

**Membership in the Orthodox Church in America
Diocese of the South- St Seraphim Cathedral**

Definition of Membership of a Parishioner from the Uniform Parish Bylaws of the Diocese of the South

Article III MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Definition. Members of the Parish are those persons who:

- (a) have been baptized and chrismated, or otherwise canonically received, into the Church and who consciously uphold and profess the Orthodox Faith;
- (b) are regular communicants, that is, frequent participants in the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion. Members ideally partake of the Mysteries weekly, but in any case, no one can be a member of the Parish who fails to comply with this obligation at least once a year;
- (c) fulfill the financial obligations established by the Parish. All members are urged to make a yearly commitment for financial support of the Parish in the form of a pledge, the standard of which is a tithe (one-tenth) of their income; and
- (d) declare their intention to be members.

Section 2 Purposes of Membership -

Privileges and Obligations of Members. Following the Tradition of the Church, the purpose of membership in the Parish is to seek the knowledge of God and union with Him through Jesus Christ by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and to express that unity with God in Christ in all family, business, and social activities. Generally, this expression consists of an enlightened obedience to the teachings of the Orthodox Faith, and is manifested in regular attendance at the Parish's divine services, in frequent reception of the Holy Gifts of the Body and Blood of Christ, in regular cleansing of the soul through Confession, in care for the Parish property and buildings, in regular contributions in fulfillment of their financial commitment, and in doing everything possible to promote the Christian spirit of love, unity, and brotherly concern among the members of the Parish.

Section 3 New Members -

Any person who desires to become a member of the Parish and who is baptized and chrismated, or otherwise canonically received, into the Orthodox Church, must present himself to the rector or the priest-in-charge, who will inform him of the life and activities of the Parish.

When that person shall have received the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion, he shall then declare his intention to become a member of the Parish by means of a written declaration which the Parish shall provide for this purpose, and he shall then be accepted as a member and enrolled by the pastor and Parish secretary on the list of members.

Any person desiring to enter the Holy Orthodox Church and membership in the parish who is not baptized and chrismated or otherwise canonically received shall present himself to the rector or priest-in-charge to be instructed and received in accord with the Tradition and practice of the Holy Orthodox Church and the directives of the Diocesan Bishop.