



The Diocese of the West
THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
Most. Rev. Benjamin
Archbishop of San Francisco
1520 Green Street, San Francisco, CA 94123-5102
(415) 567-WEST (9378)

April 30, 2015

Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord

It is my great joy to endorse the formation of, and to promote the growth of, the Orthodox Church Capital Improvement Fund (OCCIF). Initially, OCCIF was the product of the vision of several clergy and laymen of the Diocese of the West who had recognized how difficult it is for parishes, missions and monastic institutions to obtain financing through secular financial institutions. They saw the need for a lending source whose goal it was to help expand our Church's mission and fund its growth.

To be honest, other Christian groups have seen a similar need and created financial institutions that have made it possible for congregations to pool their limited resources together in order to fund loans to other qualified constituent communities. Building upon the experience of others and making adjustments to reflect the needs and challenges that are particular to the Orthodox Church, OCCIF was born. Simply put, OCCIF is a means of using what belong to God for the building up of God's Church, a way of investing in our own Church.

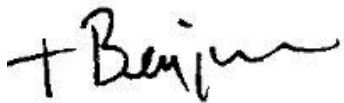
However, in order for it to become possible to make loans to parishes and monastic communities, OCCIF needs to grow its capital base. The directors of OCCIF are, therefore, looking for individuals and parishes willing to make charitable donations to create a base of unencumbered capital to begin its work. OCCIF also seeks to help parishes pool their resources to continue to build God's Church. By loaning capital to OCCIF, a parish provides OCCIF the ability to lend capital to fund

construction projects throughout the Diocese. Parish loans to OCCIF result in projects being funded much sooner than they would if OCCIF were to rely solely on donations until its capital base is further developed.

The success of OCCIF will be directly proportional to the participation of us all, both parishes and individuals.

We ask God's blessing on this endeavor and pray it will become an important tool in the building up of our parishes, missions and monasteries.

Asking God's blessing, I am,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Benjamin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

+Benjamin