

Two Letters from the Clergy of Sourozh Diocese to Bishop Basil of Sergievo, published on Dioceseinfo.org.

Letter from the Deans of the Diocese of Sourozh to Bishop Basil of Sergievo

1 January- 2006

Dear Bishop Basil,

We are writing to you as the pastor and administrator of the Diocese of Sourozh At this critical moment in the life of the Diocese and your ministry to us, we write to thank you for informing us of the recent developments with Fr Andrei Teterin who has long been at odds with the majority of the clergy and we wish to express our total support for your handling of this matter so far and to offer our backing for any subsequent action you may take in resolving it effectively and conclusively. We deplore the behaviour exhibited by Fr Andrei at the London conference of The Russian Christian Movement on Saturday 3rd December and even more scandalously after the Liturgy in the cathedral on the following day. We also deplore the letter that he wrote to the cathedral parish council and, discourteously disregarding yourself copied to Patriarch Alexis, Metropolitan Kirin and Archbishop Innokentii. Furthermore we are outraged by his attempt to involve the Russian Ambassador who, as the representative of a foreign power. has no jurisdiction in this country. We are also anxious that letters of complaint, statements and petitions generated by members of the cathedral parish council attacking your leadership of the Diocese should no longer be left unchallenged. Whenever such attacks are made, it is vitally important for the sake of the well-being of the faithful and the continued ministry and good order of the Church that those responsible whether they are members of the laity or of the clergy, whatever their rank, should not ultimately escape ecclesiastical censure. Those few individuals who have chosen to attack the work of the Diocese and our leadership have done so publicly, and we believe it would be of enormous help to the Presbytery, as your loyal delegates, if you continue to inform us of events and your decisions concerning them as soon as they occur so that we are not left in ignorance and unable to answer any questions that may be put to us.

Signed: // Your Deans: Alexander, Benedict, Daniel, John, John and Patrick

**To: Bishop Basil of Sergievo
Administrator
Russian Orthodox Diocese of Sourozh**

6 February 2006

Your Grace, dear Vladyka,

We are writing to you to express our concern on matters that we all felt were best not discussed at the meeting of Diocesan Clergy held in Oxford on Saturday, 4 February 2006.

Firstly we are deeply concerned at the conduct of Archpriest Andrey Teterin in the London cathedral parish during the past two months in that he publicly showed his disrespect for you, the Administrator of the Diocese. This is not something we have experienced among our priests in the past, and we strongly believe that it must be brought to an end. A member of the clergy is not entitled to go over the head of his bishop simply because he disagrees with him. This is clerical

disobedience, and such behaviour encourages division in the cathedral parish and the Diocese, and is a serious temptation to the laity, since it encourages them to be disobedient as well.

Secondly, we are distressed by the way Archbishop Anatoly has given public support to Father Andrey. This is demonstrated in the comments he made on Sunday, 11 December 2005, after the Liturgy. We have seen the transcript of his words and they indicate clearly that he approves of the stand Father Andrey has taken against the Russian Christian Movement and therefore his bishop. We feel that this is intolerable in an Assistant Bishop. Such behaviour also encourages division in the parish and the Diocese and is a serious temptation to the laity.

Thirdly, we have become aware that Archbishop Anatoly has also sought to hinder your work in other areas. He has attempted to undermine the reputation of the Sister Feodosia, whom you brought from Russia to try to establish monastic life in the Diocese after Archbishop Anatoly on two occasions declined to do so. Vladyka Anatoly also succeeded in dissuading parishioners from taking part in the reading of the monastic office in Slavonic in the cathedral, though you had blessed Sister Feodosia to do this in order to encourage parishioners to learn how to read properly in church and to develop an understanding of the monastic offices. He also successfully dissuaded parishioners from joining a group being organised by Sister Feodosia to read the Psalter in their homes according to a fixed rule.

The presence in the Diocese of an Assistant Bishop who does not support your efforts to continue the work of Metropolitan Anthony is a serious temptation to the parishioners of the London cathedral and throughout the Diocese.

We see no obvious or easy solution to this situation, but think it right that we should express our concern and ask that you share it with His Holiness, Patriarch Alexis.

Asking for your holy prayers, we are your humble servants in Christ, the Deans of the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Sourozh,

Archpriest John Lee

Archpriest Benedict Ramsden

Archpriest Alexander Fostiropoulos