

The Orthodox Church

VOLUME 43/NUMBER 5 ■ NATIVITY/THEOPHANY 2007 ■ THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA



Born again... of water and the Spirit

Official

No. 482 ■ SEPTEMBER 2007

■ RECEPTIONS

IANCU, The Rev. Ion is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Herman from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ June 28, 2007.

NICOLAU, The Rev. Dan is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Herman from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ May 20, 2007.

REVCU, The Rev. Eduard Eugen is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Herman from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ June 28, 2007.

■ ORDINATIONS

BALANEAN, Deacon Horatiu Cristian was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Dearborn Heights, MI. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ September 9, 2007.

BEAL, Deacon John was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West at St. Nicholas Church, San Anselmo, CA. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin and attached to the Diocese of the West/ September 23, 2007.

RIVERS, Deacon Paul was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Metropolitan Herman at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman/ September 14, 2007.

WASSEN, Gregory was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada on behalf of Metropolitan Herman at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman/ September 14, 2007.

WILLIAMS, Deacon Jeffrey Ireneaus was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West at Holy Trinity/Holy Resurrection Church, Wilkeson/Tacoma, WA. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin and attached to the Diocese of the West/ September 9, 2007.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

BALANEAN, The Rev. Horatiu Cristian is appointed assistant priest of SS. Peter and Paul

Church, Dearborn Heights, MI/ September 9, 2007.

BEAL, The Rev. John is attached to Holy Trinity Cathedral, San Francisco, CA/ September 23, 2007.

IANCU, The Rev. Ion is appointed pastor of the Nativity of the Birthgiver of God Church, Laval, QC, Canada/ July 28, 2007.

LISENKO, The V. Rev. Alexander is released from duties at St. Barbara Monastery, Santa Paula, CA and attached to the Monastic Brotherhood and Altar of the Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, Manton, CA/ September 17, 2007.

NICOLAU, The Rev. Dan A. is appointed pastor of St. Andrew the Apostle Church, Laval, QC, Canada/ November 10, 2007.

PAGE, The V. Rev. Spero, who is retired, is released from attachment to Assumption of the Virgin Mary Church, Worcester, MA and attached to St. George Cathedral, Boston, MA/ September 14, 2007.

REVCU, The Rev. Eduard Eugen is appointed pastor of Holy Confessors of Transylvania Church, Oakville, ON, Canada/ June 1, 2007.

RIVERS, The Rev. Paul is attached to Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY/ September 14, 2007.

ROBICHAU, Deacon B. Peter is released from duties at Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC and from the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South; transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; and attached to Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY/ September 19, 2007.

SCHAPLOWSKY, The Rev. Michael is released from duties at St. Athanasius Mission, Sherwood Park, AB, Canada, and attached to the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Rawdon, QC, Canada/ September 1, 2007.

WASSEN, Deacon Gregory is attached to Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY/ September 14, 2007.

WILLIAMS, The Rev. Jeffrey Ireneaus is attached to Holy Trinity/Holy Resurrection Church, Wilkeson/Tacoma, WA/ September 9, 2007.

■ PARISHES

DIOCESE OF THE WEST/ New Name. The Orthodox Mission, Kona, HI, is renamed St. Juvenal Mission/ September 17, 2007.

No. 483 ■ OCTOBER 2007

■ RECEPTIONS

SCHETTIG, The Rev. John is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox

Church in America by Metropolitan Herman from the Bulgarian Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada, and Australia; transferred to the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco; and attached to the Diocese of the West/ October 25, 2007.

TASSOS, The Rev. Michael is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Herman from the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman/ October 24, 2007.

■ ORDINATIONS

COATS, Deacon Paul D. was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate on behalf of Metropolitan Herman at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman/ October 26, 2007.

[MENDOZA SEGUNDO], Monk Serafin was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Alejo of Mexico City on behalf of Metropolitan Herman at Cathedral of the Ascension, Mexico City, Mexico. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman and attached to the Exarchate of Mexico/ May 20, 2007.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

COATS, Rev. Paul D. is attached to Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY/ October 28, 2007.

GARKLAUS, Deacon Nicholas is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY; transferred to the Diocese of Washington and New York; and attached to St. Nicholas Church, Whitestone, NY/ October 9, 2007.

[MENDOZA SEGUNDO], Hierodeacon Serafin is attached to Mision de la Santa Cruz, Pisaflores, Veracruz, Mexico/ May 20, 2007.

SCHETTIG, The Rev. John is attached to the Protection of the Holy Virgin Church, Santa Rosa, CA/ October 27, 2007.

TASSOS, The Rev. Michael is appointed treasurer of the Orthodox Church in America. He also is attached to St. Sergius of Radonezh Chapel, Oyster Bay Cove, NY/ October 24, 2007.

■ RELEASED

TYAPKO, The Rev. George, who was awaiting assignment under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman, is granted a canonical release from the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia/ October 18, 2007.

The Orthodox Church

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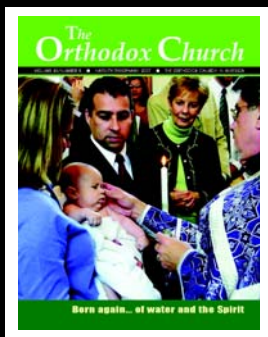
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Our Cover

“As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ!”
 First steps in a life of mission and ministry.



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Primacy theme of Catholic-Orthodox dialogue

In the aftermath of a high-level and official Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue held in Ravenna, Italy, October 8-14, 2007, news reports and commentaries described the results of the meeting as a common agreement that the bishop of Rome has primacy in the universal Church, both East and West. This led some to conclude that the Orthodox participants in the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church had agreed that the Orthodox Churches had submitted to the rule of the Pope.

The reality is different – at the same time simpler and more complicated. There is, and always has been, an Orthodox consensus that the bishop of Rome holds a *primacy of honor* among all the patriarchs and bishops of the Christian West and the Christian East – when there is no schism between Rome and the Orthodox Churches. When the unity of the Christian West and the Christian East was lost (approximately in the 11th century), the primacy of honor among the Orthodox Churches passed on to Constantinople, where it remains.

Thus, from the Orthodox point of view, the primacy which the bishop of Rome has depends on the full unity of the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. For the Orthodox, unity comes *before* primacy.

Another dimension of the discussion of primacy is the understanding and definition of the *nature* of primacy. During the centuries preceding the separation of the Church of Rome and the Eastern Churches, there was not much clarity about the nature and content of the primacy of the bishop of Rome. This lack of definition and clarity was evident both in the Christian East and in the Christian West. One of the causes of the separation be-

tween Rome and the Eastern Churches was the emergence of increasingly precise claims and teachings about the authority of the bishop of Rome. The more definite the claims for papal authority became, the less inclined were the Eastern Churches to accept these claims. The depth and extent of the claims of papal powers and authority continued to increase after the schism of the 11th century, making the restoration of unity more and more difficult.

The title of the Joint Catholic-Orthodox Commission's statement at Ravenna is "Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority." It is a good and meaningful development that theologians representing the Catholic and Orthodox churches are reflecting together on the nature of the Church. Two points have been rightly made about the Ravenna meeting. The first point – it is a good and hopeful sign that the Catholic and Orthodox churches are able today to affirm together the principle of universal primacy. The second point – the Ravenna statement is a modest step, and much remains to be done.

At Ravenna, a dispute between the Churches of Constantinople and Moscow led to the withdrawal of the Moscow delegation from the Ravenna meeting. The occasion for the dispute was the presence of a delegation from the Estonian Orthodox Church, which is associated with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. There is a larger Orthodox Church in Estonia which is associated with the Patriarchate of Moscow. Before the Russian Revolution and after the end of World War II, the Orthodox Church in Estonia was fully within the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate. The acute dispute over Orthodoxy in Estonia emerged in the 1990s, when part of the Orthodox community in Estonia was accepted by Constantinople. For a relatively short time, the Patriarchate of Moscow stopped commemorating the Ecumenical Patriarch, signaling a temporary break in communion. What emerged eventually was a tacit peace, with two Orthodox Churches in Estonia existing in parallel. From the Moscow point of view, Constantinople's invitation to one of the Churches in Estonia transgressed against the status quo.

The withdrawal of the Moscow Patriarchate from the Catholic-Orthodox meeting in Ravenna causes awkward complications for the Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue process. On the one hand, the procedures of this dialogue have acknowledged that the absence of one or several Orthodox Churches does not stop the process or invalidate its results. On the other hand, the absence of the Moscow Patriarchate – the largest Orthodox Church, with many millions of adherents – puts into question the effectiveness and practical results of the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue.

Another dimension of the withdrawal of the Moscow Patriarchate from the Ravenna meeting – ironically – shows again that there are significant unresolved questions within the Orthodox Church. Even as the Catholic-Orthodox statement on "Ecclesial Communion, Conciliarity and Authority" was being composed at Ravenna, the dispute between Constantinople and Moscow demonstrated that the balance between conciliarity and primacy articulated in the Orthodox teaching on the nature of the Church is not easily found in practice. ■

Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky attends Global Christian Forum

The Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky [first row, second from left], OCA director of external affairs, was the Orthodox presenter at the Global Christian Forum held in Limuru, near Nairobi, Kenya, November 6-9, 2007.



Over 200 representatives of the Orthodox Christian, Roman Catholic, Protestant, evangelical, and other traditions from over 70 countries attended the forum.

Participants issued a statement in which they pledged to "develop a new awareness and understanding of one another" while acknowledging that "differing views on substantive issues, such as ecclesiology, the scope of evangelism, and mission" still exist. ■

WISDOM from the Fathers

Saint Justin Martyr

Formerly He appeared to Moses and to the other prophets in the form of fire or as a bodiless being; but now, by a Virgin and the will of the Father, He has become man.

Saint Clement of Rome

Jesus Christ, for the sake of the love which He had for us and by the will of God, gave His blood for us, His flesh for our flesh, and His life for our lives.

Saint Athanasius

He became man and dwelt bodily in the flesh.... In the body, He experienced hunger, thirst, suffering, weariness, and the like.... He bears our sins, so that it might be revealed that He has become man for the sake of us [sinners]....

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem

Men abandoned God and fashioned images carved after the human form. Since an image of men was falsely worshipped as God, God became truly man, so the falsehood might be destroyed.... The Lord took on our likeness so that He might give us an even greater grace, so that sinful mankind might become a partaker of God.

Saint Irenaeus of Lyons

You will follow the only true and reliable Teacher, the Word of God, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who, because of His great love, became what we are so that He might bring us to be what He Himself is. ■



That's the Spirit

Father Vladimir Berzonsky

I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you.... For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:6

Attributes of priesthood

Our Church is passing through a crisis of Spirit that has affected so many faithful Orthodox Christians. It's natural to look to our hierarchy and priests for leadership and guidance. They might find comfort and inspiration from Saint Paul as he encouraged his disciple Timothy, to the degree that he called him his son by adoption. Note the way Saint Paul begins his second letter to Timothy, reminding him of who he is by ordination and the gifts imparted to him when he had been set apart for the ministry of Christ.

“Stir up the gift of God.” Ignite the fire that brought you to ordination. Recall what it felt like to experience the glorious work of the Holy Spirit at that time. It's still there; it only needs some poking at the ember of your soul. To be set aside for a special purpose in the priesthood means that you cannot slip backward into an ordinary way of life. It's there, and prayer will revive it. And when the feeling comes back into your heart, these are the attributes you will rediscover.

- **Courage.** “God has not given us a spirit of fear.” So many priests have a great deal to communicate, and they write full of fury and conviction, only to sign their reflections “Anonymous.” They fear exposure, loss of their parish, maybe even their priesthood. Or they grumble in close quarters with trusted colleagues but do nothing else for the good of the Church. Consider the brave priests in Russia during the Soviet era of oppression – men who risked their very lives for daring to speak the truth to the tyrants who ruled the nation.

- **Power.** A real Christian, especially one who has been set apart for sacred office, is blessed with the strength to stand tall in the face of any storm of abuse or threat, not like lobsters in a tub of flour, as the proverb has it. They have bowed their heads and welcomed the yoke of Christ, so that they can shoulder any burden and thank the loving Lord for the confidence He placed in them to do His work here on earth. They have the energy to deal with the sorrows of those entrusted to their care. They lead those overwhelmed by grief to hope and confidence, that God's plan is being worked out regardless of our inability to comprehend and cope with it. The priest can never break down or break apart.

- **Love** is the cure for all suffering, anguish, pain, and confusion. Love heals every wound, alleviates every distress, solves every problem, and wipes away every tear. Everyone should be aware that the priest has in his spiritual possession a plentiful and unlimited source of empathy, understanding, comfort, and affection at his disposal, because the constant supply is renewed by his ongoing access to Jesus Christ through his prayers.

- **Sound mind.** It's the sensible and sensitive attribute of a true priest who has self-control never to indulge in anger or panic. Kipling described it thus: “If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you; if you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, yet give allowance for their doubting, too....” We are so fortunate to have as the role model for these virtues Christ Himself, Who never asked of us something that He was not able to do. ■

Contemporary Christian Classics

Metropolitan George Khodr

Even if the world ignores its own heart

This article was originally published in Syndesmos News in 1973.

The unity of the Church is not set over against the unity of the world because the Church is not in a relationship of opposition to the created world. She is the icon of what humanity will become. The Church is in this respect the meaning of the world, its intelligibility, or in the very significant expression of Origen in *Contra Celsum*, the “cosmos of the cosmos.” The Church is still the heart of the world, even if the world ignores its heart. For this reason, her life is symbolic in the strongest sense of the term. She recognizes the unity of the world by her own unity, revealed through the Spirit until the parousia [“the presence,” designating the second Coming of Christ], when the world and the Church will be the one spouse of the Lord of glory.

Certainly the world and the Church can best be seen in an identical destiny of involvement, in an historic will to build up the earth. But the Church, through the mysterious bond which ties her to Christ, through the Spirit, Who reveals His plans to her and Who judges history, lives in a permanent tension with the world. She herself is the tension of the world. For this reason, she is always a thorn in the flesh of history. She proclaims a light which is to come, a Kingdom which is not of this world. She proclaims the hope of a salvation which is given to her, which she awaits in prayer, which she tastes in the Sacrament, and which is not purely and simply identified with the energy of men building their own city. The Church is plunged in a bath of eternity which no common work of humanity could fully manifest. Her relation with the end is not a

simple, ascending linear history. There is in her a catastrophic dimension, for in the world of nature a split has appeared which only the peace of the Kingdom will heal.

