



My Dear Brothers in Christ,

It is a great joy for me to convey greetings from the Fathers of the American Vicariate of the Orthodox Church of the Gauls at the start of this New Year of Our Lord 2025. Though we are geographically far from you, we are blessed to have Father Elie keeping us informed of the activities of our Western Orthodox Churches in Europe. By this means, our spiritual kinship is forged and strengthened, and we know that, though we are few, we are not alone.

Our world has never stood in greater need of the Good News of Jesus Christ, yet never has it been so ignorant of its need. I experienced this in a special way as a military chaplain; in 32 years of service, over half were spent in times of war.

As once great nations turn away from their own godly foundations to seek salvation in "isms" and ideologies, we see increase everywhere in division, hatred, violence, war, and environmental disasters. As solutions are sought in legal systems, sociological schemes, psychological therapies, political promises, and scientific theories, it can seem as if we have less and less to offer.

We stand, I believe, on the eve of a new Pentecost. The world is in need of reconversion, and we are in need of a new infusion of the Holy Spirit if we are to be a part of it. Dear Fathers, may each of us come in prayer to the stable as did the Magi, laying what gifts we have at the feet of the newborn Babe of Bethlehem, praying that in the silence of the night we may be gifted in turn with a sense of the vital mission given us and strengthened for task ahead of us.

I beg your prayers and offer you mine. And I am thankful to God that you are my brothers and fellow laborers in the Vineyard of the Lord.

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and holy New Year!

Fr. Thomas (Brouillard)

Vicar General