless this land and all of you.

With love in Christ,

+ Archbishop Peter

Peter, Archbishop of Chicago & Mid-America