Hence, the quest of the Christian is not ultimately identifiable with any other quest. The Christian is a disturbing element who questions every settled order, who is more at home in movement than in “establishment.” He demands a constant acceleration of achievement and is, for this reason, regarded as a corrosive element. This is why he is never accepted by his own people, by those who have transformed struggle into a left-wing or right-wing legalistic system. At the very heart of this theology of communion between the Church and the world there exists an ethic of rupture, or at least an ethic of dis-

tance. The Christian has done well to leave the temple to live out the mediation of Christ in work, art, and politics. To him, a presence of Christ is revealed in the world of man, and it is through this cosmic priesthood, with which the Christian is endowed, that all human aspirations to justice and beauty ascend towards the heavenly temple. He knows that by taking the Body of the Lord, he hears within the whole body of humanity. He pledges an infinite compassion for this humanity. And he is ready to lose his soul, so that this humanity may recover its freedom. In this gesture, he shakes off from the body of the Church the dust of the synagogue, its ritualistic lethargy, but he is simultaneously crucified by the companions of his earthly loyalty on the Cross of an irremediable solitude. ■

Metropolitan George [Khodr] of Mt. Lebanon in Lebanon, is a well known theologian and one of the inspirers of the renewal of the Orthodox Church in the Middle East.

Metropolitan George was born in Tripoli, Lebanon, in 1923. While studying law in the early 1940s, he was one of the founders of the Orthodox Youth Movement *MJO – Mouvement de la Jeunesse Orthodoxe* – which was active in the establishment of study groups, outreach to the working class, the opening of Christian hostels, the renewal of parish life, and the rebirth of monasticism in the region. To this day, despite the radically different political and religious climate in the Middle east, he and his writings continue to inspire a multitude of Orthodox young people. *MJO* remains one of the most active movements in *Syndesmos*, the Athens-based world fellowship of Orthodox Youth.

In 1952, he completed studies at St. Sergius Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris. Two years later, he was ordained to the priesthood, after which he served a parish in Tripoli. He was consecrated to the episcopacy in 1970.

In addition to his pastoral and episcopal ministry, he served as professor of pastoral theology at the University of Balamand's St. John of Damascus Institute of Theology and as professor of Arab culture at the Lebanese University. He has been active in the ecumenical movement and in the dialogue with Islam, representing the Patriarchate of Antioch at many pan-Orthodox and ecumenical gatherings.

In 1968, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. He also received an honorary doctorate from the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Paris in 1988.

Metropolitan George's numerous books, articles, and lectures have been widely published in many languages. ■



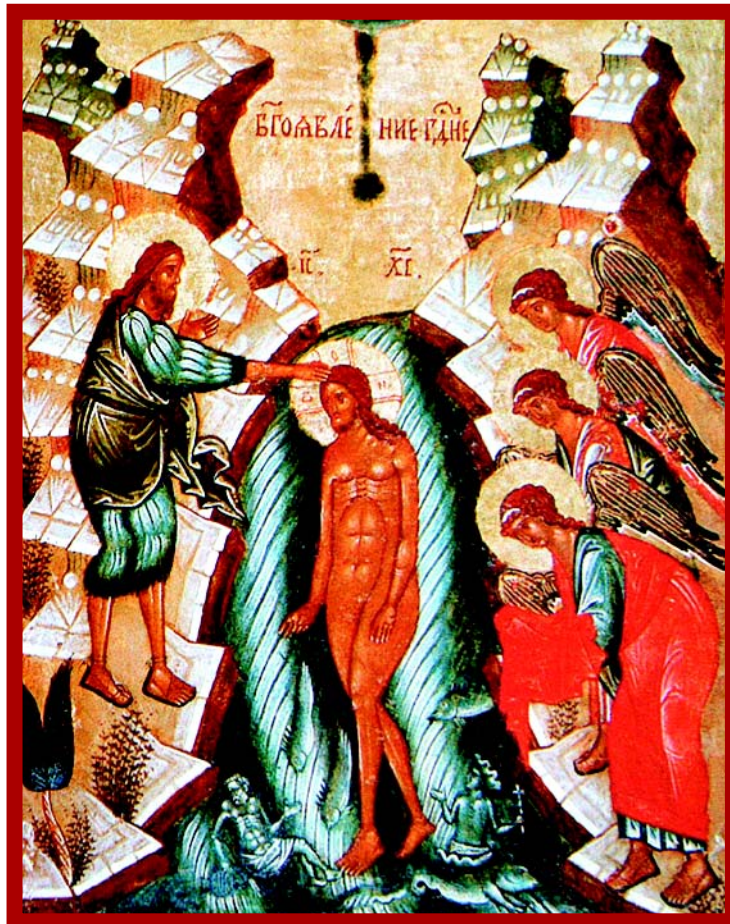
THEOPHANY

Baptism, mission, ministry

In the early Church, the Great Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord – Theophany – was more important than the Great Feast of the Nativity, if for only one reason: the Church thought in terms of Christ’s mission to the world, and that mission obviously began after Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan. His birth was presumed as an historical fact, but what was crucial for the Church in those early years was the concrete, visible mission of Christ in and to the world, and this was always associated with His baptism.

How did the early Church come to such a conclusion? The foundation of this belief is found in the Gospels. Of the four Gospels, Saint Mark’s is considered to be the first, a sort of “catechism” of the faith. Saint Mark does not mention the birth of Jesus; he presumes that people already knew about it. Instead, he begins by describing the preaching of Saint John the Baptist and by offering an account of Jesus’ baptism. At once, Saint Mark begins to relate Jesus’ public ministry – His working many signs and wonders, His healing of the sick, and His proclamation of good news to the poor.

For hundreds of years, the Church continued to celebrate Christ’s baptism as *the* feast; only later did the celebration of His birth overtake it in popular importance, and this occurred more in the West than in the East. Even today, in the Orthodox Christian liturgical cycle, Theophany is extremely important. Water is blessed. The homes of the faithful are sanctified, manifesting our conviction that Christ is the Lord and Master of our homes and families. In earlier times, baptism of new members of the Church took place on this feast – to this day we sing, “As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” at the festal Divine Liturgy as a reminder of the relationship of Christ’s baptism



to that of each individual Christian.

Now, some may ask, what does all this have to do with our lives? The answer is quite simple: *Everything!* Remember that, after Jesus’ baptism and the manifestation of the Holy Trinity at the Jordan River, Our Lord began His mission to the world. *Baptism* and *mission* are so closely related that, in fact, we cannot separate them in Jesus’ life. His public ministry began after He freely chose to be baptized, not as a sinner, but *with* sinners, in perfect humility. His willingness to accept a truly humble role suited Christ for His mission as the Savior. In the same way, our Christian baptism and mission are inseparable. Every baptism is a “little theophany” because the priest chrismates or anoints the person with Holy Chrism, the “Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit.” Confirmed as a beloved child of the Father, the newly baptized individual’s mission begins, taking on a concrete form in embracing the fullness of truth, in living the life of the Church, in celebrating and accepting the grace of the sacraments and feasts and fasts, and in putting his or her faith into action through works of mercy and love for others, especially “the least of the brethren.”

In Saint Mark’s Gospel, Jesus’ works relate to specific histori-

Theophany from 7

cal people: Simon's mother-in-law, a paralytic, a demoniac, the daughter of Jairus. But He did not perform His works and wonders for their own sake; He also taught by word and example through His works and wonders, as well as through parables, discourses, and the answers he offered the scribes and pharisees. The Christian mission is likewise twofold, for good works and teaching by example are two sides of the same coin. One complements and fulfills the other. Both are essential, as Jesus demonstrated in the Gospel: He was baptized, then He began to teach, preach, and heal. While none of us can accomplish the will of God in the perfect way Jesus did, each of us do, by virtue of the grace of baptism and chrismation, assume the responsibility to manifest Christ's mission to and in the world. Because everybody possesses different talents and gifts and temperaments, that mission may take on various forms, but the *idea* of committed life, of *mission*, is still central to Christian existence. As it defined Jesus' Messiahship, so too it defines our lives as His witnesses.

The Great Feast of Theophany, then, is central from the viewpoint of the concrete Christian life. Indeed, it is easy to understand why the early Church considered it so important. There is no such thing as a Christian life dedicated to "principles" if these are not related to the here and now, to practical action and ministry, to the recognition of our calling as co-workers and fellow ministers in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. ■

Holy Illumination: "Equipping the saints" for mission and ministry

Immediately after His baptism, Jesus Christ initiated His mission and ministry. In the **Rites of Holy Illumination**, we are prepared, in word and action, for our own mission and ministry to and in the world.

✓ In the opening **exorcisms**, we renounce Satan "and all of his angels, works, service, and pride," acknowledging our

Father Stephen Kostoff

The Incarnation

The paradox of God taking on our human nature is at the heart of our faith as Orthodox Christians

The birth of Jesus of Nazareth has always been understood within the Church to be the fulfillment of the prophecy found in the book of Isaiah: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and His name shall be Emmanuel – which means God with us" [Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23].

Combined with his clear affirmation of the "virginal conception" of Christ [Matthew 1:20], this title – *Emmanuel* – is Saint Matthew's way of revealing the total and utter uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth: God in our midst. Saint Matthew is pointing toward what, in theological language, is called the *Incarnation*. This rich and decisive word could be translated as "enfleshment" or "embodiment" in direct reference to God being *enfleshed* as Jesus of Nazareth. In other words, God was "humanized" when He was conceived and born as the Messiah of Israel – Jesus [the] Christ. The classical biblical text is, of

conviction to turn away from all that is evil and to confess and accept Jesus Christ "as King and God."

✓ By being **anointed with the Oil of Gladness**, we open ourselves to "the healing of soul and body" and "for the hearing of the faith," so that we may "walk in Thy commandments."

✓ **Immersion** in the waters of baptism is our personal participation in the burial of Christ, after which we are raised up to begin our new life as members of His Body, the Church.

✓ Having been **clothed in the "robe of righteousness,"** we are **anointed with Holy Chrism**, the "Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit" – our "personal Pentecost" – and then led in **procession** around the font, taking our first steps as "newly enlisted warriors" of Christ.

✓ In a final **ablution**, the Holy Chrism is wiped away as we are reminded that we have been "baptized, chrismated, sanctified, and washed" in the name of Our Lord and God.

✓ We are then **tonsured** – in a sense "branded" with the sign of the life-giving Cross – as an external sign that we belong to Christ and as a first offering of ourselves to God in a final commitment to living our faith and pursuing our mission all the days of our lives.

✓ Finally, in the **reception of the Holy Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist**, we become one with Him in His divine Spirit, as beloved and adopted children of our heavenly Father, and one with the entire People of God. ■



InSites

course, found in the prologue of the Gospel of Saint John: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us, full of grace and truth” [John 1:14].

Earlier in that magnificent prologue to his Gospel, Saint John revealed to us that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” [John 1:1]. Therefore, the Word of God, Who was “in the beginning” and Who “was God” began to live a human life as Jesus of Nazareth when He was born or became incarnate in what Saint Paul called “the fullness of time” [Galatians 4:4]. “Flesh” in this context means “the fullness of human nature in its totality and completeness.” This is precisely why we sing in the beautiful Nativity kontakion: “Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One, and the earth offers a cave to the Unapproachable One... since for our sake the eternal God was born as a little child!”

We need to be perfectly clear about what we are claiming about the Incarnation, and thus what we actually celebrate on Christmas. The Word of God is also called “the Son and Wisdom of God.” He is what God (the Father) is by nature, but He is distinct as One of the Persons of the Holy Trinity. He has no beginning, since He is eternally “begotten/born” of the Father. He is eternal – “begotten of the Father before all ages,” the “Light of Light, true God of true God” – as we profess in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. He is the One Who was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary when she was “overshadowed” by the Holy Spirit according to the will of the Father [Luke 1:35]. When the Virgin Mary freely consented to her role in the Incarnation, the Word of God entered her womb and was conceived without seed. Thus, Saint Joseph the Betrothed was not involved in the conception of Jesus. For this reason, he is not shown together with the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child in the cave in the Nativity icons. This “seedless conception” was absolutely essential.

From among many examples, Saint Gregory Palamas expresses it this way: “If she had conceived by seed, He would have been neither a new man nor the sinless Savior of sinners... nor the beginning of the new life which is without any deterioration whatever. If He were of the old portion and an inheritor of the fall, He would not have been capable of bearing in Himself the fullness of pure divinity and of making His flesh an inexhaustible fountain of sanctification” [*Homily 14: On the Annunciation*].

The Person in the womb of the Virgin Mary is the eternal Word, Son, and Wisdom of God. And this is why it is perfectly logical – or rather *THEO-logical* – that she is called and venerated as the *Theotokos*. Although loosely translated as “the Mother of God,” it actually means “the one who bore or gave birth to God.” Jesus Christ is not a human person somehow united with the Word of God after He was born. Rather, He is the Word of God Who is born as a unique human being, in a particular place and time. Yet, does this diminish His true humanity? Is there something less real about Our Lord’s human nature, as if His humanity was an illusion of sorts, an “incognito” for God to walk among us? Many early heresies succumbed to that false conclusion drawn from the Incarnation. They even rejected the whole “birthing process.” But, as Saint Germanos, Patriarch of Constan-



tinople, wrote: “God came forth from her as a complete human being, the Son of a real mother who was subject to the natural laws of childbearing” [*First Homily on the Dormition*]. If we emphasize the divinity of Christ at the expense of His humanity, then we fall into a one-sidedness that is always a characteristic of heresy – which is why the Incarnation is a divine-human mystery with the *Theotokos* as the “highly favored one” who gives the Lord His humanity in all of its fullness and integrity.

We confess the Incarnation while preserving the mystery: “A mystery took place which remains a mystery to this day, and it shall never cease to be a mystery,” wrote Basil of Seleucia. It is this paradox of God becoming human that is at the center of our Orthodox Christian faith. In the face of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, we *see* and *encounter* God incarnate. We want to hold onto this mystery as we prepare to celebrate the Feast. We will hear it sung and chanted in endless variations as we participate in the liturgical services. If we are moved by “baby Jesus,” we want to remember that He is actually *Emmanuel* – “*God with us.*” ■

Fr. Stephen Kostoff is rector of *Christ the Savior/Holy Spirit Church, Cincinnati, OH*, and a regular contributor to *The Orthodox Church*.

Mary Ann Bulko

An evening with...

The “Gospel of Prosperity” is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ

Recently, I was invited to an event at New York City’s Madison Square Garden featuring a very popular, charismatic televangelist. Accompanied by his wife, his mother, and other family members, the 40-ish preacher shared the stage with an array of singers and musicians who presented what might best be described as a spiritual rock concert – a lively, get on your feet, clap your hands, sing along celebration with simple, repetitive, “I am a friend of God” lyrics. The audience – a reported sellout – was swept up in the momentum and the simple message. After all, who doesn’t need a friend, especially if that friend is God?

My curiosity to discover why *so* many people turn to this type of ministry is what drew me to attend the event. Over and above the price of the admission ticket, collection baskets were passed, to the delight of the crowd. Why, I wondered, do thousands, perhaps millions, flock to experience this type of ministry, in person or on TV, while traditional churches appear to be losing members and interest?

Laying aside the obvious reasons – religious communities, including Orthodox Christianity, have been affected by all sorts of scandals in recent years – it was evident that the draw is the “feel good, feel loved” message. The focus, clearly, was on “me,” rather than God. Contributing to the ministry’s cause could indeed make one feel good without requiring a commitment to anything other than the quest to feel good and to receiving blessings – including material blessings.

