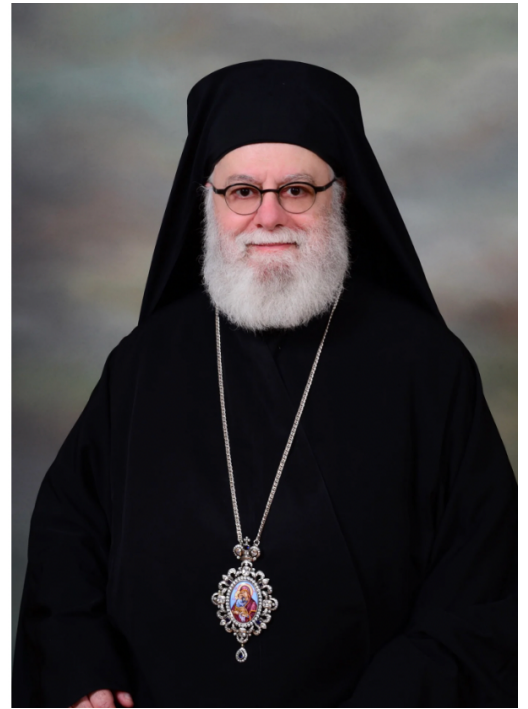


2025 SOWBC Hosting Hierarchy His Eminence Metropolitan + SAVAS of Pittsburgh

Metropolitan Savas (Zembillas) of Pittsburgh is a native of Gary, Indiana, the second of six children of Steve and Stamatia (Georgiades) Zembillas of Kalymnian and Cypriot ancestry. He is a graduate of Andrean High School, Gary, Indiana (1975), Colby College, Waterville, Maine (1979, BA in Philosophy and English Literature) and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts (1984, M.Div. with highest honors). He served as the pastoral assistant at Holy Trinity/St. Nicholas in Cincinnati, Ohio from 1985-87 before resuming his academic studies at Oxford University, England, from 1987 until 1994, under the supervision of then Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia, researching texts and persons of spiritual significance for the history of early Byzantine monasticism. While at Oxford, he served for two years as the assistant to the director of the St. Theosevia Centre for the Study of Christian Spirituality, and for three years as warden (director) of the House of St. Gregory and St. Macrina, a house of residence for students and a center for retreats and conferences affiliated with the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius.



He was ordained to the Holy Diaconate on November 21, 1992, the Feast of the Entry into the Temple of the Theotokos, and on January 8, 1995, to the Holy Priesthood, on both occasions by the then Bishop Iakovos of Chicago, at his home parish of Sts. Constantine and Helen Cathedral in Merrillville, Indiana. During a two-year interim between ordinations, he served as Deacon to Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia. Upon his return to the United States, in September 1995, he was appointed as Proistamenos of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite on November 12, 1996, the Feast of St. Gregory Palamas, by the then Bishop Maximos of Pittsburgh, the *locum tenens* of the Detroit Diocese, at St. Gregory Palamas Monastery in Hayesville, Ohio. In September 1997, His Eminence Archbishop Spyridon of America assigned Archimandrite Savas to the Greek Orthodox Church of St. Demetrios in Merrick, Long Island.

In December 1999, the newly-enthroned Archbishop Demetrios of America appointed his former student Savas Chancellor of the Archdiocese, a position he held for ten years.

On December 11, 2001, he was elected an Auxiliary Bishop to Archbishop Demetrios by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and given the title "Bishop of Troas." On February 2, 2002, the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple, he was consecrated to the Holy Episcopacy by Archbishop Demetrios of America, Archbishop Iakovos of North and South America, Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago, Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia, and several hierarchs of the Holy Eparchial Synod at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Manhattan.

Bishop Savas served as the Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America until 2009, when he was named Director of the Archdiocesan Office of Church, Society and Culture. As an active presence on the Internet, he has been in the vanguard of engaging issues of contemporary societal and cultural realities from an Orthodox Christian perspective. He has led numerous Young Adult Pilgrimages and accompanied many Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) "Real Break" teams to Constantinople and the Holy Land. He is the hierarchical representative to the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) for the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America, in which capacity he has accompanied mission teams to Turkana in Kenya and Tanzania. He is also the Chairman of the Assembly's Committee for Church and Society. He further serves as a member of the Board of Trustees of St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary as well as being an Adjunct Professor of Dogmatic Theology, teaching courses on topics such as "Looking for God in Popular Culture." He has been an instructor at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology Diaconate Program and served on the board of Saint Basil Academy.

On November 3, 2011, the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople elected him to succeed the retired Metropolitan Maximos as Metropolitan of Pittsburgh. He was enthroned at Saint Nicholas Cathedral in Pittsburgh on December 8, 2011.

His Eminence was selected to serve on the Great and Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for the term beginning in March, 2012 and ending in February, 2013. His tenure on the Synod was marked by numerous trips to Constantinople (nearly once per month), representing His All-Holiness at the Pavlia Conference in Veroia, Greece, and the canonization of St. Nikephoros the Leper (celebrated on Jan 4).

In May, 2013 His Eminence is scheduled to be honored with an Honorary Doctorate from his alma mater, Colby College in Watertown, ME, which is celebrating its Bicentennial this year.

In 2025, His Eminence gave his blessing for the third annual Synaxis of Orthodox Women Byzantine Cantors (SOWBC) to take place from September 11 – 14 at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Pittsburgh, PA.

SOWBC Co-Founding Hierarchy
His Eminence Metropolitan + NATHANAEL of Chicago

Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago is the second metropolitan to preside over the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago, consisting of 58 parishes and two monastic communities in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin as well as central Missouri.

His Eminence has served as a guest professor and lecturer of Orthodox Christian Ethics and Bioethics at Fordham University, the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, and Saint Vladimir Theological School, and has authored and delivered numerous articles and presentations in theology and bioethics. A fervent advocate of human rights, His Eminence coordinated the Archdiocesan commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the March on Selma in 2015 and represented the Archdiocese on the National Council of Churches (NCC) Special Task Force to End Racism in America. He currently serves as a member of a select non-partisan and interreligious working group in Washington, D.C., which seeks to advance religious freedom and pluralism in the Middle East.



Born Konstantinos Symeonides in Thessaloniki, Greece in 1978, His Eminence is the third child of Irene and Vasilios Symeonides and is of Pontic and Asia-Minor descent. He received his early education from the Greek-American Institute of the Zoodochos Peghe Parish of the Bronx in New York. He graduated from Hellenic College with a BA in Religious Studies (2000) and from Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology with an MDiv (2003). He earned an STM in Christian ethics (2003) and a ThD in bioethics from Boston University (2007). He also studied the history and ethics of public health at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University.

His Eminence was ordained a deacon in 2003 and a presbyter in 2010 by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America. He also is a brother of the historic monastery of St. George Epanosifis in Crete, Greece.

In September 2018, His Eminence was appointed to the Holy and Sacred Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople for the 2018-2019 ecclesial year. Among the many important decisions taken by the Holy Synod during this period was the granting of Autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

Since his enthronement, His Eminence has sought to implement policies and programs that promote greater transparency, accountability, and professionalism in the Metropolis of Chicago. He has launched a strategic planning initiative to encourage transformative action among the Metropolis' parishes and has pursued efforts to engage young adults more fully, including through the formation of the Metropolis of Chicago Junior Board.

His Eminence gave his blessing for the founding of the first annual Synaxis of Orthodox Women Byzantine Cantors (SOWBC) in 2023.