

# Orthodox Diocese of Sitka & Alaska

Orthodox Church in America

The Most Blessed Tikhon  
Metropolitan & Primate

The Right Reverend Alexei  
Bishop of Sitka & Alaska

October 20/November 2, 2023  
Great-Martyr Artemius in Antioch

Dear Brother and Concelebrant in the Sacred Mysteries, Your Beatitude, Metropolitan TIKHON,

I greet Your Beatitude on behalf of the faithful of the Diocese of Sitka and Alaska and seek on their behalf your sacred, primate blessing.

I am writing to Your Beatitude with respect to the departed handmaiden of God and faithful Orthodox Christian, Matushka Olga Michael of Kwethluk, known by the pious peoples of the Kuskokwim as *Arrsamquq*. Her humility, her generosity, her piety, her patience, and her selfless love for God and neighbor were well-known in the Kuskokwim villages during her earthly life. Her care for comforting the suffering and the grieving have also been revealed after her life by grace-filled manifestations to the faithful throughout not only Alaska, but all of North America. The first peoples of Alaska are convinced of her sanctity and the great efficacy of her prayers. For this reason, after prayerful consideration, I, Alexei, Bishop of Sitka and Alaska, am hereby making the formal request to Your Beatitude as the primate of the Orthodox Church in America, to begin the process that, if it be in accord with God's will, would lead to her eventual glorification.

Your Beatitude is well-aware of the great challenges we face in Alaska due to many factors beyond our control. Building a temple in Alaska takes much more time than it would in more temperate zones with greater resources. The same applies for making worthy preparations for something as momentous as the glorification of a new Saint. I ask that the need for additional time be included with this our formal request. If by the grace of God, Matushka Olga will be officially included among the ranks of Orthodox Saints, I also humbly ask that we consult *Yup'ik* Elders and faithful across the Diocese about the most propitious time for the eventual celebration, the most favorable location for her final resting place, and the most appropriate content for the hymnography in her praise. In this way, we will also honor this beloved Matushka by acting in harmony with *Yup'ik* respect for others that is at the heart of *yuyaraq*, the way of the human being.

I thank Your Beatitude for kindly considering this request.

With fraternal love in Christ,



+Alexei

+Allgiliyaq Kilirnaq

Bishop of the Mother Diocese of Sitka and Alaska



Chancery & Offices of the Bishop

430 C Street, Suite 303 • Anchorage, Alaska 99501 • Office (907) 677-0224 • Fax (907) 677-0646