The preacher’s message, as I understood it, reminded me of the “power of positive thinking” theme made popular years ago by Norman Vincent Peale. “Think positively, and positive things will happen to you!” In fact, a brochure distributed at the event read, “Instead of focusing on how big your problems are, begin right now to focus on how big your God is! We believe that when you do, you will know and experience the abundant life that He has in store for you.”

While the preacher quoted Scripture, offered personal testimony, and made a brief comment about forgiveness, little, if anything, was said about following the example of Jesus Christ. There was no mention of the sacraments whatsoever, although he did encourage members of his audience to support their local faith communities in the New York City area.

The vision of this type of evangelism, according to the brochure, is achieved via “ministry, missions, and media,” not to mention the other “m” word, money – and lots of it! During a brief pause in the program, the preacher’s sister challenged everyone to “pray for financial favor!” I cynically thought, “Oh, here it comes.” Sure enough, she set the tone as collection baskets were distributed after her remarks. Money helps the mission, whatever

it might be – and God knows people offer a great deal to these type of ministries. While images of children in need, medical clinics, and other ministries in faraway places were projected onto a huge screen, with appropriate background music, members of the audience were invited to write a check or give cash anonymously, with no strings attached, providing the “good feeling” of instant gratification.

The preacher went on to highlight the joy one acquires through the attainment of “life goals,” which yields prosperity and happiness. “You’ve got to choose to be happy!” the preacher stressed. “Have a vision of your faith. He can heal your toe. He can buy your gas, a car,” he explained to the receptive audience. So what’s wrong with that, you ask, for indeed, as Orthodox Christians we believe that all things are possible. What’s wrong is that the essence of Christian life – “If anyone desires to follow Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me” [Luke 9:23] – was never once proclaimed, or even casually mentioned. Neither was Our Lord’s maxim, “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?” Sin was not mentioned, much less repentance and forgiveness and long-suffering. Neither was the synergy of working out one’s salvation with God’s help, nor mercy and compassion, nor the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And, while the preacher’s scriptural references were inspiring, they were but pieces of a larger mosaic that, for Orthodox Christians, includes the life of the Church as lived and experienced through Scripture and Holy Tradition and the affirmation and celebration of the apostolic faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the central act of giving thanks to God by offering Him all that properly belongs to Him in the first place.

This is not to say that everything the preacher said was lacking. He did challenge his audience by saying, “Thank God for what you have!” and “start every service with songs of praise.” Thanksgiving is at the very center of every Eucharistic Liturgy, as are songs of praise. He did remind his hearers to “stay faithful where you are, and God will help you.” As Orthodox Christians, we believe and trust in God for everything, even to our last breath, for He knows our needs before we even ask. But it was another remark – “Do you ever go to your church and feel like God is dead?” – that really struck me like a bolt of lightning. At first I thought, “he’s right!” But then I found myself offering a resounding “no,” thinking to myself, “This man has never attended a Paschal service! God is alive! Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!”

It is possible that human hearts can grow cold. Our Lord observed as much in many who surrounded Him. We easily can become creatures of habit and take both our faith for granted, focusing on the externals while denying the power of the Spirit the externals express. The intense joy of Christ’s incarnation and resurrection permeates – or, at least, it should permeate – every celebration of the Divine Liturgy, filling us with enthusiasm and fervor, with exuberance and exhilaration, even though I have witnessed the celebration of services in Orthodox Christian parishes that hardly invite one to “taste and see how good the Lord is.”

Prosperity and financial comfort are *not* the goals. In fact, they can – and are – *obstacles* to attaining the *only* goal of our

NOTES

from the Chancellor's desk

Father Alexander Garklavs

Homecoming

Homecoming! The word conjures countless images. Most of them are pleasant ones that we all can relate to in one way or another. For many, coming home for the holidays is a cultural fixture that resonates in art, poetry, stories, and movies. There is excitement in just thinking about coming home. Young and old alike relish the thought of seeing family and friends that have been absent or away. Embraces and kisses lead to joyful tears and smiles. Lighthearted laughter gives way to tables laden with specially prepared foods. Evenings may be spent by a fireplace, where memories are recounted and new stories are shared. Even sleeping “back at home” has its special charm.

For someone who comes home after being away in a distant land, like a person in the military after a difficult assignment, homecoming is as powerful an emotional event as any. Knowing that when you return you will be welcomed with unconditional love and acceptance is an essential component of our wellbeing. As a psychological event, homecoming has a certain sequence of moments. Preparation and anticipation are followed by an instant of exultation and concluded by feelings of gratitude and fulfillment. This is as meaningful for the giver as for the recipient. Grandparents and parents, who wait impatiently for that son or daughter to come home, will be just as joyful and fulfilled in giving love and acceptance as those who are welcomed. Grace, holiness, peace, and comfort will be felt by all. Homecoming is a communal experience, uniting the souls and bodies of loving family and friends in a moment of transcendent joy.

Of course, when we think about our earthly homes, where our biological parents brought us into being, there can sometimes be unpleasant features. Those earthly homes can be places of resentment,

indifference, and anger. There are the homes where painful conditions are such that we cannot wait to leave and never want to return. But while these homes are tragic and do cause great damage to people's lives, their harmful effects can be overcome. This is possible in several ways, whether by creating a new, loving home or by being welcomed into a comforting home by benevolent hosts.

Homecoming also has several religious and spiritual dimensions. For many, the holiday homecomings include a visit to the church. For some, it may be the only time they do go to church, to make the folks happy or for old time's sake. The full churches we see on Holy Pascha and the Great Feast of the Nativity are a phenomenon that we have come to accept as “normal.” These are true homecomings and, as such, they are good. Sometimes, that annual religious observance can become a needed stimulus for the renewal of a dormant spiritual life.

The Church is very much a home. It is as loving, embracing, and comforting as any home can be. Being baptized and nurtured from youth on, we grow up in parish churches that we forever claim as our “home church.” Or perhaps it is the parish we discover as converts, where we worship and have friends. The church fam-

ily often will become as close as, or even closer than, a biological family. Homecoming in church has mystical qualities. The religious homecoming is multidimensional and spans centuries of time. Coming home to church is not only a uniting of souls and bodies of living relatives. Dearly departed ones and the community of saints throughout the ages are there to welcome us. In the religious sense, homecoming is a regular feature of sacramental worship. Every liturgical service, with their processions and entrances, is a homecoming event. The Divine Liturgy fulfills every such homecoming with a fes-

sive mystical supper. Here too, there are elements of preparation and anticipation, embraces and kisses, thanksgiving and fulfillment. Homecoming is an important biblical image with spiritual implications. The story of Zacchaeus is a moving account of welcoming a special stranger. Jesus Christ comes into a home, bringing sanctification and announcing that “salvation has come” to the house. Just before Great Lent, we hear the parable of the Prodigal Son. Throughout the lenten season, the image of the Prodigal Son will reappear frequently in liturgical hymns. The story is the moving account of a young man who squanders his inheritance and, after a time of destitution, returns in repentance to his father's loving and forgiving arms. It is the theme of returning to the home that is our state of purity acquired in baptism. Repentance – the experience of a sincere confession followed by forgiveness – is the return to that state of purity.

The same theme – returning to the loving embrace of the Father – is present in the liturgical service of the monastic tonsure. Monastics are men and women who totally embrace the teachings and example of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and give up all aspects of material and secular life. In this way, they “come home” to

Homecoming is a communal experience, uniting the souls and bodies of loving family and friends in a moment of transcendent joy.

that condition of original holiness that our first-formed ancestors Adam and Eve possessed in the Garden of Eden. Monastic life, as indeed all Christian life, is home-oriented, in that it directs us to where we truly belong, where we are truly loved and accepted, and where the Divine Giver rejoices in welcoming us weary travelers, whose difficult journeys end in the fulfillment of our heart's desire. The poet T. S. Eliot said, “Home is where one starts from.” For humankind, that means the Garden of Eden, and for us individuals, it is the baptismal font. Spiritually,

Chancellor to 30

OCA News Notes Notices

Holy Synod of Bishops, Metropolitan Council, meet

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America and the Metropolitan Council met in joint session at the Chancery, Syosset, NY, on Wednesday, October 17, 2007.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, opened the six-hour meeting with brief comments.

Report from the Holy Synod. His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim, reported that the Holy Synod, which met on Tuesday, October 16, heard and will decide on the appeal of Robert S. Kondratick, former OCA chancellor. In response, members of the Metropolitan Council emphasized that a decision on the appeal should be rendered as soon as possible.

In other matters, it was reported that the members of the Holy Synod

- clarified that the removal of a member from the original special investigative committee was an action taken by the Holy Synod of Bishops as a whole.
- determined that the *Best Practice Policies and Procedures for Financial Accountability* document needs revision to conform to the OCA *Statute* and wider Orthodox polity. The hierarchs clarified that the OCA will continue to operate under the current draft while revisions are being considered and incorporated.
- clarified in writing that the Orthodox Church in America was itself the client of the law firm of Proskauer Rose.
- declared that, with the repose of His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill of Pittsburgh, the episcopal see of the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania is vacant. The process of finding a successor to the late Archbishop Kyrill has been initiated.

The special investigative committee. Metropolitan Council members presented and explained the resolution it passed on October 16, calling for the establishment of a committee charged with reporting to the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod, with specific provisions to protect against infringements on its independence. After discussion, the

members of the Holy Synod blessed the establishment of a joint Holy Synod/Metropolitan Council special investigative committee with seven specific guidelines outlining the committee's scope, operations, and reporting procedures.

OCA treasurer. The Metropolitan Council endorsed the recommendation of the organizational task force to appoint the Rev. Michael Tassos as the new OCA treasurer. The Holy Synod approved the Council's nomination of Father Michael. *[See related article on page 15 of this issue.]*

The 15th All-American Council. The Holy Synod of Bishops approved the recommendation of the Metropolitan Council to convene the 15th All-American Council in Pittsburgh, PA, November 10-13, 2008.

Accountant's update. Mr. Frank Sluter from the accounting firm Satty, Levine and Ciacco summarized the OCA's December 31, 2006 audit report and sur-

veyed progress for the first half of 2007. He reported that the Church is complying with generally accepted accounting procedures.

Financial reports. The Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council heard reports from the OCA's acting treasurer, the Very Rev. Paul Kucynda, on outstanding invoices for accounting work. Invoices from the accounting firm Lambrides, Lamos, and Moulthrop, LLP, total \$11,522.00, with a total of \$214,710.25 billed by the firm. Outstanding invoices from the law firm Proskauer Rose, LLP, total \$105,624.97. The firm's total bill was \$337,455.48, which includes a 10% reduction granted by Proskauer Rose.

2007 and 2008 budgets. The Very Rev. Matthew Tate, chairman of the Metropolitan Council financial committee, discussed budgets for 2007 and 2008. He reported that further measures will be taken to meet budgetary restrictions resulting from an approximate \$250,000.00 loss of income in 2007 due to assessment withholdings. He presented a 2008 budget with a projected surplus of approximately \$179,000.00. The 2008 budget passed unanimously.

Members of the Holy Synod at meeting with the Metropolitan Council. From left, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern PA; Bishop Nikolai of Sitka, Anchorage, and Alaska; Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest; Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas the South; Metropolitan Herman; Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate; Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada; Bishop Nikon of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese; and Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West.





Metropolitan Council members *listen to a variety of reports during their joint meeting with the Holy Synod of Bishops.*

Committee reports. The Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council heard other reports from the Council's newly formed committees.

In a written report, Ms. Mary Caetta, chair of the internal audit committee, stated that her committee is still in the process of formation. She also reported that one member of the Holy Synod of Bishops and one member of the Metropolitan Council had yet to sign the *Best Practices* compliance documents. A new chair will be appointed upon completion of Ms. Caetta's term as a member of the Metropolitan Council.

The Very Rev. Mark Sherman, ethics committee chair, reported that his committee continues its work on developing a policies and procedures document to guide its work. The document will be shared with the Metropolitan Council when completed.

The Very Rev. John Reeves, charities committee chair, reported on the distribution of 9/11 funds forwarded to New York Disaster Interfaith Services, which is providing the OCA with regular updates detailing their relief allocations. The Metropolitan Council approved the committee's guidelines for the allocation of other appeal monies.

Other business. Members of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council reviewed plans for the selection of a law firm to serve as the OCA's general counsel. A group of legal professionals will be brought together to review the credentials of the eight applicants for the position and to draft a "short list," from which the Metropolitan Council will make its final decision. ■

Holy Synod, Metropolitan Council establish special investigative committee

In response to the October 17, 2007 joint decision of the Holy Synod of Bishops and the Metropolitan Council, a special investigative committee was established "to conclude the work begun under the prior chairmanship of His Eminence, Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest," according to the Very Rev. Andrew Jarmus, OCA director of ministries and communications.

"The decision was made one day after the Metropolitan Council passed a resolution to establish the committee in conjunction with the Holy Synod of Bishops," Father Andrew added. "The resolution listed seven points concerning the work of the proposed Holy Synod/Metropolitan Council special investigative committee."

His Grace, Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West, was appointed chairman of the committee by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman.

"Bishop Benjamin sought individuals to serve from among the membership of the Metropolitan Council," Father Andrew noted. "The committee will begin its work immediately and report its conclusions and recommendations to the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan Council when its work is completed."

The seven aforementioned points that will guide the committee's work are as follows.

- "1. Determine what tasks need to be concluded in order to determine what happened in the financial affairs from 1998–2007, what were the root causes that allowed inappropriate financial transactions, and what corrective actions are necessary to prevent recurrence of such inappropriate financial transactions.
- "2. Conduct all necessary interviews of persons that in the committee's judgment may have information germane to the matters in issue, considering no witnesses off limits.
- "3. Make written recommendations to the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod regarding implementation of the corrective actions necessary to prevent recurrence of inappropriate transactions.
- "4. Recommend such other actions as the committee may feel appropriate.
- "5. Provide quarterly reports to the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod regarding the progress of the committee.
- "6. Make decisions within the committee by majority vote of the committee, with the chair voting to resolve tie votes.
- "7. Conclude the investigation and provide a written report to the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod of the committee's complete findings."

In response to the Metropolitan Council's resolution, the Holy Synod issued the following statement.

"Having on October 16, 2007, established a second special investigative committee, and having recognized the request of the Metropolitan Council that a Holy Synod/Metropolitan Council special investigative committee be established; and, accepting the seven points of the Metropolitan Council's resolution of October 16, 2007; the Holy Synod blesses the work of the special investigative committee."

In addition to Bishop Benjamin, other members of the committee include the Very Revs. Philip Reese and John Tkachuk, Dr. Faith Skordinski, and Dr. Dmitri Solodow. Mrs. Alexandra Makosky has been asked to continue to serve as the committee's legal counsel. ■

Preconciliar Commission holds first meeting

The Preconciliar Commission, charged with organizing the 15th All-American Council slated to convene in Pittsburgh, PA November 10-13, 2007, held its inaugural meeting at the OCA Chancery, Syosset, NY, on Friday, November 16, 2007.

At the meeting, chaired by His Grace, Bishop Nikon of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese, commission members reviewed possible AAC themes and scheduling options. Future meetings will be held to refine and finalize plans for the gathering.

Other members include the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, chancellor; the Rev. Michael Tassos, treasurer; the Very Rev. Andrew Jarmus, ministries and communications director; the Very Rev. Myron Manzuk, council manager; the Very Rev. John Jillions; Prof. David Drillock; Mrs. Michelle Jannakos; Mrs. Eugenia Skuby; and Ms. Lisa Morris, recording secretary. ■

Holy Synod issues statement on former chancellor's appeal

At their regular fall session held on October 16, 2007, the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops issued the following statement concerning the appeal of Robert S. Kondratick, former chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America.

"The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, meeting at its regular session on October 16, 2007, at the Chancery in Oyster Bay Cove, NY, heard the written appeal, orally presented by Robert S. Kondratick, concerning the conclusions of the diocesan court of the Diocese of Washington and New York. These conclusions were received by the Holy Synod of Bishops at its special session on July 31-August 1, 2007. The Holy Synod of Bishops is considering this appeal, in accordance with the *Statute of the Orthodox Church in America*. The decision will be communicated to Robert S. Kondratick in due time." ■

Primate's announcement of the 15th All-American Council

October 25, 2007

Beloved clergy, monastics, and faithful,

It is with great joy and anticipation that I announce that the 15th All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America will be convened in Pittsburgh, PA on November 10-13, 2008. Delegates and observers from throughout our Church will be given the opportunity to participate in the four key components of an All-American Council: worship, fellowship, learning, and decision making.

Under the guidance of His Grace, Bishop Nikon of Boston, chairman of the Preconciliar Commission, the members of the Preconciliar Commission will be working to set a theme, an agenda, and a format which will encourage active participation by the parish delegates and observers in a way that will benefit the parishes they have been chosen to represent.

Parishes will begin to receive resource materials later in this year to assist in their preparation for the All-American Council. These mailings will include documents that will focus on the topics that will be discussed at the Council. Parishes are asked to begin the delegate selection process in a timely manner so that their elected delegates may prepare themselves for significant and meaningful participation in the Council. Election of parish delegates is to be in conformity with *The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America*, Article III, Section 6.

The 15th All-American Council will take place at the Hilton Hotel, currently undergoing extensive renovations. The first plenary session will begin on the morning of Tuesday, November 10, 2008. We have made arrangements with the hotel to honor conference rates for three days before and three days after the Council for any delegates interested in extending their stay.

It is my sincere prayer that the Holy Spirit will continue to inspire and guide us as we prepare ourselves, corporately and personally, for this significant event in the life of Christ's Holy Church in North America.

With love in Christ

+ **Herman**

Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

The convocation of the 15th All-American Council

October 25, 2007

Dear clergy and faithful,

This letter serves as the first notice for the 15th All-American Council, scheduled to convene November 10-13, 2008 at the Hilton Hotel, Pittsburgh, PA. Our gathering will bring together hierarchs, clergy, and faithful of our Church in worship, fellowship, and administrative duty. It will allow us the opportunity to deliberate important issues for the ongoing ministry of the Orthodox Church in America.

Plans and preparation for this historic event are already underway. A Preconciliar Commission has been established by the Holy Synod at the request of the Metropolitan Council. A local committee has been activated.

Past experience shows us that a Council of this importance requires a working budget, traditionally supported through an assessment of the member parishes. At the recent joint meeting of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council, it was decided that the rate of \$8.00 per member in each parish would be the assessment for this 15th

Council to 20

Fr. Michael Tassos begins treasurer's duties

The Rev. Michael Tassos, newly appointed treasurer of the Orthodox Church in America, began his duties at the Chancery on November 12, 2007.

Father Michael, who has been a priest for 10 years, has 20 years of accounting experience, working as a certified public accountant for 11 years.

Father Michael, who grew up in the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, served as a tonsured reader and assistant choir director at Protection of the Theotokos Church, Los Angeles, CA, for several years. He started his accounting career with Price Waterhouse in Los Angeles. In 1991, he left a position as accounting manager with Capitol Records to attend Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY.

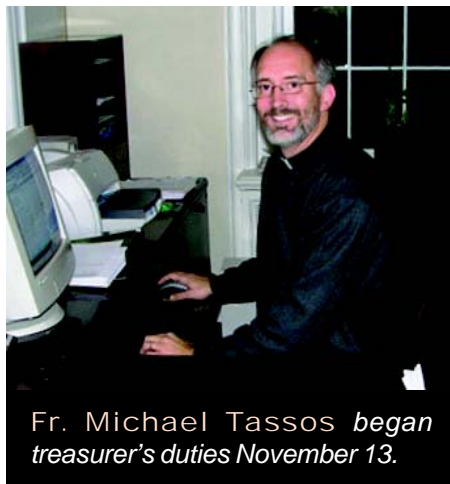
In 1995, Father Michael and his family moved to Charleston, WV, where he served Saint Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church, Beckley, WV. He worked as chief financial officer for one of the state's largest medical practices and served as a board member and finance committee chairman for Covenant House, West Virginia.

In 2002, the Tassoses returned to California, where Father Michael worked as the business manager for another large medical practice for three years, and for two years as the chief financial officer for a publicly traded company specializing in ambulatory surgery centers. He also served as pastor of Holy Cross Antiochian Orthodox Church, Palmdale, CA.

In addition to his parish ministry and secular work, Father Michael has been a financial advisor and member of the board of directors of Conciliar Press Ministries. He possesses a comprehensive knowledge of accounting and financial reporting for not-for-profit organizations and has served as a consultant to numerous medical practices and not-for-profit organizations.

Father Michael met his wife Christina at Saint Vladimir's Seminary. They have three children.

In a memorandum issued on November 13 and posted on the OCA web site, Father Michael offered initial remarks and obser-



ations on the OCA's financial situation.

"I arrived in New York this past Thursday and had the opportunity to sit with Father Alexander Garklavs, Father Andrew Jarmus, Deacon John Zarras, and Mr. Paul Bodnar and received an update on various issues," the memorandum reads. "I am very sorry to bombard you with so much detail about the current financial affairs, however I feel that it is imperative that you understand what is actually going on and what are we doing. In the near future it is my intention to focus on four main issues: a. meet with the accountants that have been providing ongoing assistance and determine their future involvement, and with the accounting firm that performed the audit for 2006; b. meet with the Proskauer Rose law firm that we still owe money to and try to work out some sort of payment plan; c. begin to make some sense of the current financial reporting; and d. thoroughly review the financial report that was prepared for the period ending June 30, 2007."

The full text of Father Michael's memorandum is posted on the OCA web site at <http://www.oca.org/News.asp?ID=1382&SID=19>.

"We are pleased to welcome Father Michael as the new treasurer of the OCA, and pray that the Lord will grant him many years of fruitful service in this ministry," said Deacon John Zarras, OCA transition officer. ■

IN DEPTH

- ✓ **READ** the minutes of the fall 2007 session of the Holy Synod of Bishops at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1368&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the opening address of Metropolitan Herman to the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1350&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the minutes of the October 2007 joint meeting of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1365&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the report of the October 2007 Metropolitan Council meeting at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1357&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the letter of Metropolitan Herman appointing Bishop Benjamin chair of the reconstituted special investigative committee at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1345&SID=19.
- ✓ **VIEW** the OCA organizational task force's PowerPoint report to the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council and a PDF file with additional notes at www.oca.org/News.asp?ID=1378&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the memorandum of Fr. Michael Tassos, OCA treasurer, at www.oca.org/News.asp?ID=1382&SID=19. ■

www.oca.org

Updated diptychs now available on OCA web site

The updated diptychs, listing the Primates of the world's 15 autocephalous Orthodox Churches are available on the OCA web site in PDF format at www.oca.org/PDF/official/2007-1029-dyptichs.pdf.

"These diptychs are used liturgically only at a hierarchical Divine Liturgy celebrated by the Metropolitan," explains the Very Rev. Andrew Jarmus, OCA director of ministries and communications. "They are sung immediately before the chanting of the Trisagion." ■

Archbishop Peter of NY/NJ falls asleep in the Lord

Funeral services for His Eminence, Archbishop Peter, former Archbishop of New York and New Jersey, were celebrated at Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, New York, NY, on Tuesday and Wednesday, November 27-28, 2007, with interment at Saint Tikhon's Monastery Cemetery, South Canaan, PA.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presided, assisted by members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America.

Archbishop Peter fell asleep in the Lord after a lengthy illness on Monday, November 19, 2007, at 11:25 a.m.

Born Paul L'Huillier in Paris, France on December 3, 1926, he embraced the Orthodox faith in 1945 while enrolled at the Saint Denys Institute in Paris. Subsequently, he pursued graduate studies at the University of Paris. He received a licentiate of theology from the Moscow Theological Academy in 1962 and a doctorate in canon law in 1985.

Tonsured to monastic rank with the name Peter on August 30, 1954, he was ordained to the diaconate on September 4, 1954, and to the priesthood the following

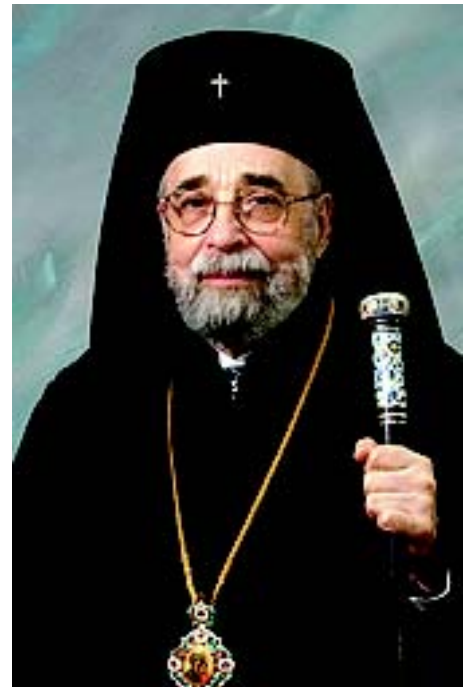
day by His Eminence, Archbishop Boris, Exarch of the Moscow Patriarchate in Europe. After his ordination, he served two parishes, Three Hierarchs Church and the Church of our Lady the Joy of Those who Sorrow, in Paris.

In 1960, he was elevated to the rank of archimandrite. On September 12, 1968, he was consecrated to the episcopacy by His Eminence, Metropolitan Nikodim [Rotov] of Leningrad and His Eminence, Metropolitan Anthony [Bloom] of Sourozh at the former Saint Alexander Nevsky Lavra, Leningrad [now St. Petersburg].

In 1979, he was invited by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, to serve the Orthodox Church in America as an auxiliary bishop with the title of Bishop of Brooklyn.

In 1981, when the Holy Synod of Bishops established the Diocese of Washington, DC, as the seat of the Primate, he was installed as bishop of the remaining part of the Metropolitan's former local diocese with the title Bishop of New York and New Jersey.

In 1989, he was elevated by the Holy Synod of Bishops to the rank of arch-

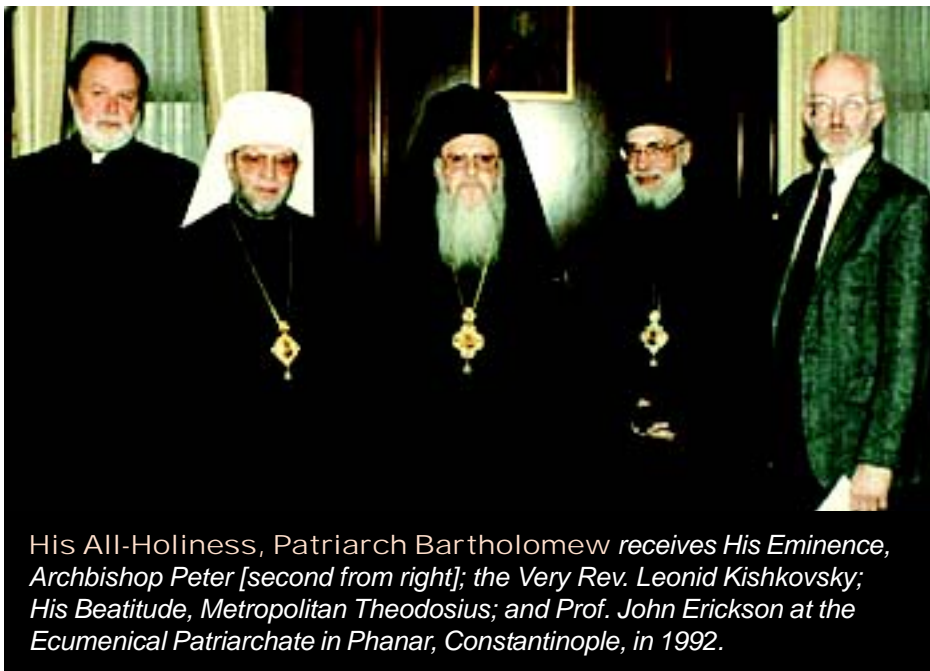


bishop.

Archbishop Peter's linguistic fluency in four languages, his academic and collegial contacts, his extensive background in Orthodox Christian canonical traditions, and his knowledge of the varieties of ethnic and local customs and traditions, made him one of the most qualified and astute hierarchs worldwide. He chaired the OCA's Department of External Affairs for many years. His dealings within the international Orthodox community often brought him face-to-face with other notable hierarchs and Church leaders, many of whom he knew personally. He also served as canonical advisor for the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas and was active in promoting Orthodox unity and presence in North America.

No less important was Archbishop Peter's academic career. He lectured at the Institute of Saint Denys, Paris, from 1949 to 1950. From 1952 to 1962, he taught at the Three Hierarchs Seminary, Ville-moisson, France. He was a professor at the Catholic University in Paris from 1966 to 1978. He served as adjunct professor of canon law at Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, since 1979. His critically acclaimed doctoral dissertation – "The Church of the Ancient Councils: The Disciplinary Work of the First Four Ecumenical Councils" – was published by Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press in 1996. He was often sought as an expert in this field by other Orthodox jurisdictions and invited

Archbishop to 20



His All-Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew receives His Eminence, Archbishop Peter [second from right]; the Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky; His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius; and Prof. John Erickson at the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Phanar, Constantinople, in 1992.

✓ VIEW photos of Bishop Benjamin's installation at www.oca.org/PHOTOindex.asp?formMonth=October&formYear=2007&SID=11§ion=searchsearch&x=23&y=10. ■

Bishop Benjamin installed as ruling hierarch of Diocese of the West

His Grace, Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco, was installed as ruling hierarch of the Diocese of the West at Holy Trinity Cathedral, San Francisco, CA, on Saturday, October 2, 2007.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presided at the installation, which took place in conjunction with the diocese's annual assembly.

