

St. Vladimir Orthodox Church

A Parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad

Ann Arbor, MI ~ Founded 1981

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Parish Instructional letter 01/19

October 30/November 12, 2019
Hieromartyr Zenobios

With thanks to God for our growing clergy brotherhood in our St. Vladimir Parish, this letter is issued to assist all our parish clergy to harmonize our service to the Lord and to align us, to the greatest extent possible, to the norms of the Russian Orthodox Church. It is understood that each clergyman will serve with some idiosyncrasies. But these should be minimized. We should, as a rule, all strive to serve to a set standard, and this will be especially important as, God willing, our clergy brotherhood continues to grow.

- A) In general we should not do anything when the bishop is absent that we would not do if he were present.
- B) Clergymen should arrive at the evening services not less than 15 minutes before the beginning of the Divine Services. 30 minutes would be ideal. It should never be the case that the parishioners must wait for the clergymen to be ready to begin the service beyond the scheduled start time. With this in mind clergymen should plan their arrival time accordingly. This is the second time we have included this instruction in such a letter. We must improve our timeliness.
- C) Clergymen should arrive at the Divine Liturgy not less than 45 minutes before the beginning of the Divine Liturgy. This allows for all entrance prayers to be read before the Hours are begun. The priest assigned to serve the Proskomide should arrive earlier than this – in order to substantially complete the preparation of the Gifts by the time the other clergymen arrive. This is the second time we have included this instruction in such a letter. We must improve our timeliness.
- D) Clergymen should not walk about during the sermon or other similar times when the Divine Services are not actively underway, acting as an example to the faithful of piety and attentiveness.
- E) Clergymen should not leave the church before the Divine Services have concluded without a specific blessing to do so. This applies also to the First Hour following Matins.
- F) At the Entrance Prayers a priest does not lift up his hands at the reading of the prayer: “O Lord, stretch forth Thy hand...”
- G) Please be aware that the microphones in the altar are very powerful, and anything that is said louder than a quiet whisper is heard by those listening on the live stream.
- H) Clergymen should memorize prayers that must be said when it is not convenient to hold the Sluzhebник. If prayers cannot be memorized then they should be written on a small card that can be easily used in such situations. In this way the flow of the Divine Services will not be interrupted.

Very Rev. Father Gregory Joyce
Rector, St Vladimir Orthodox Church

