Office of the Metropolitan
312 Garfield Street
Johnstown, PA 15906

September 19, 2026

Rev. Fr. Nicolaie Atitienei
St. John the Compassionate Mission
153-155 Broadview Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M4M 2E9 Canada

Glory to Jesus Christ!
Reverend and dear Father Nicolaie:

It gives me great pleasure to greet you, together with Father Deacon Pawel Mucha, and all clerical and lay workers of the St. John the Compassionate Mission. Do know that as an apostolate of our God-saved Diocese, we recognize in a very special way the 40th anniversary of your daily care of the poor and marginalized of the Greater Metropolitan Toronto area.

For forty years you have exemplified the spiritual teachings of our Holy Orthodox Faith as you have provided food, shelter, healthcare and financial aid to those struggling on the margins in your area. It is difficult to imagine them without you!

You have put Scripture to work! Spiritual devotion must be paired with tangible acts of kindness. You feed the hungry. You house the homeless. Service to others is service to God!

Your service is not stagnant! Over the years it has grown in size and outreach, the most recent example being St. John's Eco Market on Queen Street, an extension of the Mission which provides coffee and baked goods daily, a thrift store of second-hand clothing, and an artisan gallery of crafts by local artists.

What is so expressive of the formidable difference the Mission has made is the presence of community dignitaries on this occasion, together with many words of gratitude from those in public office who are deeply appreciative of the daily work of the Mission.

My prayer for all of you is that "grace upon grace" from Heaven above may continually flow gently over those you serve – refreshing them, moving them forward, and helping them to heal of every spiritual and bodily infirmity.

Chanting for all of you MANY YEARS, together with my blessing, I remain sincerely

Working in His Vineyard,

+ Metropolitan Gregory

+ Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa