

Biography of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah was born James Paffhausen on October 20, 1959, in Chicago, IL, and was baptized into the Episcopal Church. While still a child, his family later settled in La Jolla, CA, near San Diego. He was received into the Orthodox Church in 1978 at Our Lady of Kazan Moscow Patriarchal Church, San Diego, while a student at the University of California, San Diego. Later, he transferred to UC Santa Cruz, where he was instrumental in establishing an Orthodox Christian Fellowship.

After completing studies at UCSC, James attended St. Vladimir's Seminary, graduating with a Master of Divinity degree in 1985 and a Master of Theology in Dogmatics in 1988.

He went on to pursue studies towards a Ph.D. at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, but interrupted those studies to spend a year in Russia.

In Moscow, working for *Russkiy Palomnik* ("The Russian Pilgrim") at the Publishing Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, he was introduced to life in the Russian church, in particular monastic life. Later that year, he joined Valaam Monastery, having found a spiritual father in the monastery's Abbot, Archimandrite Pankratiy. It was Archimandrite Pankratiy's spiritual father, the Elder Kyrill at Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, who blessed James to become a priestmonk. He was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood in 1994 and in 1995 was tonsured to monastic rank at St. Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA, having received the name Jonah.

Returning to California, Fr. Jonah served a number of missions and was later given the obedience to establish a monastery under the patronage of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco. The monastery, initially located in Point Reyes Station, CA, recently moved to Manton in Northern California, near Redding. During his time building up the monastic community, Fr. Jonah also worked to establish missions in Merced, Sonora, Chico, Eureka, Redding, Susanville, and other communities in California, as well as in Kona, HI.

In the spring of 2008, the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America elevated Fr. Jonah to the rank of Archimandrite and he was given the obedience to leave the monastery and take on the responsibilities of auxiliary bishop and chancellor for the Diocese of the South.

Metropolitan Jonah's episcopal election took place on September 4, 2008, at an extraordinary meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops. Earlier in the summer, his candidacy was endorsed by the Diocese of the South's Diocesan Council, shortly after he had participated in the diocese's annual assembly.

Metropolitan Jonah was consecrated Bishop of Forth Worth and Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of the South, at St. Seraphim Cathedral, Dallas, TX, on Saturday, November 1, 2008. On Wednesday, November 12, 2008, he was elected Archbishop of Washington and New York and Metropolitan of All America and Canada at the 15th All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America, in Pittsburgh, PA.

Credits: biography taken from the OCA website, <http://www.oca.org/HSbiojonah.asp?SID=7>