

# EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF THE DIOCESE OF THE SOUTH

**DATE**                    May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
**TIME:**                    12:30 PM EASTERN  
**LOCATION:**                ZOOM

## **ATTENDEES:**

His Eminence, Archbishop Alexander, His Grace, Bishop Gerasim, Archpriest Marcus Burch, Archpriest Peter Robichau, Jason Bigelow, Maureen Jury, Mary Harkins, Archpriest Philip Kontos, Thomas Hemstock, Archpriest Theodor Pisarchuk, Ali P., Archpriest Jason Foster, Archpriest Theophan Buck, Anya Gill, Frank Dale, Joshua Greening, Archpriest David Wooten, Archpriest Basil Biberdorf, David Charpie, Archpriest John Cox

## **MEETING PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

The Diocesan Council of the Diocese of the South convened this meeting to discuss the process for selecting a new ruling bishop following Archbishop Alexander's planned retirement. The sole agenda item was whether or not to proceed with Bishop Gerasim as the sole candidate for consideration. The council discussed the unusual timing of starting the process before the formal vacancy was declared, with some members asking questions about procedures in the diocesan bylaws. After discussion, the council voted unanimously in favor of moving forward with Bishop Gerasim as the candidate to be presented at the special nominating assembly scheduled for July 24th in Jacksonville, FL.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **PRACTICAL CONSIDERATION OF ARCHBISHOP ALEXANDER'S RETIREMENT**

The discussion centered around Archbishop Alexander's planned retirement from his position as ruling bishop of the Diocese of the South, which was made in the summer of 2025, but was received by His Beatitude with a request to delay His Eminence's retirement as ruling bishop. Fr. Marcus explained that while the proposal being considered today was perhaps "unusual" due to the lack of a specific retirement date and locum tenens, Archbishop Alexander was effectively fulfilling the locum tenens' role. Fr. Marcus noted that this arrangement could possibly be perceived as the imposition of a single candidate, though multiple members noted that the candidate, Bishop Gerasim, was well-known and had broad support throughout the diocese, and was nominated as a candidate by the DOS Assembly formally years ago.

### **BISHOP SELECTION PROCESS DISCUSSION**

The group discussed the process for selecting a new bishop following His Eminence's retirement announcement. Maureen inquired about differences with the previous West Diocese situation, and Alexander confirmed there were no significant differences except for Gerasim's greater recognition in their diocese. Fr. Marcus suggested that Maureen might review the Diocese of the West bylaws for potential procedures and suggested considering a change to our own bylaws to allow the process to start once a ruling bishop announces retirement. The conversation ended with Robichau proposing to use a team/group chat for voting on a formal motion to proceed with the process.

The Diocesan Council then discussed the process that would be employed for presenting Bishop Gerasim as a candidate as ruling bishop of Dallas and the South at an upcoming special nominating assembly on July 24th in Jacksonville, FL. After discussion, Fr. Marcus formally moved to present Bishop Gerasim as the candidate, contingent on the formal declaration of the vacancy and appointment of a locum tenens by the Holy Synod. The would meet the 60 day notice requirement before our July Special nominating assembly.

## MEETING VOTE AND ADJOURNMENT

The Motion from Archpriest Marcus Burch, "I move that the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of the South, acknowledging the anticipated vacancy in the See of Dallas and the South upon the effective retirement of His Eminence, Archbishop Alexander, and acting in preparation for the formal canonical process to occur following the declaration of the vacancy and the appointment of the Locum Tenens, identify His Grace, Bishop Gerasim, Auxiliary Bishop and Administrator of the Diocese of the South, as the candidate to be presented for consideration at the anticipated Special Nominating Assembly, subject to the direction of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, the Holy Synod of Bishops, and the formal action of the Diocesan Council after the vacancy is declared," was seconded by Archpriest Theodore Pisarchuk

**Votes recorded in the meeting:** 1) Fr. Marcus Burch (approve), 2) Fr. Jason Foster and 3) Mary Harkins (approve), 4) Fr. Ted Pisarchuk (yes), 5) Maureen Jury (aye), 6) Fr. Theodore Pisarchuk (yes), 7) Philip Kontos (yay), 8) Fr. Basil Biberdorf (yes), 9) Jason Bigelow (yes), 10) Rdr. Thomas Hemstock (yes), and 11) Fr. Basil Biberdorf (yes) 12) Fr. David Wooten (approve), 13) Fr. John Cox (yea), 14) Anya Gill (approve), 15) Robichau (yes), 16) Fr. Theophan Buck (approve), 17) Ali Marie Phipps (yes), and 18) Rdr. Gregory/Frank Dale (yea). Neither Archbishop Alexander nor Bishop Gerasim voted.

After the vote, Archbishop Alexander moved to adjourn the meeting, which was approved by the attendees. The conversation ended with His Eminence, Alexander offering a closing prayer.

