

**The Greeting of the First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad to the Participants of the 2018 Commencement at Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary, 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2018.**

Dear in the Lord Father Archimandrite Luke, faculty, staff, and students, esteemed fathers, brothers, and sisters!

I cordially greet all of you who are gathered here on the day of the 70<sup>th</sup> Commencement Exercises of Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary, in the year of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this one and only Seminary of the Russian diaspora!

While prayerfully sharing with you the joy of today's solemnity, I raise these entreaties from the bottom of my soul to Three Holy Hierarchs and to Venerable Job of Pochaev: may the Life-giving Trinity, our God, send down His ever-fortifying help to all those who toil in the field of theology. May He grant courage to all who prepare to begin their ecclesiastical ministry in the uneasy conditions of the modern world.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary occupies a special place, for it is situated in the very heart of the Russian Church Abroad – in Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, our “spiritual fortress,” in the words of the Most Blessed Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky). Here the students have an opportunity to perceive in their lives not only the prayerful intercessions of the above-mentioned Saints, but also the prayers of the departed members of the monastic brotherhood who piously laboured in this place.

On this joyous day, I wish, my dears, for you to preserve the spiritual disposition that was shared by those who dwelt in the Lavra of our Diaspora. May the all-bountiful God strengthen all of you with His grace in the very difficult and very responsible ministry in the field of theological education.

With love in Christ, and asking your prayers,

**+HILARION**

**Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York, First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad**