



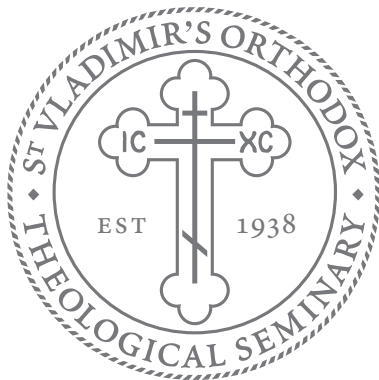
# COMMENCE- MENT : 2015

ST VLADIMIR'S ORTHODOX  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

YONKERS, NEW YORK



SATURDAY, MAY 30, 2015, 2:30 PM  
METROPOLITAN PHILIP AUDITORIUM





# COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES

*Please silence all mobile phones  
and other electronic devices.*

*During the Procession: The Troparion of the Three Hierarchs (TONE ONE)*

**L**ET US WHO love their words come together with hymns \*\* and honor the three great torch-bearers of the triune Godhead: \* Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom. \* These men have enlightened the world with the rays of their divine doctrines. \*\* They are flowing rivers of wisdom, \* and have filled all creation with springs of heavenly knowledge. \* They ceaselessly intercede for us \*\*\* before the holy Trinity.

*Opening of the Commencement Exercises*

The Most Blessed Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada, and President of the Seminary

*Welcoming Remarks*

The Dean

*Commencement Address*

The Most Reverend Elia, Metropolitan of Oulu,  
Orthodox Church of Finland

CONFERRAL OF DEGREES ON THE GRADUATES OF THE  
CLASS OF 2015

*Valedictory Address*

Mr. Luke Perry Bullock

*Introduction to the Alumni Association*

Mr. Gregory Abdalah

*Conferral of the St Macrina Award*  
The Rev. Theodor Svane  
President of the Student Council

*Salutatory Address*  
Mr. William Rettig

*Concluding Remarks*  
The Chancellor

*Closing Remarks*  
His Beatitude

*Closing prayer: It Is Truly Meet*

*Recessional: The Troparion of St. Vladimir of Kiev*

**O**HOLY PRINCE Vladimir, \* you were like a merchant in search of fine pearls; \* by sending servants to Constantinople for the Orthodox Faith, \* you found Christ, the priceless Pearl. \* He anointed you to be another Paul, \* washing away in baptism your physical and spiritual blindness. \* We celebrate your memory, \* asking you to pray for all Orthodox Christians of Russia, \*\*\* and for us, your spiritual children.

*A reception follows.*



# THE CLASS OF 2015

## CANDIDATES FOR THE MASTER OF DIVINITY DEGREE

Mr. Luke Perry BULLOCK (*summa cum laude*)  
*Approaching the Unapproachable: The Mystery of John 20:17*  
Dr. John Barnet, *advisor*

The Reverend Joshua Alexander BURNETT

Mr. Rami George DAHDAL (*commendation for service to the community*)

Mr. Tristan Joseph Biondi GALL (*commendation for service to the community*)

Mr. Ignatius GREEN (*summa cum laude*)  
*Preparing to Read St Gregory of Nyssa's Catechetical Oration*  
The Very Reverend Dr. John Behr, *advisor*

The Reverend Deacon Stephen Charles OSBURN, Jr.

The Very Reverend Timothy C. PERRY  
(Degree awarded in December 2014)  
*The New Homiletic: An Examination of Contemporary Theory and Practice for Orthodox Preachers*  
The Reverend Dr. Sergius Halvorsen, *advisor*

The Reverend Theodor T. Vegard SVANE

The Reverend Gabriel Fayez TANNOUS

The Reverend Joshua Stephen TRANT

The Reverend Mark Douglas VAIR

Mr. John Bradley VIEN



CANDIDATES FOR THE  
MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

Mr. Nikita ANDREJEV (*summa cum laude*)

*Energeiai or Operations in St Irenaeus of Lyons' Against the Heresies*  
The Very Reverend Dr. John Behr, *advisor*

Mr. Joel APPELFELDT (*cum laude; commendation for thesis*)

*Living Bread, Living Sacrifice, and Living People: The Structural Unity and Sacramental Theology of Sarapion's Anaphora in Light of Its Johannine Character and Apocalyptic Elements*  
The Very Reverend Dr. John Behr, *advisor*

Ms. Kathryn Ani ASHBARIAN

(*commendation for service to the community*)  
*"You Change the Sighs of Our Hearts into Laughter": Justice and Mercy in the Prayers of Gregory of Narek*  
Dr. Roberta Ervine, *advisor*

Mr. John AWADALLA

*Pontius Pilate in the Orthodox Churches of Africa*  
Dr. Peter Bouteneff, *advisor*

The Reverend Dn. B. John EDWARD

*Orthodox Missions in Asia in the Light of Growing Religious Fundamentalism*  
The Very Reverend Dr. Chad Hatfield, *advisor*

Ms. Olga KIRILCHENKO

*Encounter and Transformation: Contemporary Narrative in the Sayings of the Desert Fathers*  
The Reverend Dr. Sergius Halvorsen, *advisor*

Miss Arpina NAKASHIAN (*cum laude*)

*Shepherds of Saints: An Analysis of Armenian Church Leadership in 1915*  
Dr. Roberta Ervine, *advisor*

Mr. Bogdan NEACSIU

*The Neo-Charismatic Movement in the Orthodox Church*  
The Very Reverend Dr. Chad Hatfield, *advisor*

Ms. Lijin Hannah RAJU

*Pastoral Guidance for Mixed Marriages in the Malankara Orthodox Church*  
Dr. Albert Rossi, *advisor*

Ms. Mirjana RUZICIC

*Creating Generous Hearts*  
The Very Reverend Dr. Chad Hatfield, *advisor*

Mr. Botros SADEK (*magna cum laude*)

*Dioscorus of Alexandria: Condemnation by Association*  
The Very Reverend Dr. John Behr, *advisor*

Ms. Sara Amelia STAFF

*An Orthodox Christian Understanding of Vocation*  
Dr. Albert Rossi, *advisor*

Mr. Alexander Robert TITUS (*magna cum laude; commendation for thesis*)

*Cooperante Gratuito Diuinae Gratiae: Aspects of Eastern Patristic Thought in John Scottus Eriugena's Treatise on Divine Predestination*  
Dr. Peter Bouteneff, *advisor*

CANDIDATES FOR THE  
MASTER OF THEOLOGY DEGREE

Ms. Megan Martha CARLISLE (*commendation for thesis*)

*Signifying Autocephaly: A Semiotic Analysis of the Orthodox Church in America and Her Archive in the 20th Century*  
Prof. Richard Schneider, *advisor*

Ms. Katie Marie MCCRAY

(Degree awarded in December 2014)  
*A Prayer for the Dying: A Derridian Comparison and Analysis of Prayer in Pseudo-Dionysius*  
Dr. Peter Bouteneff, *advisor*

The Reverend Kyle Glenn PARROTT

*Liturgical Narrative and the Nativity Vigil in the Constantinopolitan Cathedral Office: The Hermeneutics of Liturgical-Theology*  
Prof. Richard Schneider, *advisor*

Mr. Joshua Karl SCHOOPING

*Irenaeus and Orthodox Apologetic Methodology in Light of  
Contemporary Apologetic Discourse*  
Dr. Peter Bouteneff, *advisor*

Mr. Keith Andrew TEMPLE

(Degree awarded in December 2014)

*The Old Testament Readings of the Paschal Vigil as a Summary of  
the Divine Economy*  
The Very Reverend Dr. Alexander Rentel, *advisor*

Mr. Zarko ZARIC

*Christ as Mediator in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa*  
The Very Reverend Dr. John Behr, *advisor*



## THE COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

HIS EMINENCE METROPOLITAN ELIA of Oulu was born in Kajaani, Finland in 1961 and given the name Matti. He studied Swedish and Czech at the Stockholm University in Sweden, and in 1986 he completed training at the Teachers' College, also in Stockholm, followed by further training in Helsinki. For twenty years he taught languages and Orthodox Christianity in Finnish schools. Meanwhile, he began formal theological studies in 1996 at the University of Joensuu. In 2003 he received the Master of Divinity degree from St. Vladimir's Seminary.

His Eminence was ordained to the priesthood on September 1, 2003, in Jyväskylä, Finland. He served as second priest for two and a half years in central Finland, and for eight and a half years as dean of the Cathedral in Vaasa, western Finland. Father Matti was tonsured and elevated to the rank of archimandrite on December 16–17, 2014, in the Valamo Monastery of the Transfiguration and given his new monastic name, Elia. Archimandrite Elia was ordained to the episcopate on January 11, 2015, by Archbishop Leo of Karelia and All Finland, along with the entire Synod of Bishops of the Finnish Church.

Vladyka Elia notes that his “best and most challenging years” were when he studied at St. Vladimir's. He credits the influence of three seminary Deans—Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann, Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, and Archpriest John Behr—as key in his formation as an Orthodox priest. ☐

## THE VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

The valedictorian, who is selected from among graduating M.Div. students, delivers the commencement address on behalf of the graduating class. The salutarian, an M.Div. middler who is completing his or her second academic year at St Vladimir's as a full-time student, offers words of congratulation to the graduating class on behalf of those who will be remaining at the seminary. The valedictorian and salutarian are selected by the faculty on the basis of each student's excellent performance in all aspects of seminary life, including academic work, participation in chapel services, and completion of community service assignments. ☐

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