Concelebrating with Metropolitan Herman and Bishop Benjamin at the installation Divine Liturgy were His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada, who read the proclamation issued by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America; His Grace, Bishop Joseph of Los Angeles and the West of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America; His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania; and His Grace, Bishop Maxim of Western America of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA and Canada.

Bishop Benjamin was elected candidate for the office at a special diocesan assembly held in Las Vegas, NV, on January 31, 2007.

Following the installation, a banquet was held at Castagnolas Restaurant on Fisherman's Wharf.

Assembly delegates sent greetings to His Grace, Bishop Tikhon, retired Bishop of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the West, acknowledging his wise and loving guidance and assuring him of their prayers. Bishop Tikhon retired in 2006.

Bishop Benjamin was born Vincent Peterson in Pasadena, CA on June 1, 1954 and was baptized and chrismated at Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA on April 27, 1972. In 1982 he was awarded a master of divinity degree and certificate in liturgical music from Saint Vladimir Seminary, Crestwood, NY.

A prolific musician, he served as choir-master at parishes in Detroit, MI, and Los Angeles, and as chairman of the OCA's Department of Liturgical Music. He was ordained to the diaconate on November 15,



Diocesan faithful receive blessing from newly installed Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West after the Divine Liturgy [above]. At left, Metropolitan Herman addresses Bishop Benjamin at the conclusion of the installation Liturgy as Archbishop Seraphim looks on.

1987 by Bishop Tikhon at his home parish, to which he was assigned and at which he served as deacon and youth and education director for 10 years. The following year, he was tonsured a riasophore monk by Bishop Tikhon and further tonsured to the lesser schema by Archbishop [now Metropolitan] Herman at Saint Tikhon Monastery, South Canaan, PA. In 1991 he was elevated to the rank of archdeacon.

On July 19, 1997, he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Tikhon. In 1999, Igumen Benjamin was transferred to the

Diocese of Alaska, where he served as dean of Saint Innocent Cathedral, Anchorage, AK, and later as administrative dean of Saint Herman Seminary, Kodiak, AK. He was elevated to the rank of archimandrite in 2002. In January 2004, he was reassigned to Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral, Los Angeles, and appointed chancellor of the Diocese of the West. He was consecrated to the episcopacy by Metropolitan Herman, Bishop Tikhon of the West, and His Grace, Bishop Nikolai of Sitka, Anchorage, and Alaska at San Francisco's Holy Trinity Cathedral on May 1, 2004. ■

Alexis Liberovsky

St. John Kochurov: Missionary and martyr

October 31, 2007, marked 90 years since the martyrdom of Saint John Kochurov, a missionary in America for a dozen years before he became the first clergy martyr under the communist yoke in Russia.

Saint John was born on July 13, 1871 in the village of Bigildino-Surky in Russia's Ryazan province, where his father was a priest. Having graduated from the Ryazan Seminary in 1891, he was admitted for advanced studies to the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy where, along with his close friend and classmate, Saint Alexander Hotovitzky, he was recruited for missionary work in North America by Bishop Nicholas [Ziorov] of the Aleutians and Alaska.

After marrying Alexandra Chernisheva in July 1895, Saint John was ordained to the priesthood on August 27, 1895 and as-

signed to serve in Chicago, IL. In 1903, he undertook the construction of the city's Holy Trinity Cathedral, designed by renowned architect Louis Sullivan. During this time, Saint John made numerous missionary journeys and established parishes in several states. He was also a key participant in the First All-American *Sobor* [Council] which was convened in Mayfield, PA in 1907.

On the 10th anniversary of his priestly service, Saint John was honored at a special gathering of his fellow clergy of the North American Diocese. In gratitude for their congratulations and the gift of the pectoral cross he had received from his brother priests, Saint John concluded his extensive remarks that day with the following words which poignantly foreshadowed his future martyrdom: "I bow to the ground before you and ask you to forget my mistakes and unworthiness. I kiss this holy cross, which is a gift of your brotherly love for me. May it be my support during difficult moments. I will not make strong assertions to say that I will not part with it in the grave. These could be powerful words, but they would not be wise. It does not belong in the grave. It must remain here on earth for my children and their descendants as a sacred family relic and as clear proof that brotherhood and friendship are the most sacred things on earth, with-

out which life would not be beautiful."

Four of the six Kochurov children were born in the US. As the eldest were reaching high school age, Saint John was concerned that they be educated in their ancestral homeland. At that time, it was quite normal for a young priest to serve as a missionary abroad for a decade and then return to Russia to continue his priestly service. Hence, in 1907, Saint John petitioned for reassignment in Russia. He was sent to Narva [now in Estonia], an area with a population of diverse faiths, where he would labor for almost a decade, primarily teaching religion classes to the Orthodox students in the public schools. He also organized various activities for his students to instill in them a profound sense of Church life. As World War I began, he involved the youth and their families in several charitable initiatives.

However, Saint John missed pastoral work as a parish priest. Therefore, on November 16, 1916, Saint John assumed duties as assistant pastor of Saint Catherine's Cathedral in Tsarskoe Selo near Petrograd [today Saint Petersburg], then the capital of the Russian Empire. Located on the town's main square, the cathedral was the town's principal church and dominant structure. Less than a year later, on October 30, 1917, as Bolshevik forces were attacking Tsarskoe Selo, the cathedral clergy

The 90th anniversary of the martyrdom of St. John Kochurov

As a newly ordained priest [below, left], St. John and his wife Alexandra were assigned to serve in Chicago, IL, in 1895. In 1903, he undertook the construction of Holy Trinity Cathedral, working with the renowned architect Louis Sullivan, a mentor of Frank Lloyd Wright. In a rare photo that appeared in a Chicago newspaper in 1905 [below, right], St. John is seen preaching in the completed cathedral, which still serves as the see of the OCA Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest.



organized a decorous procession through the town with special prayers for peace and an end to fratricidal conflict. Saint John delivered an inspiring sermon during the service, appealing for serenity in the face of upcoming turmoil. The following day, the Bolsheviks took over the town and immediately arrested the clergy. Saint John tried to reason calmly with the oppressors. An enraged mob of Bolshevik soldiers took him to the outskirts of town and brutally shot him to death, as his teenaged son watched helplessly. He was solemnly buried in the crypt beneath the cathedral on November 4. On the ninth day after his death, a solemn hierarchical memorial service with scores of clergy participating was celebrated at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan in Petrograd. At the same time, the newly elected Patriarch Tikhon addressed a touching letter to Saint John's family, expressing condolences on behalf of the All-Russian Church Council, then meeting in Moscow. Council delegates issued a resolution to provide aid to Saint John's family and the families of other victims.

Two decades later, in April 1938, under difficult conditions at the peak of Stalin's oppression, the parish community of Saint Catherine Cathedral ceased to function, and on June 5, 1939, the cathedral was blown up and demolished. In 1960, a large bronze statue of Lenin was erected

where the cathedral had once stood. With the advent of *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the waning days of the Soviet Union, the Russian Church began to regain her freedom. Many churches which had been closed for decades began to reopen at that

IN DEPTH

✓ **MORE INFO** on St. John Kochurov may be found by logging on to the OCA web site at [www.oca.org/FS.NA-Saint.asp?SID=4\\$Saint=John](http://www.oca.org/FS.NA-Saint.asp?SID=4$Saint=John). Information in the English language on the reconstruction of St. Catherine Cathedral in Pushkin is available at www.sobor-ekaterina.ru/raboty_vossozdanie/Reconstruction%20Program_english.php. ■

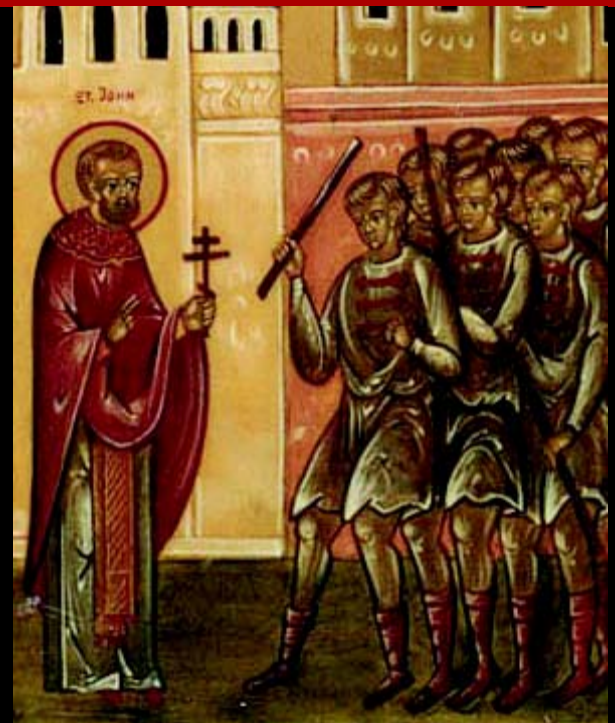
www.oca.org

time, and a parish community was formed in 1989 in Pushkin (formerly Tsarskoe Selo), a town that did not have a functioning church for many years under communist rule. Led by a dynamic priest, young volunteers among the faithful were recruited to restore Saint Sophia Cathedral, an historic church building in town, which by then had fallen into ruins. It was here that the legacy and veneration of Saint John also began to grow.

On December 4, 1994, upon the proposal of the Orthodox Church in America, Saint John and Saint Alexander Hotovitzky were officially glorified among the saints as missionaries to America and new martyrs and confessors of Russia. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, at that time Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, traveled to Moscow with a group of pilgrims from North America to participate in the glorification services.

Two months later, a large cross (more than 20 feet high) was erected in the square near where Saint Catherine Cathedral had once stood. The same year, government authorities adopted a decision to remove Lenin's statue from the cathedral square. In 1998, preliminary government approval was given for the reconstruction of Saint Catherine Cathedral, but in the years that followed, permission was not granted for any concrete actions towards removal of the statue or reconstruction of the cathedral in Pushkin. In the early hours of the morning of April 6, 2004 – Holy Tuesday and the eve of the feast of the Annunciation on the old calendar – this apparent stalemate was resolved. Lenin's statue and its concrete pedestal were unceremoniously removed from the square while the town slept. A few hours later, police came to the home of the rector of Saint Sophia

Pages to 20



From Chicago to Tsarskoe Selo Photos of St. John show him during his pastorate in Chicago [above, left] and in Tsarskoe Selo [above, right]. A contemporary biographical icon [right] shows St. John preaching to the angry mob of revolutionaries that put him to death.

Archbishop from 16**The repose of Archbishop Peter**

to represent the Orthodox Church at various conferences, meetings, and ecumenical dialogues.

Archbishop Peter's three decades of episcopal service coincided with many important events in the history of the Church in the 20th century.

In March 2005, the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops accepted Archbishop Peter's request for retirement. Due to failing health, he had been on a leave of absence since the spring 2004 session of the Holy Synod. His retirement became effective April 30, 2005.

May Archbishop Peter's memory be eternal! ■

Council from 14**Convocation of the 15th All-American Council**

All-American Council. An adjustment was made from previous years in order to encourage the participation of smaller, mission parishes. This Council will be on a more modest scale, and every effort will be made to keep costs to a minimum.

Assessments will be based upon your parish census figures submitted for the year 2007. Invoices are currently being prepared and will be sent out shortly. We request that parishes make an effort to remit assessment funds to the Chancery offices by December 31, 2007.

Thank you for your remittance in advance. Your support will provide the Orthodox Church in America with the means to plan and implement the 15th All-American Council next November.

With love in Christ,
Archpriest Alexander Garklavs
Chancellor ■

Visit the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards link at www.oca.org to learn how you and your parish can support and expand the work of the OCA's departments!

**Pilgrims visit site of St. John's martyrdom**

TSARSKOE SELO, RUSSIA – A cross marks the site of St. John Kochurov's martyrdom in 1917. Archimandrite Zacchaeus, dean of the Orthodox Church in America's Representation Church of the Great Martyr Catherine in Moscow, Russia, and several of the parish's members visited the site and attended services marking the 90th anniversary of St. John's death. ■

Pages from 19**St. John Kochurov**

Cathedral, a dedicated priest and well-known activist, to ask if he knew anything about the removal of the statue. The priest was surprised to learn of this from the police and honestly assured them that he had nothing to do with it. The statue's removal and destruction was officially labeled criminal vandalism, but no perpetrators were ever found. In the Church, it soon became known that the statue was removed by an Orthodox construction worker, who surreptitiously used a heavy construction vehicle to yank Lenin's statue from the square as a special personal act of lenten spiritual effort.

In early 2006, archeologists began to excavate the cathedral's foundation, which

had remained largely intact, as a raised platform above ground level had been built around the statue where the cathedral had previously stood. Human remains were uncovered there, but there has yet to be any confirmed forensic identification of the relics of Saint John Kochurov. In December 2006, ground breaking for the new cathedral took place, and its consecration is planned for 2010, the town's 300th anniversary.

Saint John – gifted missionary in America, dynamic teacher in Narva, and selfless pastor in Tsarskoe Selo – made the ultimate sacrifice as a witness to Christ.

Holy Father John, missionary, teacher and martyr, pray to God for us! ■

Alexis Liberovsky is the archivist of the Orthodox Church in America.

Relics of St. Maxim Sandowicz enshrined at St. Tikhon's Monastery

Relics of Saint Maxim Sandowicz, an early 20th century martyr for the Orthodox Christian faith from the Lemko region of what is today Poland, were enshrined at Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA on September 19, 2007.

Receiving the relics on behalf of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, were His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania; the Very Rev. Michael Dahulich, dean of Saint Tikhon's Seminary; members of the monastic community; and seminarians.

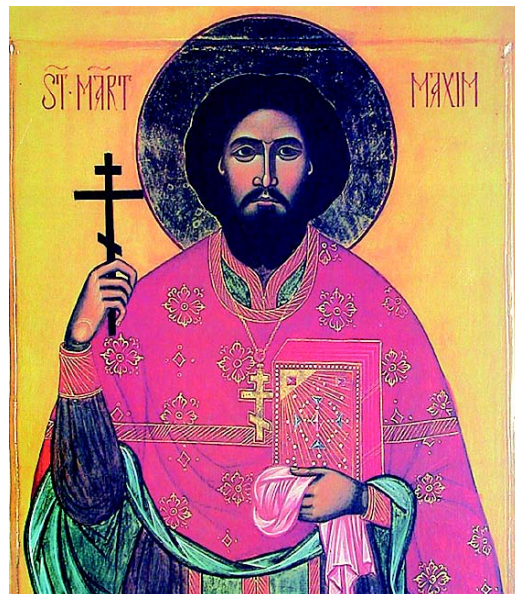
The relics were presented to the monastery by the Very Rev. Daniel Ressetar, pastor emeritus of Christ the Saviour Church, Harrisburg, PA, a great nephew of Saint Maxim.

Earlier in the month, Father Daniel participated in the celebration of the translation of Saint Maxim's relics in Gorlice, Poland, where he was martyred

by firing squad in 1914. The saint's relics were transferred from the parish cemetery in Zdynia, and enshrined on the right side of the iconostasis in Gorlice's Holy Trinity Church. Hundreds of faithful attended the services, at which His Beatitude, Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland presided, assisted by eight other hierarchs and dozens of priests and deacons.

During the celebration, Father Daniel was presented with a golden vessel containing Saint Maxim's relics. Upon his return to the US, he concelebrated an Akathistos in the saint's honor at Christ the Saviour Church with the Rev. Steven Vernak, rector, and the Rev. Srboľjub Jackovic.

"The translation of Saint Maxim's relics was an emotional, unforgettable spiritual event," Father Daniel said. "In the future, portions of his relics will be distributed to parishes and Church institutions." ■



St. Maxim Sandowicz

St. Maxim Sandowicz was born on January 31, 1886 in Zdynia, Austrian Galicia, Poland. After completing his basic education, he entered a Greek Catholic monastery. Soon thereafter, he became estranged from Greek Catholicism in general, and entered the Pochaiv Monastery, at that time in the Russian Empire, in 1904. After completing studies at the Orthodox seminary in Zhytomyr, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1911, after which he returned to the Lemko region. As the first Orthodox priest to serve in the area since it embraced uniatism in the early 18th century, he served under the watchful eye of the Austrian authorities, who feared the spread of Russian influence through the growing Orthodox presence.

In March 1912, he and three associates, were arrested and put on trial two years later in Lviv. They were accused of being spies for the Russian Empire. The four were acquitted, after which Saint Maxim returned to his native village.

On August 28, 1914, he and his entire family were arrested and imprisoned in Gorlice. World War I had already begun, and as Russian troops invaded the region in September 1914, he was summarily shot by the Austrians.

His relics were returned to Zdynia in 1922.

In 1994, he was glorified by the Orthodox Church of Poland in Gorlice. His son, a priest also named Maxim, continued to serve the region's Orthodox faithful until his death in 1991. ■

Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania with Frs. Michael Dahulich and Daniel Ressetar and several members of the monastery and seminary communities, receive the relics of St. Maxim Sandowicz at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA [below]. Fr. Daniel, the great nephew of St. Maxim, prays before the saint's relics, enshrined in Holy Trinity Church, Gorlice, Poland, in early September [right].



Stewardship

Cheerful giving

The question is not “how much should I give,” but “how much have I been given?”

When addressing the question of the relationship of money to the Church, one immediately comes to the realization that, while the Church does not exist to make money, the Church – as an organism living and growing in this world – needs money to exist. In saying this, one does not diminish the importance of God’s presence for the existence and continuation of the life of the Church. Indeed, even if we had all of the money in the world but lacked the abiding presence of Christ, the Church would not, nor could not, exist.

At first glance, it may appear that money and the Church have very little to do with one another, except for the fact that money is used to “pay the bills.” While it is true that God, and not money, is the true content of our faith, we must seek to understand the theological vision of giving that is presented to us within the Tradition of the Church.

By taking flesh from the Virgin Mary, Our Lord entered into the fullness of the material world – a world which He created and called “good.” By His incarnation, Jesus united heaven and earth, abolishing once and for all the dichotomy between the “spiritual” and the “material.” The myth – or, rather, the heresy of *dualism* – that holds that while the spiritual is “good,” the material is “evil,” is nothing more than a denial of the true implications of the incarnation. In Jesus Christ, heaven and earth are united. By entering the material world and taking on our physical human nature in its fullness, He sanctifies matter, returning it to its original purpose and function. Hence, matter – even money – can be used for the glory of God and the building up of His Body, the Church.

Offering our first fruits. When we give money to the Church, we are offering back to the Lord something of ourselves. All things ultimately are from God, and belong to Him. We have

been given the task of being faithful *stewards*, or managers, of that which belongs to Him and entrusted to our care.

As a way of giving thanks for all that God has given us, we are called to set aside our “first fruits” for God: “Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine” [Proverbs 3:9-10]. We are called by Scripture to offer back to the Lord something of what He has allowed us to earn. Notice that Scripture emphasizes the *first fruits* of our labor. Many times we present our offerings to the Lord only *after* everything else has been taken care of – food, clothing, entertainment, utility bills, etc. – leaving, like Cain, the “leftovers” for God. But God does not honor our leftovers!

A common temptation. “All mortal things are vanity and exist not after death,” we sing at the funeral service. “Riches

do not endure, neither does glory accompany us on the way, for when death comes, all things vanish utterly.” These words remind us that we cannot selfishly claim anything “just for ourselves,” precisely because we are mortal beings. When we die, riches, wealth, property, and even poverty mean nothing to us. As the old saying goes, “you can’t take it with you,” regardless of what that “it” might be.

Christ reveals that selfishness is a sin because it is a lie about

our ability to possess anything for eternity. Hence, we are challenged not to ascribe excessive devotion to our material possessions, nor to yield to the temptation of selfishness. To do so is to enslave ourselves to the life of the devil and to separate ourselves from the Christian vision of life, property, and death. The point here is that Christians should never refuse to give to the Church because they delight in their material possessions and wealth.

How much should I give? While, time and time again, we may ask, “How much should I give,” the *real* question is, “How much have I been given?”

Ask, “What has Our Lord accomplished for me?” and “How much does the work of Christ and His Church mean to me?” And then give in a consistent, responsible way, whether by tithing – offering 10% of our income – or by setting aside the “first portion” of our income for the Lord *before* setting aside a portion for ourselves. Either way, our giving should be sacrificial, offered as a sign of thanks for the blessings the Lord has bestowed upon us. ■

Scripture provides us with guidelines for giving to the Church.

- *Whatever we give, we should never boast about it, as we see in Matthew 6:1-4.*

- *We should give regularly and consistently. St. Paul tells the faithful of Corinth to “put something aside... on the first day of every week” for the Church [1 Corinthians 16:2].*

- *We should give cheerfully. St. Paul keenly illustrates this point when he writes, “The point is this: he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” [2 Corinthians 9:6-7].*



Outreach Ministries

Signs of new life

Sharing Christ's love with Katrina's forgotten victims

Antonia Godbold

Most anyone will tell you that life is a series of peaks and valleys. I was in a small valley when I received an issue of International Orthodox Christian Charities' newsletter that highlighted the need for volunteers to work for a week in the Katrina-devastated areas of the Gulf coast.

As a busy homeschooling mother of four, I found that I had become far too self-focused. I needed an outreach opportunity so I could feel that I was "giving back." This seemed to be the perfect solution – a short vacation from the little people and a chance to fulfill my need to reach out.

A group from our parish, Holy Apostles, Columbia, SC, and our parish priest, the Rev. Thomas Moore, departed for the coast.

We were housed in a community church, complete with showers! Each morning, before we left to begin the day's work, Father Thomas led morning prayers. The first day, our IOCC contact led us on a tour of the area north of Lake Pontchartrain, where we would be working, and New Orleans. Some neighborhoods resembled ghost towns. We saw street after street with empty houses – broken windows, rooftops askew, weedy lots – all with mysterious grids and numbers painted on their exteriors. It was a very stark reminder of the immediate aftermath of Katrina, when houses were systematically searched for survivors. The Ninth Ward was a collection of concrete foundations set in overgrown lots, with dirt and gravel pockmarked streets. A few residents had returned and were attempting to rebuild their homes and lives, while others

remained in the countless trailers that dotted the landscape along the interstates approaching the city. It was clear that, two years after Katrina, there was so much to be done.

A bright spot in our tour was Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, established in the mid-1800s. The church, built on a small hill, was seriously damaged. New flooring had been installed in the altar shortly before the hurricane. Miraculously, the extra quarter inch of flooring prevented the flood waters from entering the altar.

For the next five days, our team worked with volunteers from Habitat for Humanity, one of whom had given nine months to rehabilitation efforts. Some of the homeowners visited us as we worked. One woman, a single mother who had lost her job, tearfully shared her fear that she would lose her house. It was encouraging to watch one of the Habitat volunteers offer her a hug while encouraging her to "just keep praying." He explained that Habitat is committed to offering "a hand up, not a hand out," as he outlined the responsibilities home recipients must meet.

During our week in New Orleans, there was one scene I will never forget. There was one site among the weedy lots and concrete slabs of the Lower Ninth Ward on which someone had planted brightly colored flowers. There, in the pouring rain, amongst amazing devastation, was a splash of cheerful red and yellow along the front and side of the slab on the otherwise empty lot. The flowers grew in stark contrast to their surroundings. I wondered if it was a memorial to someone who had lost his or her life, or a display of hope for the future – perhaps both. Either way, it reminded me of Christ – His death and His Resurrection and the hope of new life He so graciously offers – and the need to turn our focus away from ourselves to reach out to the "least of the brethren." I, and the other members of our team, were truly blessed to receive so much more than we had given during our week in New Orleans. ■

Giving... and receiving! Faithful from Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC, spent a week last summer rebuilding homes in Katrina-devastated New Orleans. Pictured in the first row are Marty Cipolla, Antonia Godbold, and Valerie Hook, behind whom are Bret Barnard, George Moore, and Kreg, the group's supervisor. Fr. Thomas Moore stands to the right.



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4: Did Jesus tell Bible stories?

Father Theodore Bobosh

“Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; He did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: ‘I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world’” [Matthew 13:34-35]. While this text gives us another example of the New Testament treatment of an Old Testament text as prophecy (in this case Psalm 78:2), it also gives a justification for Jesus’ own teaching method – namely the use of *parables*.

A parable is a story that, while purely fictitious, teaches a lesson. The story does not have to be “true,” in the sense of literal or historical fact. A parable is also different from an *allegory*, in which the story may indeed be factual and historical, even though it is used to lead to some understanding beyond the mere literal facts. In allegories, the words of the text are each treated as “symbols” or tokens referring to other realities. The literal meaning of the text and the coherence of the story can be totally ignored, or even destroyed, since each element or word in the story refers to some greater reality. In allegories, the text is really a “code” to be cracked, or simply a pretext for some other “hidden meaning.” A parable, on the other hand, presents a story that, in and of itself, makes sense, yet requires the listener to think about the story’s possible meanings, implications, and parallels.

The use of parables was common in Jewish tradition; hence, in using parables, Jesus spoke in a manner familiar to His hearers. And, while the New Testament makes it clear that Jesus used parables constantly in His teaching [Matthew 13:34], it does not claim that He spoke allegorically.

The parable requires the hearer to give meaning to the story. Thus, the disciples were troubled as to why Jesus continually spoke in parables, since the parables’ meanings had then to be discerned. While they wanted a more direct, literal form of teaching, Jesus did not accommodate them [Matthew 13:34-35]. Rather, He taught in parables, and only later did He explain their meaning. When asked why He did this, Jesus said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, ‘though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand’” [Luke 8:10]. Further, we see in this text that the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9 is fulfilled in the life of Jesus. He apparently wanted people to think, to be creative, to discern meaning in His stories – and this would be the very reason He used parables in the first place!

What is fascinating is that, though the chief priests, elders, and pharisees are not taught the meaning of the parables (as are the disciples) and seem not to understand their meaning in general, they do perceive that “He was talking *about* them” [Matthew 21:45] – or, more precisely, that He was talking *against* them. But their eyes remained closed to the meaning of the parables, for they had no faith in Him or His message. In the same way that one needs faith to see a miracle, one needs faith to have one’s mind or



heart enlightened by a parable.

Beyond using the parables, did Jesus tell Bible stories? If we are looking for Him to narrate stories which are so popularly recognized – Adam and Eve, Joseph and his brothers, David and Goliath, Noah, or Jonah – the answer is no. It may be that He didn’t tell these stories because they were readily known and available to His hearers. It is also possible that, as with His

parables, Jesus intended people to discern the deeper meanings of these stories, so He used them in such a way as to require an interpretation.

In Matthew 24:37-42, Jesus refers to Noah: “As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of man. Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one is taken and one is left. Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”

Instead of narrating the story, Jesus He makes particular use of the story. The hermeneutic He uses is what the patristic writers termed *pragmatica* – the *implication* of the text. Here, Jesus uses the story of Noah, a lesson from the past, to teach His hearers how to understand their – and our – current situation and to take appropriate action. Ultimately, Jesus is calling His hearers to vigilance. The future – His Second Coming – will occur in a manner similar to the flood of Noah’s day, by complete surprise as the people were going about their business.

Jesus makes reference to the story of Jonah in Matthew 12:38-41: “Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, ‘Teacher, we wish to see a sign from You.’ But He answered them, ‘An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nin’evah will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.’”

While Jesus seems to accept the literal details of Jonah’s tale, what is more significant is that He sees the events of Jonah’s life as a sign and prophecy of His own resurrection. Thus, the story of Jonah finds its ultimate purpose in Christ, as a sign and prophecy. The key to the story is not found in its historical context, but in how it serves to reveal Christ’s own life as that which the prophets anticipated. Again, Christ is both the hermeneutic for understanding God’s word, as well as the Interpreter of God’s Word.

In John 5:39, Christ challenges the Jews: “You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf.” Here, Christ is clear: the very purpose of the Old Testament is to witness to Christ, so that all might recognize Him. The Jewish Tanakh as understood by Christians is a treasury of God’s riches and wisdom and revelation, but it remains locked in its vault until the Key – Jesus Christ – is given to open the vault. Hence, the Key to understanding the

Scripture to 30

Not-so-weird science

Hands-on classroom activities explore Scripture and the wonders of God's creation

Valerie Zahirsky

A good teacher will always strive to relate new information, attitudes, and concepts to his or her student's experience. Since science, as taught in public schools, is devoid of any connection with faith, much less Scripture, here's an example of how to intergrate study of the Word of God with basic scientific concepts.

Lesson theme.

"What does God see in us?"

What you'll need.

For this activity, you will need a black non-permanent marker, water, scissors, large coffee filters (either one per student, one per pair of students, or one for the whole class – your choice).

Procedure.

1. Cut the round bottom center from the coffee filter[s]. You will be using only the round center piece.
2. Use the marker to color a penny-sized black dot in the middle of the round piece of filter.
3. Ask the students, "What do you think would happen if we dropped some water on the black dot?" Let them offer guesses and ideas.
4. Drop 10 drops of water onto the dot. Students may be surprised to see a rainbow of colors appear. Share with students the scientific explanation: The ink in the black marker is made of mixed colored pigments. The drops of water made the pigments dissolve and spread through the filter, showing the individual colors.
5. Tell the students that the Old Testament tells us how God sent Samuel to anoint His chosen king. (Make sure the students understand that anointing with oil marks a person with the sign of God's Holy Spirit – that person belongs to God, and has a special responsibility to fulfill.) In the Old Testament story, God told Samuel that the one to be anointed was one of the sons of Jesse, but Samuel did not know which son it was.
6. Read together 1 Samuel 16: 6-13. (Note: "They" in verse 6 refers to Jesse's sons, who passed before Samuel one by one.)
7. Ask the students, "How was Samuel surprised?" (He assumed that one of the strong, capable older brothers would be God's chosen one, not smaller David.)
8. Ask, "How is this like our experiment?" Let the students give answers. Through discussion, help them see that God looked deeper than the outward appearance of the brothers, and that He looks beyond our external appearance. We had to "look deeper" to see the rainbow hidden in the black dot. And, as followers of God, we are called to "look deeper" into people than their outward appearance. ■

RESOURCES

Looking for an introductory text on Holy Scripture?

Look no further!

Called to Serve is a Bible survey in 20 short lessons. Its author, Fr. John Peck, says it is intended for those who want to learn more about Scripture or who want to have a text from which to teach others about Scripture.

Called to Serve consists of two black-and-white volumes – one for students and one for the teacher or group leader, with answers provided. Each book is 65 pages in length.

Despite its brevity, **Called to Serve** is thorough, guiding students well in looking at Scripture from an Orthodox Christian perspective. Fr. John has the gift of saying memorable and useful things in a succinct way. For example, he writes, "For the Orthodox Christian, the Old and New Testaments form a unified whole of God's revelation.... We see that the Old Testament prophets were receiving instruction from, and witnessing to, the same Christ that the New Testament apostles were." [The text is "in sync" with the *Discovering Scripture* series written by Fr. Theodore Bobosh and published in *The Orthodox Church*.]

To the question of why we should bother with the Old Testament if it has already been fulfilled by Christ, the book gives a good answer: It is Christ Who created the world, Who spoke to Moses in the burning bush, and Who sent the prophets. The Old Testament sets the New Testament experience in context for us, since we did not live in that time and culture.

The lessons are varied – always a plus in a textbook. They offer map work, word devices to memorize data, discussion guides, diagrams, and illustrations. An effort is made to give students, with their diverse learning styles, opportunities to learn in the ways they do best.

Called to Serve is a useful and attractive survey course. Fr. John has even offered readers a way of sending him feedback on the book – the mark of a writer who truly wants to make his work the best, and most useful, that it can be.

Order on-line at www.interiorstrength.com or lulu.com/interiorstrength. ■ – Valerie Zahirsky

For a wealth of educational resources, supplements, and creative ideas, visit the Department of Christian Education web site at <http://dce.oca.org>.

Christian Ed

DCE holds Christian ed conference in Ft. Worth, TX

In the Beginning” was the theme of a one-day conference for teachers, parents, youth leaders, and others interested in Christian education sponsored by the Orthodox Church in America’s Department of Christian Education on September 29, 2007.

Fifty-three participants from seven OCA and Antiochian parishes attended the conference, which was held at Saint Barbara Church, Fort Worth, TX.

The theme utilized the book of Genesis as an example of what teachers and parents can do to instruct children and Church school students of various age and grade levels.

His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South, delivered the opening keynote address, titled “The Church’s Use

of Scripture in Her Services.” Matushka Valerie Zahirsky, DCE cochair, spoke on “How Genesis Can Help Our Kids Navigate Their World” in the second keynote address.

Three workshops were offered by DCE members. Mrs. Daria Petrykowski presented “What? Who? When?” in which she explored a variety of issues related to lesson content. Mrs. Veronica Bilas led a workshop on “Creative Ideas for Home and Church School,” which offered hands-on examples of activities and resources for all age levels. Matushka Christine Zebrun, DCE cochair, presented “The Welcoming Classroom,” which surveyed instructional, functional, and creative ideas and solutions to generate a more inviting learning environment.

Displays and free resource materials from various Orthodox Christian vendors were available to participants.

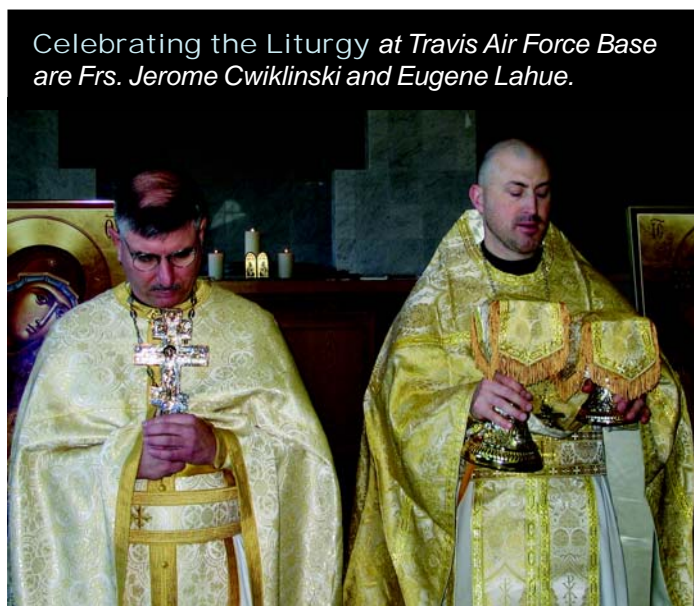
For more information about future conferences and workshops, or to host a conference in your area, contact the Department of Christian Education at christianeducation@oca.org. ■

Chaplaincies

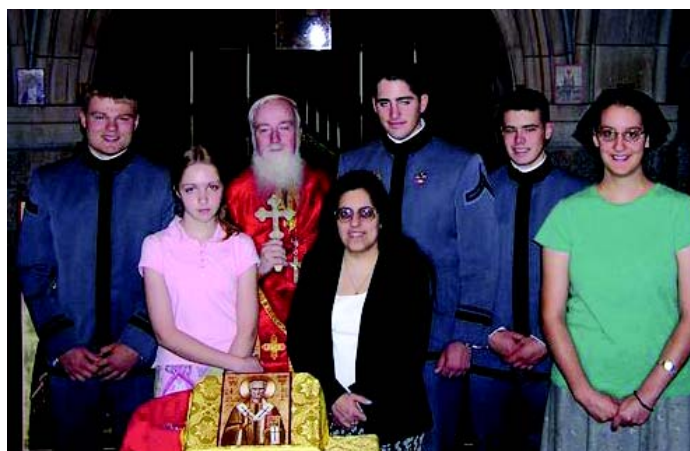
Orthodox chaplains embrace all branches of service

For nearly seven decades, Orthodox Christian chaplains have faithfully ministered to the needs of US military personnel stateside and around the world.

Currently, the Rev. Eugene Lahue celebrates the Divine Liturgy and other services at Travis Air Force Base near Fairfield, CA. The Very Rev. Jerome Cwiklinski, a Navy chaplain assigned to the Coast Guard near Oakland, CA, recently transferred



Celebrating the Liturgy at Travis Air Force Base are Frs. Jerome Cwiklinski and Eugene Lahue.



Weekly liturgies have been celebrated for years for cadettes at the US Military Academy at West Point by Fr. Joseph Frawley.

from the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base to take over Orthodox services on Travis AFB for Father Eugene, who was deployed to Afghanistan to serve as a chaplain with coalition forces that include all branches of the US military and partners from Orthodox nations, including Bulgaria, Georgia, and Romania.

US Army chaplain, the Very Rev. Peter Baktis, and the Rev. Eugene Wozniak, a US Navy chaplain assigned to the Marines, are also deployed in and around Iraq.

During deployment, Orthodox Chaplains minister not only in their assigned units, but provide circuit-riding outreach to Orthodox Christian service members, regardless of branch.

“If you have a spiritual child, fellow parishioner, or loved one deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan or searching for Orthodox chapel services stateside, please communicate with any of our listed Orthodox chaplains,” said Father Jerome. “Orthodox service members deployed or serving overseas may also request a visit by an Orthodox chaplain through their own unit chaplain.” ■

North America

OCA archivist speaks at celebration marking centennial of the First All-American Sobor

Mr. Alexis Liberovsky, archivist of the Orthodox Church in America and director of the OCA Department of History and Archives, was the guest speaker at the celebration of the centennial of the First All-American *Sobor* [Council] at Saint John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Mayfield, PA, on Sunday, October 28, 2007.

Saint Tikhon, Archbishop of North America and later Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus, presided at the *sobor*, which was held in Mayfield in 1907.

His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia [ROCOR], presided at the Divine Liturgy that opened the event. Earlier this year, ROCOR reestablished Eucharistic Communion with the Moscow Patriarchate after decades of estrangement.

In his keynote address at the banquet held at Saint John parish center after the Divine Liturgy, Mr. Liberovsky offered a detailed historical presentation of the Mayfield *Sobor* in 1907 and reflected on its importance for all Orthodox Christians today.

“The Church is fortified by her Councils and, through the prayers of all the saints of North America, strives to be faithful to Christ and the Holy Tradition of the universal Orthodox Church,” Mr. Liberovsky observed after offering a detailed history of the *Sobor*. “She must seek to worthily serve and witness in the difficult circumstances of a non-Orthodox culture and the increasingly anti-Christian spirit of the contemporary world. As the Church in North America faces new challenges in the 21st century and the new millennium, fu-

Mayfield to 28

St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Mayfield, PA hosted the celebration of the centennial of the First All-American Sobor, held in Mayfield in 1907. Mr. Alexis Liberovsky delivered the keynote address at the festive banquet that followed the anniversary Divine Liturgy.

Photo courtesy of St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Mayfield, PA



Participants sought for parish life study

As a follow-up to its recent study, “Evolving Visions of the Orthodox Priesthood in America,” which surveyed the lives of Orthodox Christian clergy in North America, the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute [PAOI], Berkeley, CA, is seeking volunteers to participate in a new “Parish Life” study.

The “Parish Life” project is the first national study of the realities of day-to-day life in American parishes.

While the parish stands at the heart of Church life, there have been few serious efforts to study it in a realistic, honest, and triumphalism-free manner. The study attempts to provide a first step toward a better understanding of the numerous challenges and issues that American Orthodox parishes face in their daily lives. A particular goal of the project is to look at these challenges and issues through the eyes of parishioners – young and old, cradle Orthodox and converts to Orthodoxy, and persons regularly participating in parish life and those who attend only occasionally.

The project is being supported by a grant from the Louisville Institute, a Lilly Endowment-funded program.

All members of OCA parishes interested in participating in the “Parish Life” study are invited to contact PAOI’s research director, Mr. Alexei D. Krindatch, at ParishProject@gmail.com. ■

IN DEPTH

✓ **READ** the results of Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute’s landmark study, *Evolving Visions of the Orthodox Priesthood in America*, on the institute’s site at www.orthodoxinstitute.org/files/evolvisstudrepwebpost.pdf. Hundreds of clergy from the OCA and various jurisdictions participated in the survey. For more information on the work of the pan-Orthodox institute at www.orthodoxinstitute.org. ■

NorthAmerica

Oriental, Eastern Orthodox hierarchs celebrate 7th annual UN prayer service

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, was among the hierarchs representing the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas [SCOBA] and of the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches [SCOCH] who attended the seventh annual Prayer Service for the United Nations at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral, New York, NY, on Tuesday, November 13, 2007.

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, SCOBA chairman, welcomed the hierarchs, clergy, ambassadors and members of the UN diplomatic corps, and laity to the Vesper service, at which His Eminence, Archbishop Nicolae of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas, presided.

UN Secretary General Ban-Ki-Moon offered greetings, delivered by Dr. Emmanuel Kattan of the UN Office of the Alliance. Archbishop Nicolae responded by speaking on mankind's sacred responsibility for creation.

"Every form of matter which passes through the hand of a Christian is harmonious with the natural environment, and is transformed into a means of com-

munion with one another and with God," said Archbishop Nicolae. "In our time, however, the meaning of Creation and the holy responsibility of each human person towards our world has been forgotten."

Other SCOBA hierarchs in attendance included His Eminence, Metropolitan Joseph, Bulgarian Orthodox Church; His Eminence, Archbishop Anthony, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA; His Grace, Bishop Antoun, Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America; and His Grace, Bishop Ioan Casian, Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese.

Among the SCOCH hierarchs present were His Eminence, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Armenian Orthodox Church and SCOCH chairman; His Eminence, Archbishop Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim, Syrian Orthodox Church; His Eminence, Archbishop Mor Titus Yeldho Pathickal, Malankara Syrian Orthodox Archdiocese; and His Grace, Bishop Makarios, Coptic Orthodox Church.

Ambassadors from Armenia, Albania, Greece, Ukraine, and other countries also attended. ■

Evening from 10

An evening with...

faith: eternal life. As I witnessed those around me hanging on to the preacher's every word, I wondered if perhaps it is we, as Orthodox Christians, who have failed to proclaim, much less share, the fullness of the faith sorely lacking in the preacher's words and vision of prosperity. And I wondered what would happen if the true prosperity which Christ promises – the prosperity that is "not of this world," the prosperity which Orthodox Christianity proclaims in word but too often fails to reveal in deed – were to be made manifest in our own parishes and communities with the same intensity that clearly marked the preacher's message. How wonderful it would be if we could pack Madison Square Garden – or even our own parish churches – in a genuine effort to share with one and all the one thing needful! ■

Mary Ann Bulko is a frequent contributor to The Orthodox Church.

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Official from 2

■ SUSPENDED

[BURKE], Archdeacon Gregory, who was attached to Christ the Savior Cathedral, Miami, FL, is suspended/ October 19, 2007.

HECKMAN, The V. Rev. Theodore, who was rector of St. Mark Church, Wrightstown, PA, is suspended/ October 18, 2007.

■ PARISHES

ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA/ Church closed. Mar Elias Church, New Westminster, BC, is closed/ October 1, 2007.

DIOCESE OF THE WEST/ Status and Deanery change. St. Innocent Mission, Fremont, CA is granted parish status and is now known as St. Innocent Church. The parish is transferred from the Missionary District Deanery to the Pacific Central Deanery/ October 24, 2007. ■

Mayfield from 27

Centennial of First AAC

ture All-American Councils should derive wise unspiration from the historical legacy and rich experience of the Councils of the past, beginning with the first one here in Mayfield, for discerning the Church's course for the future.

IN DEPTH

✓ READ the complete text of Mr. Liberovsky's address on the First All-American Sobor in PDF format at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2007/2007-1028-mayfield/mayfield_sobor_anniv_10282007.pdf. ■

www.oca.org

"I would like to end with another quote from Fr. Leonid Turkevich," Mr. Liberovsky concluded. "These are the final words of his concluding remarks at the Mayfield Council, which are today perhaps even more timely and meaningful for all Orthodox Christians in North America than they were a century ago: 'Renewed in spirit, with faith and hope in God, may our Church grow and be courageous, pure, loving, and strong in her unity; may she draw unto her bosom not only the Uniates, who are our brothers by blood, but advancing beyond the Russian race, may all those who live in America be drawn to the Holy Apostolic Church, so that here, there would be one flock and one Shepherd, Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory and majesty with the Father and the Holy Spirit unto ages of ages.'" ■

WorldBriefs

UKRAINE

Relics thought to be those of St. Olga discovered by archeologists

Archeologists carrying out excavations at the 10th century Church of the Tithe in Kyiv, Ukraine, concluded in early August 2007 that remains discovered there in 1939 are probably those of Saint Olga, Equal to the Apostles and grandmother of Saint Vladimir.

The Church of the Tithe, the first stone church in Kyivan Rus, was dedicated to the Mother of God. It was erected by Kyivan and Byzantine workers during the years 988-996. It was known as the "Tithe Church" because Saint Vladimir appropriated one-tenth of his income for its construction.

The Church of the Tithe was burned during the Mongol-Tatar invasion in 1240. All that remains of the church today are its foundations, which indicate that it was somewhat smaller than Kyiv's Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom, the stone masterpiece that was built in 1037 by Yaroslav the Wise and that still graces the city's skyline.

"In the 10th century, the Church of the Tithe was one of the largest churches in the Christian world," explained Dr. Oleg Ioannisyanyan, a specialist in the region's ancient architecture. The church measured 44 meters in length and 30 meters in width.

Among the archeological finds on the church's site were jewelry and coins dating to the 10th century and what are believed to be the oldest Slavonic inscriptions ever discovered on the territory of Kyiv.

In 1939, an expedition lead by Leninograd scientist Mikhail Karger discovered some hidden recesses on the church's site. Within these recesses, tombs were discovered. One, that of a woman, contained numerous gold ornaments.

"Today, we are close to confirming that this is the tomb of Princess Olga," Dr. Ioannisyanyan said.

Saint Olga has been the subject of attention of historians and writers through-

out the centuries. Prior to embracing Christianity, she avenged the death of her murdered husband, Prince Igor, by the Drevlyany tribe. She ruled Kyivan Rus' while her son Svyatoslav was a minor and during his countless campaigns. ■

ITALY

Primacy focus of Catholic-Orthodox dialogue

Talks between Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christian theologians held in Ravenna, Italy, in October 2007 centered on the primacy of the Pope. But Vatican's top representative at the Ravenna talks, Cardinal Walter Kasper, cautioned that the approved 46-paragraph final document released on November 15 should not be seen as a dramatic step toward Orthodox acceptance of the Pope's authority, since it does not resolve questions about the nature of papal authority.

The final document refers to the bishop of Rome as the "first among the patriarchs," while recognizing the historical "pentarchy" that included the Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, as affirmed in the

fourth century.

However, the Ravenna document does not settle questions about the authority of the Pope, especially after the 11th century. In fact, the members of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue noted in their statement that Catholic and Orthodox theologians disagree "on the interpretation of the historical evidence from this era regarding the prerogatives of the bishop of Rome as *protos*," or first among the patriarchs. "There are differences of understanding with regard to the manner in which it [primacy] is to be exercised, and also with regard to its scriptural and theological foundations."

Cardinal Kasper told Vatican Radio that the Ravenna document will be the focus of future talks, during which "we have to go on to clarify the details."

The Ravenna meeting was the 10th plenary session of the joint theological commission, established in 1979 by Pope John Paul II and His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I.

The Ravenna meeting was conducted under a cloud because the Russian Orthodox delegation – representing by far the largest Orthodox Church in the world – left the meeting at the beginning of the discussions because it objected to the seating of a delegation from the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church, under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which Moscow does not recognize.

The Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue includes 30 Orthodox and 30 Catholic theologians.

For related information, read the editorial on page 4 of this issue. ■

Rusyn Society seeks parish histories

For 35 years, the Carpatho-Rusyn Society has been collecting histories of Orthodox and Byzantine Catholic parishes established by Rusyn immigrants. The collection is believed to be the largest of its kind in the world.

"The histories, often written by parishioners, provide a unique chronicle, often enriched by old photographs and advertisements illustrating the formative experiences of the over 400 US Rusyn communities founded before 1950," said Mr. John Schweich, president of the society's Washington, DC chapter. "The collection is available to scholars and individuals doing research on immigrant life in the US."

Parishes and individuals wishing to donate related materials may send them to Mr. John Schweich, 11900 Moss Point Lane, Reston, VA 20194. ■

Chancellor from 11**Homecoming**

homecoming is the return to that holiness, honor, and joy that we are all meant to enjoy by virtue of our being created in God's image and likeness.

The beauty of homecoming depends on the nature of that place we call home. Ideally, it is a glorious place, holy and comforting, a place of virtue. Home is where dignity reigns and acceptance is assured. We know that we will not be rejected or dishonored at home. It is where we are always welcome, always loved, always forgiven. Home can never be underestimated, its value can never be overstated, and its significance cannot be ignored. Therefore, being home naturally leads one to be mindful and grateful of its existence. In a way, homecoming itself is an act of giving thanks for home. Gratitude can also be combined with humility, as in the case of the Prodigal Son. The sacredness of the home is ensured by our devotion to it.

Of course, all of this is supremely applicable to the Church. Each parish church is a treasure. Throughout the ages, even in the pre-Christian and non-Christian context, the sacred place of worship was always treated with special care and respect. Christian churches are similarly cared for. We cannot imagine a church that is unkempt or disordered. Every effort is made to ensure that, when we come and pray, we do so in a place that is as clean and beautiful as it possibly can be. The attention to detail, cleanliness and order that we direct to a parish church should also be passed on to our selves and to our spiritual lives. The honor that we bestow upon our church buildings should also be accorded to monastic communities, diocesan institutions, Church administration facilities, seminaries, and other Church agencies.

If we agree that home and homecoming are crucial parts of the human psyche, then we also must accept the need to give the place and the event special recognition. We will not usually consciously think about our Church as our home, but if we did, we would come to appreciate the Church even more. We would also come to see the need to preserve and honor all levels of Church life.

Ultimately, our final journey is the last and best homecoming. We mean, of course, our passing from this life into the next. Our only real and lasting home is other-worldly. Saint Paul says, "if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" [2 Corinthians 5:1].

Our Lord Himself assures His disciples that in "my Father's house are many rooms" [John 14:2], to which the faithful can come home. The Orthodox Church reiterates that image in its Funeral Service: "To the one departed, grant repose, O Lord, where a home is prepared and where hearts are filled with gladness." Every Orthodox priest, in several of his hundreds of delivered eulogies, will use that comforting expression about a departed loved one, "this noble and faithful servant of God has finally come home!"

So homecoming is indeed something to look forward to. In fact, there is nothing else we *can* look forward to! That final homecoming will have all of the makings of those many memorable earthly homecomings – preparation, anticipation, a moment of exultation, and then gratitude and appreciation. And yes, it also will be a coming home to the "banqueting house" where the table will be laden with food that does not perish. ■

Scripture from 24**Did Jesus tell Bible stories?**

Old Testament, including the Ten Commandments, all of the Torah's 613 laws, the history, the psalms, and the prophecies, is Jesus Christ.

Some want to read the Old Testament and proclaim the Law of God without Christ. But for those who follow Christ and His interpretation of Scripture, the Old Testament can only be understood and interpreted in Christ and through Christ and by Christ, for the Old Covenant speaks about Him, not just literally, but in symbols, shadows, prophesy, poetry, history, allegory, typology, and foreshadowing. To do otherwise consti-

Communities

Send photos and news to TOC Communities, One Wheaton Center 912, Wheaton, IL 60187 or to info@oca.org.

**FOCA hosts NJ youth at Six Flags**

JACKSON, NJ – The New Jersey District of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America [FOCA] hosted a day at Six Flags Great Adventure here September 23, 2007.

Youth from over 10 parishes of the New Jersey Deanery enjoyed the day of fun and fellowship.

Established as the Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs in 1927, the FOCA maintains junior and senior chapters in dozens of parishes across the US. Among its national youth activities are its annual basketball tournament and summer Olympics program. ■

For more info on the FOCA log on to www.orthodoxfellowship.org

tutes a denial of His role in salvation. The Old Testament can be read literally, but in doing so, we may be missing, or even denying, Christ's presence in them while failing to read and understand them as Christ understood and taught them.

Christ opened our hearts and minds to the Jewish scriptures, revealing how they witnessed to Him. And they witness to Him not just literally, for some of what Christ claimed the Old Testament says about Him cannot be found literally in any precise verse of the Old Testament. One must be able to read the Old Testament in a particular way – in Christ – to understand its meaning. Christ opened us to the new revelation – that which God had hidden previously in the scriptures. As we read in Matthew 13:35, "This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: 'I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world.'" Similarly, Saint Paul writes, we read the scriptures "so that [we] may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" [Colossians 2:2-3]. All that God had hidden in the Old Testament is fully and perfectly revealed in Christ Jesus. ■

Fr. Theodore Bobosh is rector of St. Paul the Apostle Church, Dayton, OH.

Communities

Chicago's Holy Trinity Cathedral receives \$75,000 Partners in Preservation grant

CHICAGO, IL – Historic Holy Trinity Cathedral here was one of a handful of Chicago-area historic sites to be awarded a grant from Partners in Preservation recently.

The cathedral serves as the see of the Orthodox Church in America's Diocese of the Midwest.

Partners in Preservation is an alliance between the American Express Corporation and the National Trust for Historic Places. At the beginning of September 2007, it initiated a special competition allowing the public to vote for favorite historic sites in need of preservation.

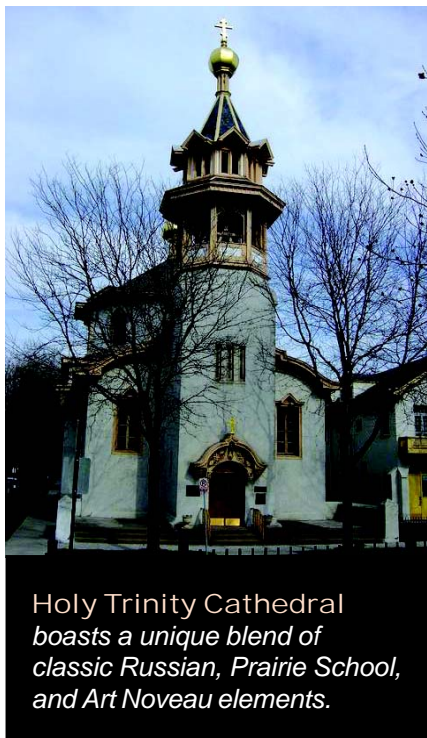
The cathedral placed among the top 25 finalists selected from a field of over 150 applicants. Voting ended on October 10, with judging taking place two weeks later.

At a gala reception on November 10, Partners in Preservation announced that the cathedral would receive a \$75,000 grant for restoration of the decorative metalwork on the cathedral's exterior. Fr. John Adamcio, dean, attended on behalf of the cathedral community.

Walker Johnson of Johnson and Laskey Architects will serve as lead architect for the restoration, with support from Anne Sullivan, who has assisted in discerning a number of necessary restoration projects on the cathedral.

The cathedral, one of only two churches designed by renowned Midwest architect and Frank Lloyd Wright mentor Louis Sullivan – the other Sullivan church, built on Chicago's south side, was recently destroyed by fire – was built in the early 1900s during the pastorate of St. John Kochurov. It was consecrated in 1904 by St. Tikhon, during his tenure as bishop of North America.

According to parish council president, Peter Rosi, and cathedral building and restoration committee chairman, Nicholas Yurschak, the grant, while very generous, falls short of covering the entire restoration project. Plans for securing additional funds to complete the project are being explored. ■



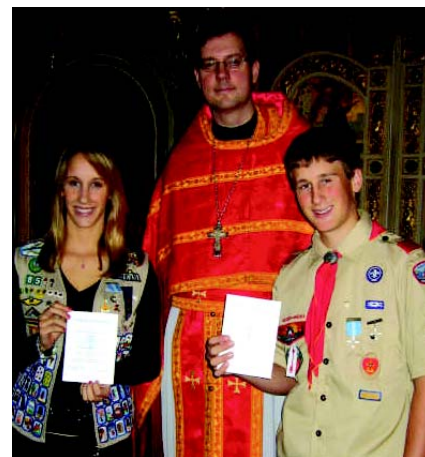
Holy Trinity Cathedral boasts a unique blend of classic Russian, Prairie School, and Art Nouveau elements.

CT scouts receive A-0 award

MERIDEN, CT –

Christina and Thomas Craig of SS. Peter and Paul Church here recently received the Alpha-Omega Orthodox scouting award.

The siblings spent nearly six months studying the faith in detail under the direction of Fr. Joshua Mosher, pictured presenting the awards, and his wife Jenny.



Tom, a boy scout from Troop One, Wallingford, CT, is currently pursuing his Eagle Scout project. Christina, a senior girl scout from Troop 85, Wallingford, CT, is currently pursuing the Gold Award. ■

Fr. Nicholas Timpko retires

ANSONIA, CT – Fr. Nicholas and Matushka Anastasia Timpko were honored by the faithful of Three Saints Church here September 8-9, 2007 on the occasion of Father Nicholas' retirement after serving the parish for 27 years.

Metropolitan Herman and Bishop Nikon of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese, concelebrated with Fr. Nicholas; Fr. Michael Roshak, rector; and visiting clergy at the celebration.

Prior to his assignment to the Ansonia parish, Fr. Nicholas served Archangel Michael Church, Burbank, IL, and Saint Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, MN. In addition to his parish ministry, he also served as dean of the Minneapolis Deanery and chancellor of the Diocese of New England.

A testimonial banquet followed at Grassy Hill Lodge, Derby, CT. ■

Fr. Nicholas and Matushka Anastasis Timpko with Metropolitan Herman, Bishop Nikon, and family members.



Communities

NJ parish reflects on past, future

BAYONNE, NJ – Fr. Arkady Mironko and the faithful of SS. Peter and Paul Church here welcomed Metropolitan Herman on the celebration of their parish's 85th anniversary on October 28, 2007.

"The celebration provided an opportunity to reflect on the parish's many accomplishments and to give thanks for the grace which God has so richly poured upon us," said Fr. Arkady. "While the parish was founded in 1922, an even longer history may be claimed by our cherished iconostasis, once a fixture at St. Platon Seminary in Tenafly, NJ."

When the seminary closed in 1923, the iconostasis was given to the parish.

Faithful of Bayonne's SS. Peter and Paul Church with Metropolitan Herman and Fr. Arkady Mironko at the celebration of the parish's 85th anniversary.



PA parish hosts Valaam children's choir

GRADYVILLE, PA – The children's choir of Russia's Valaam Monastery visited St. Herman of Alaska Church here recently.

The choir sang the responses at Great Vespers and the Divine Liturgy and performed concerts after each service. Parishioners and friends of the parish presented a check for \$4,000.00 to the choir for the needs of the monastery, which was reopened in the 1990s after decades of closure at the hands of the former Soviet regime. ■

"The iconostasis had enriched our parish's countless services, both by its aesthetic beauty and the many blessings imparted by those who over time have prayed before it, including St. Raphael of Brooklyn and St. Alexis Toth," Fr. Arkady added.

"While the cherished memories of those present at the celebration were happily shared, the true focus of the anniversary event was on the parish's future," Fr. Arkady noted. "His Beatitude's words reminded everyone of the importance of cultivating an authentic Orthodox identity through prayer and commitment to the Church, as well accepting the call to evangelize through hospitality and openness to others." ■

– *Chris Bygonaise*