

**RESOLUTION OF THE 18<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY OF THE AUSTRALAN AND NEW ZEALAND  
DIOCESE  
Held in Sydney 17-19 November 2016**

We, the participants of the Eighteenth Diocesan Assembly of the Australian-New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia, here in the God-preserved city of Sydney, give thanks to God for the opportunity to gather to consider the life and achievements of our vast Diocese.

For the first time, we commenced our Assembly with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at which the great majority of Diocesan clergy concelebrated. We were uplifted by God's grace, our common prayer and the beauty of the service. Our Eucharistic unity set the tone for the remainder of the Assembly.

At our head stands His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion, our beloved Archpastor for the past two decades. His love and care for his flock, and the reciprocal devotion of the faithful, are always before us. At the banquet held in honour of his twenty years of service on the evening of the first day of the Assembly this tangible spirit of unity was again evident.

When we gathered three years ago we anticipated the possibility of a vicar bishop for our Diocese. We rejoice in the appointment of His Grace Bishop George, a man already well-known to Metropolitan Hilarion and our priests educated at the Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, New York. We look forward to his long and fruitful service in our midst.

It was edifying to see Mitred Archpriest Michael Protopopov receive the Order of Saint Raphael of Brooklyn from the Synod of Bishops and a number of our senior priests awarded the Diocesan Cross for long and faithful service. We pray that their example will inspire a new generation of young men to dedicate themselves to service in the parishes and communities of our Diocese.

We note a number of pleasing developments in the work of preparation for the Assembly. Materials were carefully prepared, attractively presented, and distributed in advance. Steps were taken to improve the process of electing a new Diocesan Council and Auditing Committee. All of this greatly helped the work of the Assembly.

In discussing the varied life and work of our Diocese, the Assembly did not shy away from difficult – and even controversial – topics. Pleasingly, these were resolved in a way that ultimately served to build our unity.

The increasing number of younger people participating in the Diocesan Assembly was noted with joy. Comprehensive reports on the work of the Diocesan Liturgical Music Committee and on the life our monasteries – the barometer of Orthodox spiritual life – were heard with interest.

A spirit of generosity and of engagement with the fullness of the life of the Diocese pervaded the whole Assembly.

The Diocesan Assembly acknowledges with gratitude the exemplary service of Nicholas Nedachin, the long-serving Diocesan Treasurer. Noting that he did not seek a further term on the Diocesan Council, the Assembly thanks him for his devoted and sacrificial service to the Diocese, often in difficult circumstances.

The Assembly also thanks the other outgoing members of the Diocesan Council for their work: Archpriest James Carles, Lubov Cowall, Alexander Bialocerkowski, and Nicholas Wirubov.

Our Diocese as a whole faces many challenges in the years ahead. Spiritual ignorance and discord challenge us from within, whilst an increasing turning away from God in Western society challenges us from without. May God grant us to resist all such temptations, building on the foundations laid by Archbishop Sava and the other ever-memorable hierarchs of our Diocese, remaining faithful to the Holy Orthodox Church and to the historical path – the Royal Path – of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia.