

The Orthodox Church

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA



THANKSGIVING

**Unless you are converted and become as
little children, you will by no means
enter the Kingdom of heaven.**

■ EPISCOPAL CHANGES

[PAFFHAUSEN], Metropolitan Jonah is appointed Locum Tenens of the Diocese of the South by the Holy Synod of Bishops/ March 31, 2009. He also is released from duties as Locum Tenens of the Diocese of Alaska by the Holy Synod of Bishops/ April 2, 2009.

[ROYSTER], Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South is granted retirement by the Holy Synod of Bishops/ March 31, 2009.

[PETERSON], Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West, in addition to other duties, is appointed Locum Tenens of the Diocese of Alaska by the Holy Synod of Bishops/ April 2, 2009.

[SIGRIST], Bishop Seraphim was canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by the Holy Synod of Bishops as a retired Bishop with the title of "Former Bishop of Sendai" / April 2, 2009.

■ ELEVATIONS

[PLESKA], Archimandrite Melchisedek was elected by the Holy Synod of Bishops as Bishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. Bishop-elect Melchisedek will be consecrated on June 26-27, 2009 at St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park, PA/ April 2, 2009.

[ROCHON], Archimandrite Irene was elected by the Holy Synod of Bishops as Bishop of Quebec City, Auxiliary to Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada. Bishop-elect Irene will be consecrated on a date to be announced/ April 2, 2009.

■ ORDINATIONS

FRANCHAK, Jason was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon and attached to the Diocese of Eastern PA/ April 11, 2009.

HAYS, John was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas at Holy Ascension Mission, Mount Pleasant/Charleston, SC. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri and attached to the Diocese of the South/ May 23, 2008.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

GIBSON, The Rev. Joseph, in addition to duties at St. John the Forerunner Church, Indianapolis, IN, is appointed dean of the Columbus Deanery/ December 1, 2008.

HASENECZ, The V. Rev. George is released from duties at Holy Trinity Church, Randolph, NJ and granted retirement/ April 30, 2009.

HAYS, Deacon John is attached to St. Justin Martyr Church, Jacksonville, FL/ May 23, 2008.

HAYS, The Rev. John is attached to St. Justin Martyr Church, Jacksonville, FL/ November 1, 2008.

JARMUS, The V. Rev. Andrew, in addition to duties as Director of Ministries and Communications of the Orthodox Church in America, is placed on loan to the omophorion of Bishop Nikon of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese to service St. Nicholas Church, Jamaica Estates, NY. He remains attached to St. Sergius Chapel, Oyster Bay Cove, NY/ May 1, 2009.

KARLGUT, The V. Rev. Alexey, in addition to duties at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Endicott, NY, is

appointed Dean of the NY State Deanery/ April 2, 2009.

MUELLER, The V. Rev. Thomas is appointed priest-in-charge of Holy Theophany Chapel, Lake Geneva, WI. All other duties remain the same/ April 6, 2009.

[NICOLAI], Priestmonk Yakov is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Eklutna, AK, and appointed associate priest of St. Nicholas Church, Kwethluk, AK/ April 27, 2009.

STANTON, The Rev. Christopher is released from duties at St. Lazarus Mission, Wasilla, AK, and attached to St. Nicholas Church, Eklutna, AK/ April 21, 2009.

TREFON, The V. Rev. Michael is released from duties at St. Anna the Mother of the Theotokos Church, Naknek, AK; Chignik Lagoon Mission, Chignik Lagoon, AK; and St. Nicholas Church, False Pass, AK. He is appointed Rector of Transfiguration of Our Lord Church, Ninilchik, AK/ April 27, 2009.

WILLIAMS, The Rev. Kyrill is released from duties at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA; transferred to the Diocese of the South; and appointed acting rector of Holy Trinity Church, Safety Harbor, FL/ April 8, 2009.

■ RELEASED

[ERICKSON], Hierodeacon Panteleimon, who was suspended, had his suspension lifted by Metropolitan Jonah/ April 16, 2009. He is released from the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and granted a canonical release to the Diocese of Australia and New Zealand of the Serbian Orthodox Church/ April 17, 2009.

KRUGE, Protodeacon Anthony is released from duties at Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT, and from the omophorion of Bishop Nikon of Boston and the Diocese of New England; transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah; and subsequently granted a canonical release to the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA/ April 8, 2009.

■ RETIRED

HASENECZ, The V. Rev. George is granted retirement. He is attached to Holy Trinity Church, Randolph, NJ/ April 30, 2009.

[ROYSTER], Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South is granted retirement by the Holy Synod of Bishops/ March 31, 2009.

■ DEPOSED

ASKOAK, The Rev. Daniel is deposed from all sacred functions of the Holy Priesthood. His name is removed from the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by the Holy Synod of Bishops/ April 1, 2009.

■ DEATHS

BULLOCK, The Rev. Nicholas, who was attached to St. Michael the Archangel Cathedral, Sitka, AK, died in retirement on December 7, 2008. *May his memory be eternal!*

■ PARISHES

DIocese of ALASKA/ Parish closed. St. Lazarus Mission, Wasilla, AK is closed/ April 21, 2009.

DIocese of THE MIDWEST/ Status change. The Orthodox Community, Lake Geneva, WI is granted chapel status and is now known as Holy Theophany Chapel/ April 6, 2009.

■ RECEPTIONS

[KONDRATYEV], Priestmonk Peter is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Russian Orthodox Church. He is transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and attached to the Archdiocese of Canada/ December 24, 2008.

■ ORDINATIONS

BUCK, Deacon Theophan was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia on behalf of Metropolitan Jonah at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah/ May 16, 2009.

LEVINE, Deacon Sean was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Metropolitan Jonah at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah/ May 16, 2009.

McCARTNEY, Deacon Joseph was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Metropolitan Jonah at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah/ May 24, 2009.

PARKER, Gregory was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Nikolai of Sitka, Anchorage and Alaska at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Kodiak, AK. At the time of this ordination, he was under the omophorion of Bishop Nikolai and attached to the Diocese of Alaska/ February 15, 2008.

PARKER, Gregory was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco on behalf of Metropolitan Jonah at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Kodiak, AK. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Diocese of Alaska/ March 15, 2009.

PASONICK, Michael was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon and attached to the Diocese of Eastern PA/ May 24, 2009.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

ANDREW, V. Rev. Jonah is released from duties at Holy Ascension Cathedral, Unalaska, AK and appointed associate priest of St. Alexis Mission, Anchorage, AK/ May 30, 2009. He is also released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Nikolski, AK; St. Nicholas Church, Atka, AK; and St. Alexander Nevsky Church, Akutan, AK/ June 1, 2009.

BERESKIN, Rev. Evon is released from duties at Nativity of Our Lord Church, Ouzinkie, AK and appointed rector of Holy Trinity Church, Kasigluk, AK/ June 1, 2009.

BEREZKIN, Rev. R. George is released from duties at Holy Trinity Church, Kasigluk, AK and appointed associate priest of St. Sophia Church, Bethel, AK/ June 1, 2009.

BIBERDORF, Rev. Basil is released from duties at St. Cyril of Jerusalem Mission, Houston, TX and attached to St. Anthony the Great Mission, San Antonio, TX/ June 1, 2009.

BUCK, Rev. Theophan is attached to St. Tikhon of

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IMPORTANT NOTE CONCERNING THE PUBLICATION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

In light of current financial realities facing the Orthodox Church in America, this issue, and all issues of The Orthodox Church published in the immediate future, will only be available on-line on the OCA web site at www.oca.org. Printing and mailing of future issues will be subject to the availability of funds and reflect the budgeted priorities of the Orthodox Church in America.

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Toward an American Orthodox Church

The Fourth Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference met at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambesy, Switzerland, June 6-13, 2009. The work of the Conference, based on the consensus of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches at their meeting in the Phanar [Constantinople] in October 2008, resulted in two documents. *The Orthodox Diaspora* defines the principles according to which Episcopal Assemblies mandated for twelve regions will organize themselves. *Rules of Operation of Episcopal Assemblies in the Orthodox Diaspora* provides rules for the organization of the work of the Episcopal Assemblies.

In September the hierarchs of the Standing Conference of Canonical Bishops in the Americas [SCOBA] met at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in New York to reflect on the Chambesy documents and their meaning for Orthodoxy in America. After a careful discussion, the hierarchs agreed to convene an Episcopal Assembly during the season of Pentecost in 2010.

It should be noted that there have been three Episcopal Assemblies convened by the SCOBA – in 1994, 2001, and 2006. The difference between these assemblies and the one to be convened in 2010 is the official mandate now given by the Primates of the Orthodox Churches and the Fourth Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference.

At the meeting of the SCOBA hierarchs, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, speaking on behalf of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America, offered an affirmation of the process to form the Episcopal Assembly for North America. For the OCA, the Episcopal Assembly is a constructive step towards the formation of a united Orthodox Church in North America – a Church united for mission and witness, a church equipped to take its place among the patriarchates and autocephalous churches.

The vision affirmed by the Primate of the OCA is consistent with the vision of the OCA – that the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America has the spiritual and canonical mandate to work for the unity of Orthodoxy in America. When this goal is reached, the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America must decrease so that the fully united Orthodox Church in North America may increase. ■

The Primate's ministry of unity

At the invitation of Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, visited the Church of Georgia from October 12-18, 2009.

An important dimension of the ministry of the primates of Orthodox Churches around the world is to “maintain the unity

of the spirit in the bond of peace” [Ephesians 4:3] among the Churches. This was the purpose of the visit of the new head of the Orthodox Church in America to the Church of Russia in April 2009. The same purpose motivated the pilgrimage to the Church of Georgia.

It is worthy of note that in visiting the Churches of Russia and Georgia, Metropolitan Jonah was giving a sign of affirmation for the mission of reconciliation and peace these Churches undertook during the war between Georgia and Russia in the summer of 2008. Both churches spoke out – separately and together – for peace and reconciliation. Both Churches resisted the rhetoric of war and hostility, stressing the living bond of shared Orthodox faith.

The OCA and the Church of Georgia have been linked for decades by ties of friendship and by a strong sense of mutual understanding. Today, many Georgians are in the US as immigrants. In most cases, these immigrants are integrated in the life of parishes of the OCA. In New York City, Saint Nino's parish, ministering to Georgians in their own language, is a parish in the OCA's Diocese of New York and New Jersey. In several places Georgian immigrants have shown a desire to form communities linked to the Patriarchate of Georgia, yet having a close relationship with the OCA.

One of the intentions of Metropolitan Jonah's journey to Georgia was to explore the viable ways in which the OCA could serve and support the Orthodox Georgians in the US in harmony with their ties of affection for their ancient Church and culture.

Metropolitan Jonah and the members of the small delegation accompanying him were deeply touched by the strong faith and piety of the Georgian Orthodox people. The long history of faithfulness and steadfastness, beginning with the evangelizing mission of Saint Nino in the fourth century, stretching through centuries of conquest, persecution and martyrdom, continues today with the dramatic revival of Church life after 70 years of communist campaigns to eradicate religion.

The renewal of Church life is taking place in the midst of the renewal of Georgia's life as an independent nation. The Church of Georgia is not a marginal presence in this national renewal. Patriarch Ilia is a deeply respected leader and father of the nation, giving a powerful witness to the unity of the Georgian people and grounding this unity in the Gospel of Christ.

As they parted after celebrating Divine Liturgy together on Sunday, October 18, Patriarch Ilia and Metropolitan Jonah were united in the expectation that the collaboration of the Churches of Georgia and America would be strengthened through their mutual commitment to “maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” ■

WHAT'S NEWS?

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www.oca.org

St. Ignatius of Antioch

I wish to warn you not to fall into the snare of false doctrine. Be convinced of the birth and the passion and of the resurrection, which took place during the time of the rule of Pontius Pilate. These things were truly and certainly done by Jesus Christ, our hope, from which may none of you be turned aside.

St. Justin Martyr

With our own eyes we are witness to things that have happened and are happening just as they were predicted. And this, we think, will appear to you as the strongest and surest proof.

St. Cyprian of Carthage

And I myself was bound fast, held by so many errors of my past life, from which I did not believe that I could extricate myself.... But afterwards, when the stain of my past life had been washed away by means of the water of rebirth, a light from above poured itself upon my chastened and now pure heart; afterwards through the Spirit, Which is breathed from heaven, a second birth made of me a new man. And then, in a marvelous manner, doubts immediately clarified themselves, the closed opened, the darkness became illuminated....

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

He truly rose, and having risen He was seen again by the disciples. Twelve disciples were witnesses to His resurrection, and they did not bear witness with pleasing words, but insisted upon the truth of the resurrection even in the face of torture and death. Well, according to the Scriptures, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand." Twelve bear witness to the resurrection of Christ, and are you still without faith in that resurrection? ■

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

John 14:6

Discovering Truth

When we do as the apostles, taking their cue in giving our lives meaning by accepting the invitation of Jesus to "Follow Me," we learn why the early Church's first title was "The Way" [Acts 9:19,24]. Learning is a process, not just a goal. We measure our intelligence and wisdom not by a diploma or degree, but by what we've been discovering and assimilating on the pathway through life. We realize that our salvation came through the cross and resurrection of Christ, yet we find ourselves growing in understanding as we follow Him from His incarnation through His ascent and return to the "right hand of the Father."

In that way, we learn what Truth is; or better put, *Who* is Truth. He teaches by example the variant meanings of truth. For the Jews, truth is the Law, and to abide by it is to be right with God. "You shall honor the Sabbath." No exceptions accepted. And yet we find Him breaking that law. He heals on the Sabbath. Was that wrong? Following Him, we remember that He is also the Truth. So Truth transcends Law. As we wend our way through this life, we are trained to be law-abiding citizens of our country and to keep the traditions and rules of the Church; however, we realize that at times, situations in which we find ourselves may create conditions that cause us to reflect on our values and consider what would be the best way to resolve the given situation.

Truth can be understood as reason. The Greek term *aletheia* has this meaning. The proper way to act is to do what is logical. In following Christ, we realize that He isn't always rational in the world's understanding of the term. When Saint Peter chastises the Lord for dropping hints that His way of redeeming humanity has to do with suffering, rejection and ultimately crucifixion, He rebukes the apostle in strongest terms, calling him Satan, realizing that the evil one is speaking through him. Later, when He announced His intention to go up to Jerusalem, Saint Thomas made a similar observation.

Through the centuries, Christians who had acted in accordance with their faith, rather than their instinct for self-preservation, giving their bodies to be tortured and put to death for the sake of Christ, have been considered holy martyrs and honored by the Church. We, as members of "The Way," following the Living Way, Jesus Christ, find meaning each hour of the our lives as we are challenged by the constant question: What is the right way to reply to another person – to act in a manner fitting as a Christian? To do what the Lord would have me do?

Truth is that glorious Person, Whose life, death, and resurrection give meaning to the entire world. Like Him, we obey the Law and live by the Ten Commandments, but also like Him, we find there are situations in which we must use our consciences to weigh right and wrong, making the best choice given the circumstances.

And we realize that Life is not limited to this present lifetime. Christ, the Life of the world, shows us the meaning of His admonition: "He who loves his life in this world must lose it, but he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" [John 12:25]. Following His example, we comprehend the great truth that the present life is but a preparation for what is to come. He will be there at the end, and I will not only be following Him, but He will turn around to face me and greet me, welcoming me as a true follower of Him in this world and beyond. ■



Shaping the future

SVS summer conference joins ongoing conversation on the future of Orthodox Christianity in North America

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We understand life backwards, but we live it forwards.” With these words from Kierkegaard, the Very Rev. John Behr, Dean of Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, opened the school’s 2009 Summer Conference, which promised to examine “20th century landmarks towards a 21st century Church.” But as faculty member Prof. Peter Bouteneff later pointed out, the study of the past is always undertaken in order to understand the present and shape the future, so the problem then lies in how to interpret or “spin” the past.

In presentations by the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, the Rev. Hyacinthe Destivelle, Scott Kenworthy, and Vera Shevzov, the All-Russian Council, which met in Moscow in 1917–1918, and the vision of Saint Tikhon directly influenced the shape of Church life and its structures of authority.

Looking to a more recent past, the Rev. Cyril Hovorun and Matthew Namee sought to critically examine the way in which aspects of 20th century Orthodox Church history in North America have been presented. Father Cyril noted that autocephaly has carried something of an aura – a “mythical dimension,” as he called it – that went far beyond its obvious canonical implications. Namee dismantled what he saw as the simplistic notion of early 20th century Church unity under Russian auspices.

The Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky discussed the reality of communion between the various Orthodox Churches that led to the proclamation of autocephaly for the Orthodox Church in America, as well as the varying states of communion between Churches since 1970.

Looking further back for insight into the present, His Grace, Bishop Basil [Osborne] of Amphipolis, explored in a fresh way the contemporary implications of the 28th Canon of the Council of Chalcedon, which placed the Churches in the “barbarian lands” under the care of the See of Constantinople. He argued that, under the canon’s internal logic, North America might properly be claimed by the ancient Patriarchate of Rome, and that the Patriarchate of Constantinople ought to be considered a temporary administrator in view of the Great Schism.

The conference decisively arrived at the present in its concluding session on Saturday afternoon as His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, offered a detailed vision for the present and future, solidly founded on the past century that had been so closely examined during the previous two days. *[The complete text of his address begins on the next page of this issue.]*

Referring frequently to the “kenotic vocation of the OCA,” Metropolitan Jonah said that the OCA would joyfully meld



Metropolitan Jonah reflects on the OCA's “kenotic vocation.”

itself into “a fully autocephalous united Church in North America, embracing all Orthodox, and freely electing its own hierarchy and, in time, its own patriarch.” Along the way, he offered several practical suggestions for interim steps.

Responding to Metropolitan Jonah’s address were Charles Ajalat, Chancellor of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America; the Rev. Mark Arey, General Secretary of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas and Ecumenical Officer of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; Archimandrite Luke [Murianka], Abbot of Holy Trinity Monastery and Rector of Holy Trinity Seminary, Jordanville, NY; and His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate of the Orthodox Church in America.

Apart from its content, the conference was remarkable for its wide availability to those who were not physically present. Broadcast in streaming video on the internet through Saint Andrew House, and archived in audio on Ancient Faith Radio, the lectures and discussions were viewed live by hundreds of individuals, with over 2,500 log-ons to the site from all over the US and from 25 different countries.

While the conference did not address, much less solve, every crisis facing the Church in North America today, it did lay some vital groundwork for how these may be addressed concretely. And it proved to be a “first” in gathering hierarchs, clergy, and lay leaders from multiple North American jurisdictions for the purpose of reflecting deeply and critically— and face-to-face – on the past and the present. In addition to Metropolitan Jonah, four other members of the OCA Holy Synod of Bishops participated, along with several members of the OCA Metropolitan Council; seminary faculty, staff, and trustees, including His Grace, Bishop Savas of Troas of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America; and over 100 registered attendees and countless webcast visitors. ■

1917 Council and Tomos

Saint Tikhon's Vision, Then and Now

In his address at Saint Vladimir's Seminary 2009 summer conference, Metropolitan Jonah provided the context in which to anticipate the future face of North American Orthodoxy while honoring its past



The Great Council of 1917, and the revival of the Russian Orthodox Church that it began, are aspects of the deimperialization of the Orthodox Church and its canonical structures. This began a process of the transcendence of the imperial domination of Orthodox ecclesiology, which reigned from Constantine and Theodosius to Nicholas II, and the beginning of the adaptation to a new era in which the Church became independent of the state. This was the beginning of a new conciliar vision, which has developed significantly over the past century. What it did was to set up a new set of structural and canonical interpretations, demanding a worldwide rethinking of Orthodox ecclesiology.

The fruit of this vision, partially, is the Orthodox Church in America, and her autocephaly. The conflict with the old ecclesiological and canonical interpretations forms the context for the issues surrounding the acceptance or rejection of the autocephaly. This conflict is, however, also the fruitful ground for a creative resolution to the issues confronting the OCA, and the Orthodox Church throughout the world.

The Orthodox Church in Russia began preparing for a great Council over a hundred years ago, particularly in 1905. In the final decades of the Russian Empire there was a tremendous intellectual ferment among the clergy and intelligentsia of the Russian Church that not only sought a way out of the morass of the Oberprokurator system suppressing the Patriarchate, established by Peter the First, but that was also very much in dialogue with the social, political, and cultural developments of the time. The Russian Empire not only had tens of thousands of churches, and over a thousand monasteries, in its own territory, using Slavonic and a “standard” practice also taught in the seminaries and academies; there were dozens of missions to tribes of many languages, as well as extensive foreign missions, including that to North America. Each of these served in the local language, generated liturgical and catechetical material in these languages, and recruited and trained local indigenous clergy.

While most of the other local Orthodox Churches remained under Islamic domination and persecution, which virtually eliminated Orthodox theological education and suppressed intellectual life in the Middle East, the Russian Church on the other hand had tremendous freedom to begin to confront the new era. There were the issues of corruption in the schools and monasteries, and the role of the State in interfering with ecclesiastical appointments. There was the confrontation with Western ideas: nihilism, atheism, Marxism, and communism, as well as Roman Catholicism. On the other hand, other ideas and trends, such as Slavophile idealism (or should one say, romanticism), played a significant role in the development of Russian ecclesiological thought, with the concept of *sobornost*. A fundamental underlying issue was how the Church would live and structure itself without an overwhelming imperial context, particularly in the American Mission.

At the beginning of preparation for the council in 1905, there were few who expected the complete collapse of the imperial system, much less the persecution of the Church which followed. As the imperial system weakened, the theologians became more focused on the Church as the community of the faithful, as opposed to a strict hierarchical structure of authority paralleling and operating in symphony with the secular authorities. The bishops were asked to provide their ideas for the restructuring of the Russian Orthodox Church.

At the core of this process was Saint Tikhon, both as a young bishop in America between 1898 and 1907, and later as Patriarch of Moscow. He espoused this vision of a transformation of the Church into a number of new metropolitanates. He also endorsed the idea of the transformation of the American diocese into an exarchate, with a level of conciliar participation of the clergy and laity, and reflecting the diversity of the national churches present in America.

Saint Tikhon writes, “As to the see of North America, it ought to be made into an exarchate of the Russian Church. The fact is that this see is composed not only of different nationalities, but also of different Orthodox Churches, which though one in faith each have their peculiarities in the canonical order, the office ritual, and parish life. These peculiarities are dear to

them and altogether tolerable from the general Orthodox point of view. This is why we do not consider we have the right to interfere with the national character of the churches in this country and, on the contrary, try to preserve it, giving each a chance to be governed directly by chiefs of the same nationality.... In short, it is possible that there will be formed in America an entire exarchate of national Orthodox Churches with their own bishops, whose exarch is to be to the Russian archbishop.”

Saint Tikhon continues, “In his own field of work, each of these bishops is to be independent, but the affairs which concern the American Church in general are to be decided by a general council, presided over by the Russian archbishop. Through him will be preserved the connection of the Orthodox Church of America with the Church of All the Russias and a degree of dependence of the former on the latter. We also must keep in view that, compared with the life in the old country, life in America has its peculiarities, with which the local Orthodox Church is obliged to count, and that consequently it ought to be allowed to be more autonomous than other metropolitan districts of Russia” [Archbishop Tikhon, *The Russian American Messenger*, pp. 68-70, 1905].

These paragraphs form the basic vision statement for the development of the Church over the next century. In his answer to the Synod regarding his vision for restructuring the Russian Church, Saint Tikhon further delineates how the North American See would be composed of dioceses, with both a local See and title, and a specific mission to particular ethnic groups: New York for the Russian churches, Alaska for the natives and resident Russians, Brooklyn for the Syrians, Chicago for the Serbians, and an undecided future See for the Greeks.

Equally important in this document are Saint Tikhon’s words in relation to conciliarity, lay participation.

“If laymen take part in the see assemblies,” he writes, “they will be something like Church conventions customary in America, amongst the Episcopalians for instance. These conventions have general sessions, in which both the laymen and the clergy take part, and also private sessions reserved for the discussion of purely ecclesiastical affairs by the clergy alone. This participation of the lay element would give to the function of Church life the character of a council, and also would tend to enliven it” [RAM, p. 75].

The councils and life of the Russian Missionary Diocese in America, and its successors, would embody the themes sketched out in this statement, with full lay and priestly participation on all levels of Church life. This is the incarnation of *sobornost* – conciliarity.

It is in this context, then, that the concept of *sobornost*, which means both *catholicity* and *conciliarity*, became a dominant theme in the rethinking of Orthodox ecclesiology. The unity of vision and life are focused in the whole community of the faithful, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and structured around the Eucharist. From this developed, later in the 20th century, Eucharistic ecclesiology and the ecclesiology of the Local Church. This theological movement was fueled by a patristic revival, which began in the mid-19th century with the translation of many texts of the Fathers into Slavonic and Russian, and a



St. Tikhon of Moscow

Eucharistic revival championed by such figures as Saint John of Kronstadt. No longer were the lay faithful simply passive subjects to be ministered *to*, but active participants *in* the life of the Church. Thus, the stage was set for the inclusion of the clergy and laity in the decision-making processes of the Church, which are of the essence of *sobornost* – a true conciliar process. This became the foundation for the Great Council of 1917, and the development of new institutions incorporating lay and clerical participation, previously reserved to bishops and imperial officials. While some of these institutional reforms were not able to be implemented in Russia due to the Revolution, they were implemented in the Russian mission in America – which later became the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America.

The missionary vision of the Church grew at the same time as the development of the ideas of *sobornost* and the ecclesial integrity of the local Church. While some of the internal missions in Russia retained a political component – to integrate people into the empire by forming them in an Orthodox identity – some of the missions had no political content, or lost it along the way. Of course, there were political implications. The stated reason for sending Father Junipero Serra, in 1775, to establish the Spanish missions in California was to keep the Russians from taking California. When the Russians established their farthest outpost in what is now Sonoma County, Northern California, in 1812, and began their mission work among the native peoples there, they did not so much seek to integrate the natives into a Russian political identity, as simply to convey the Orthodox Faith. Saint Innocent later visited the colony in 1842, and subsequently the Spanish missions in the Bay Area. Soon after this, any political content was lost.

The missionary vision was simply to incarnate the Gospel of Jesus Christ by bringing people into the Orthodox Church. Such was the mission to America, especially after the sale of Alaska. The vision of Saint Innocent for the establishment of the diocesan headquarters in San Francisco at the time of the sale of Alaska focused on converting Anglo-Americans to Orthodoxy through serving and teaching in English. The initial Valaam Mission in Kodiak had the same task: to make Americans (this time Native Alaskans with their respective languages) Orthodox Christians, and establish the Orthodox Church in this land with a native clergy.

The Growth of the American Mission. Thirty years later, the new bishop assigned to America, Tikhon, was faced with a different situation. The Church had begun to grow decisively in the continental US and Canada [1]. It continued to change dramatically over the course of the next decades. The number of parishes and their affiliations grew and multiplied with each successive wave of immigration. The effects of the collapse of Russian imperial support (and that of the Russian Missionary Society), following the Revolution, were financially devastating. With this period came a very different mission for the Church in America: to deal with the immigrant communities and their particular needs. The Mission in America lost its

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[1] The records of the Russian Mission, in the OCA archives, testify to the transformation that was occurring. The Church had grown and expanded significantly from the Alaskan mission, which in 1850 had 9 churches, 37 chapels, 9 priests, 2 deacons and about 15,000 members. By 1905, according to the report of Saint Tikhon, in his diocese there were 72 churches and 83 “houses of prayer,” 80 church schools with 2,000 students, 8 orphanages with 120 children, and 79 brotherhoods. By the time Saint Tikhon became bishop in San Francisco, in 1898, emigration had set in from multiple quarters, and the movement of the Uniates into Orthodoxy, guided by Saint Alexis Toth, was in full force. This was in addition to other Orthodox communities, Greek and otherwise, that formed parishes independently.

By 1917, in the Missionary Diocese of New York itself there were 272 parishes: 191 in the US, 15 in Alaska, and 65 in Canada. On the eve of the Revolution there were five bishops: Archbishop Evdokim, Bishop Alexander, Bishop Stephan, Bishop Philip, Bishop Afthimios. The Diocese was divided into five districts and 27 deaneries, in which there were 306 churches and chapels, with 242 priests. Registered membership was approximately 300,000. In addition to the Russian Missionary Diocese itself, there were several missions: the Syro-Arabic Mission, consisting of 32 churches and up to 30,000 parishioners; the Albanian Mission, consisting of three parishes and 30,000 parishioners; and the Serbian Mission, consisting of 36 churches and up to 15,000 parishioners. In all, within the Diocese, were 461 churches and chapels, 309 priests, and up to 500,000 parishioners. Beyond this were over 100 independent churches, some aligned with the Churches of Greece or Constantinople. (*Statistics from the OCA Archivist, Alexis Liberovsky.*)

missionary focus, and instead was engulfed with immigrants, the churches acting as reference points for the maintenance of cultural identity and solidarity. Each group had its own particular needs, its own language, its own customs and traditions. Saint Tikhon wrote of the need to have particular ministries to each group, respecting their cultures, within the unified archdiocese. While this remained possible, the political and economic realities ended up with each group withdrawing into itself, and the vision of unity – which had been realized to a large degree – was lost with the missionary imperative. Even the Russian Mission itself lost contact with its Mother Church, which was descending into the abyss of grievous persecution and martyrdom. In 1924, the American Mission proclaimed itself temporarily autonomous, and in canonical contact with the Synod of Russian Orthodox Bishops Abroad.

We won't go over the sordid details of the intervening decades: schisms, the Living Church, lawsuits, fights, and all manner of division. It was not until the end of the 1950s that the Metropolia began to regain its missionary vision, and to move beyond the needs of reinforcing immigrant identity. It began to come to maturity as a local Church, no longer looking outside of itself for its identity. It began a new phase in its existence, as it developed into an authentically local Church, embodying many of the elements of the reforms of the Council of 1917, and yet incarnating them in a uniquely American way. It began to fulfill the vision of Saint Tikhon, as a foundation for the unity of multiple ethnic churches within a single synod of bishops, in the context of the mission to bring Americans to Orthodoxy.



The missionary vision was simply to incarnate the Gospel of Jesus Christ by bringing people into the Orthodox Church. Such was the mission to America, especially after the sale of Alaska. The vision of Saint Innocent for the establishment of the diocesan headquarters in San Francisco at the time of the sale of Alaska focused on converting Anglo-Americans to Orthodoxy through serving and teaching in English. The initial Valaam Mission in Kodiak had the same task: to make Americans (this time Native Alaskans with their respective languages) Orthodox Christians, and establish the Orthodox Church in this land with a native clergy.



Beginning in the 1950s, with the renewed contacts with the Russian Mother Church, the Metropolia began to come to a new self-consciousness, under the influence of Father Georges Florovsky, Father Alexander Schmemmann, and Father John Meyendorff, and others from Saint Serge Academy in Paris transplanted to Saint Vladimir's Seminary in New York. They were the main fathers of the patristic revival, and the proponents of Eucharistic ecclesiology, and the ecclesiology of the Local Church, which came to dominate Orthodox dialogue and ecumenical discourse. The latter two were also among the main architects of the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America. Beginning their contacts with the Russian Church at ecumenical gatherings, they worked for years to prepare for a rapprochement with the Mother Church. This culminated in 1970 with the granting of autocephaly.

The new Orthodox Church in America represented the maturation of the Mission into a Local Church. In the newly created Orthodox Church in America, all the themes of the past came together: a united multi-ethnic Church with a single synod of bishops; a Church focused on being the local Church for North America, without a formal reliance on any Mother Church; a missionary Church, dedicated to becoming the presence of the One, Holy, Catholic Church in America, for all people, races, and nationalities; it had no national identity save American, while not repressing any ethnic identities. The new OCA existed outside any imperial context, free from government interference and support. More than this, the OCA embodied the principle of *conciliarity*, of clerical and lay participation in decision making, with the institutions of the All-American Council and Metropolitan and Diocesan Councils, outlined in the new Statute.

Several different motivations are stated by the Russian hierarchy in the Tomos for granting the autocephaly: for the welfare of the *whole* Orthodox Church; to try to help remedy the situation of ecclesiastical pluralism that existed and to further ecclesiastical unity; and to bring the former Russian Mission – then the “Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Metropolia” – into normal relations with itself as Mother Church. The Tomos recognized “as good for Orthodoxy in America the independent and self-sustaining existence of said Metropolitanate, which now represents a mature ecclesiastical organism possessing all that is necessary for successful further growth.”

It can be asserted that the Tomos also recognized that the autocephaly was not “final,” but in some way relative. I quote: “The newly established local Orthodox Autocephalous Church in America should abide in brotherly relations with all the Orthodox Churches and their Primate as well as with their bishops, clergy and pious flocks who are in America, and who for the time being preserve their de facto existing canonical and jurisdictional dependence on their national Churches and their Primate.” The Tomos does not allow for the full consequences of autocephaly to be proclaimed, that all other churches on the territory of the OCA are thereby uncanonical. Rather, it allows for the preservation of their ties to their Mother Churches until such time as all can be brought into a new unity, a single Church for America.



‘Local Church’ has many implications, in different contexts. Some use it in relation to a diocese, some in relation to a national Church. It can also be used in relation to any Eucharistic community, such as a parish. What is important for us is that the “local Church” is not understood as deriving its legitimacy by reference to a remote point, patriarchate, or Church, that is the criterion of catholicity. It is the integrity of the Local Church, itself – the bishop and the people of a particular place celebrating the Liturgy – and its communion with the whole body of surrounding local Churches that forms the ultimate criterion of catholicity. The Canons protect and help these local Churches relate to one another.



Thus, the OCA’s charter and vocation is for it to disappear: it is kenotic. Either it is to become the basis for the unity of the rest of the Churches in America, or it must enter into a new organization that will be fully autocephalous. We await this day, eagerly, so that the mission of the Orthodox Church and the proclamation of the Gospel are no longer compromised by the scandal of disunity.

Analysis and a Vision for the Future. I stand before you, gathered here, in great humility, as the “least among equals,” the youngest head of the smallest and youngest autocephalous Orthodox Church in the world.

No bishop of the Orthodox Church works alone; each is sustained and aided by a structure, developed over centuries, and implemented in any given place in accordance with the realities of the life which God gives us. This structure has to be capable of existing in a very wide range of different circumstances, as evidenced by the history of the Church. There have been times of plenty and times of famine, times during which political systems have been friendly and supportive, and others when they have been downright hostile and injurious to everything for which the Light of the Gospel eternally shines. As these changes have occurred, the Church has found the need to make laws and rulings to protect the integrity of the life of Church under all circumstances. These rulings, or Canons, are a treasure-house of experience which enlivens and enlightens each new situation which the Church, in Her life, faces in every age.

Like every Orthodox bishop, I accept all the Holy Canons, traditions, and practices of the Holy Orthodox Church, without

reservation, since they are the expression of the life of the Church in any given place. They are not so much *the* life of the Church (which is the Proclamation of the Gospel Itself) but, rather, they create the sacred space within which the life of the Church can flourish. Far from being rigid, legalistic and restricting, the application of the rulings of Holy Canons has, over the centuries, shown them to be capable of allowing for change and adapting to new situations, whether political, philosophical, or geographical. This they do since the Church, constantly and naturally, interprets their meaning and significance to reflect the reality of each age. To restrict their meaning to the reality of long-dead political systems and lost empires, even those during which the Body of Christ flourished and grew, is to do a great disservice to the power of the Holy Spirit to “effect the change,” which is the very essence of our Life in God.

The Canon is embodied in a vast amount of writing ranging from the Holy Scriptures themselves down to the decisions of local councils in our own day. Different Canons reflect the different eras which led to their creation, and together they outline the Church’s experience of the working of God in Her life, throughout the generations. Individual Canons, specific in detail and seen and understood within the of the entire corpus of Canon Law, lend themselves to the formation of “canonical principles,” more general in detail, which in turn govern our life.

One canonical principle in particular is plainly and singularly vital in the life of the Church, and it can be stated as follows: the fullness of the Church is present, in its completeness, where a rightfully-appointed Bishop celebrates the Divine Liturgy together with his presbyters, deacons, and the rest of the People of God. It is this divinely-given ‘pleroma,’ the actual presence of God among His people, which embodies the fullness of the Gospel, and expresses itself, in each nation, as “One,” “Holy,” and “Catholic.” To accept anything less is to betray our calling, to ignore the words of Christ, and to rationalize our human weaknesses. This is the principle of the Local Church.

“Local Church” has many implications, in different contexts. Some use it in relation to a diocese, some in relation to a national Church. It can also be used in relation to any Eucharistic community, such as a parish. What is important for us is that the “local Church” is not understood as deriving its legitimacy by reference to a remote point, patriarchate, or Church, that is the criterion of catholicity. It is the integrity of the Local Church, itself – the bishop and the people of a particular place celebrating the Liturgy – and its communion with the whole body of surrounding local Churches that forms the ultimate criterion of catholicity. The Canons protect and help these local Churches relate to one another.

In North America there are at least three distinct systems of ecclesiology and canonical interpretation that are incarnate as ecclesiastical bodies.

The first of these is the Russian canonical and ecclesiological tradition, which has led to the basic vision of the conciliar Local Church. This was the context of the foundation of the Russian Mission to Alaska of 1794 and its missionary imperative. The

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Russian Church, especially under Bishop Tikhon in America, developed a working model of multi-ethnic cooperation and vision of unity, which was renewed and reformed by the Council of 1917. While the Russian Mission in America struggled with the influx of immigrants, and the temptation to remain an ethnic sect, it overcame these and began to realize its identity as an indigenous Orthodox Church for all North Americans, thus coming to actualize the fullness of catholicity. This maturity bore fruit as the autocephaly of the OCA. The mission had become a local Church, with all the resources to perpetuate itself and the mission of Orthodoxy, free of any imperial or government entanglements or interference. It embodied and incarnated the conciliar vision of the Church, incorporating laity and clergy into the process of decision making, and thus became a living experiment in the Orthodox world of conciliarity and the de-imperialization of the Church.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate espouses another system of canonicity and an ecclesiological vision, which it extended to North America in the 1920s with the establishment of the Greek Archdiocese. (There were various parishes here under its jurisdiction, and/or that of Athens, before; but there was no organized Greek hierarchy in the US until the early 1920s.) [2]

I will not venture to define their system, other than their conclusions in relation to the OCA. It does not accept the status of the OCA as an autocephalous Church, in regards to how they define autocephaly. This is by no means universal, contrary to their claims; nor is their interpretation of the canons universally accepted. The basic argument is that they do not

[2] *Unity of Orthodoxy in America before 1921.* “17. And we assert that the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in North America has fulfilled all these requirements and conditions in full, in connection with which, her Mother Church, the Patriarchate of Moscow, granted this Holy Church autocephaly, which act was expressed in the Patriarchal and Synodal Tomos of 10 April, 1970. The right of the Holy Council of the Patriarchate of Moscow to perform the above-mentioned act, rests on the undisputed fact that the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of North America is the Child and Branch of the Moscow Patriarchate. And, though the missionary and enlightening work of the Holy Russian Church in North America is strangely evaluated in Your Holiness’ Letter (in particular, to our amazement, it is considered as propaganda and proselytism, in reference to the pastoral care for the Slavs, former Uniates, who returned to Orthodoxy), the unalterable fact remains that, until the arbitrary establishment by the throne of Constantinople of its own archdiocese in North America in 1921, an act which we have already mentioned in our last letter to Your Holiness, and which was in absolute violation of the Sacred Canons (Apostolic 34, Carthage 131, Fourth Ecumenical Council 17, Sixth Ecumenical Council 25), strict canonical order was followed on this continent under the hierarchical leadership of the Church of Russia. This order was challenged by no one, and was recognized by all the Local Orthodox Churches, including the Church of Constantinople” [*Letter of Metropolitan Pimen to Patriarch Athenagoras, August 11, 1970, No. 1505*].

“ It is the task of the Church in this country not only to offer the life of the Orthodox Church to the American people, but also to bring to the practice of Orthodoxy all that is best, all that is valiant, all that is most noble, in our American life. ”

recognize the right of the Russian Church to grant autocephaly to its mission; and they claim universal jurisdiction over the “diaspora.” In fact there are some who would claim that the initial Russian mission was uncanonical in the first place, as it did not come with the authorization and under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. While some accept their claim of jurisdiction over the “diaspora,” other Orthodox Churches do not. Whether right or wrong, it is contended.

The Orthodox Church in America has never been under the jurisdiction of Constantinople, or any other Church but the Russian Church, for the past 215 years, and it operates as a fully canonical autocephalous Church under the canonical tradition of her Mother Russian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox Church in America is not a Church of the “diaspora,” but a local indigenous territorial Church. It is not an ethnic Church; it is not the Russian Church in America, but the mature outgrowth of 175 years of Russian missionary work in America. The Orthodox Church in America fully affirms the primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople. We reject, however, the canonical interpretations that compromise our canonical tradition.

Through the 1920s, the Russian Mission formed the basis of a united canonical Orthodox Church in America. The Antiochians, Serbs, and Albanians were all originally a part of this united Church, though we certainly admit that many Greek churches were not. Though these groups eventually developed their own hierarchies sent from their Mother Churches, they did not subordinate themselves to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in this continent. Neither did the Romanians and Bulgarians, most of whom joined the OCA, with most of the Albanians.

The groups that split from the Russian Mission, mainly in the 1920s and 1930s – the Serbians and Antiochians, and the other Churches that then established jurisdiction here – can be seen as operating on yet a third model of canonical interpretation and ecclesiology, in which each patriarchate has the right to care for the people of its own nation wherever they may be “in diaspora,” regardless of the existence of a territorial canonical Church. This nationalist or ethnic model presumably works until the people have been indigenized – in the US, usually by the second or third generation – by which time they have lost their “ethnicity.”

With the Russian and Ecumenical Patriarchate models, at least the integrity of the local territorial Church has some meaning. The third model does not seem to respect that. This is perhaps the greatest canonical problem.

We could debate the merits of the renewed conciliar ecclesiology of the local Church, and the system of canonical interpretation of the Russian Tradition, compared to the interpretation of Canon 28 of Chalcedon by Constantinople, but this would miss the fundamental point: they are two very

different systems, operating on different sets of presuppositions. Both of these systems evolved in an imperial context. The situation of the 21st century, with all empires long gone, presents a new context for the life of the Church and new canonical interpretations regarding its organization. This is neither an historical issue, nor ultimately an issue of interpretation, but of presuppositions. We, all Orthodox in North America, seem to be caught between Moscow and Constantinople. And as is often the case when there is an impasse, the resolution resides in a new, third way.

And so what is required, I believe, is for our best theologians to sit down and work out a system that is universally acceptable.

I, as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America – and again, please bear in mind the kenotic vocation of the OCA, as well as my own role – have the unique privilege of leading a Church which is not only thoroughly and indelibly Orthodox, but one which is also thoroughly and indelibly American, a fact that allows us to feel blessed, since America is not one tribe or race, but the voluntary union of all the peoples who have come to live here. In this miracle of symbiosis, there is much to be improved, but there is also much which is right, wholesome, and of good report. The spirit of our nation proclaims that there is no such thing as a second-class citizen, that each citizen has the right to participate in government, and that each citizen deserves the right to exercise his or her choices freely, according to law.

It is the task of the Church in this country not only to offer the life of the Orthodox Church to the American people, but also to bring to the practice of Orthodoxy all that is best, all that is valiant, all that is most noble, in our American life.

We are very willing to work with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Churches to resolve the issue of Orthodox unity in America, and we earnestly desire to resolve any obstacles. But we will not surrender our integrity as a local territorial indigenous Church. We have a kenotic vocation; but that only opens out

into a more fully catholic expression of an indigenous local Church. I earnestly hope that we will all, eventually, come together to fully incarnate the one Body of Christ in this land.

It is the prerogative and responsibility of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to convene the Churches to resolve this issue of unity in the “diaspora,” so called. This needs to be done both on the international pan-Orthodox level, as well as within America and in each region of the so-called “diaspora.” As long as the Mother Churches agree to let their extra-territorial dioceses go, then the Ecumenical Patriarchate can convene them in each locale, so they can determine their own future, and the structure of their new local Churches. Eventually, these new Churches must be universally recognized as fully autocephalous. But the conciliar principle must be followed: every community must have a voice in its own destiny. Otherwise, the result will be illegitimate, and be rejected. This will lead to only greater division.

Ultimately, but hopefully not eschatologically, the only acceptable resolution is a fully autocephalous united Church in North America, embracing all Orthodox, and freely electing its own hierarchy and, in time, its own patriarch. We stand for conciliarity, the participation of the whole body of the Church in the life and decision making process of the Church. This is very American, but it also resonates with the ideal of *sobornost* that inspired Saint Tikhon and the renewal of the Russian Church by the Council of 1917. This is the vision of the OCA, and of many other Orthodox in America. Only for this vision would the OCA surrender its own autocephaly, to joyfully meld into the fulfillment of that vision which was given with the Tomos in 1970.

Many in this continent are not ready to give up their ties to their Mother Churches. Many of the Mother Churches are not ready to give up their ties to their American missions. Episcopal assemblies are fine, though we believe their presidents should be freely elected. But they are not synods, much less autocephalous Churches. Perhaps the time has not come to move beyond this point.

Patriarch Tikhon’s Vision Renewed. If as the OCA we are to renew Patriarch Tikhon’s vision, there is a way to build a provisional unity between all the Churches in this country that are ready for it, and yet to maintain a real link with their Mother Churches. Our canonical situation is unique in history. It demands a creative solution.

One possibility might be to “open” the Synod of the OCA to include canonical bishops who preside over American archdioceses of foreign churches, and thus to begin to create a united Synod of Bishops in America. These bishops would be members of the Synod here; they would represent us to their Mother Churches, and their Mother Churches to us. A council of Metropolitans of the various archdioceses would be formed, as well as a general synod of all bishops, with the possibility of organic growth. Once all Orthodox come into agreement, it could be restructured as an American Patriarchate, and territorial lines drawn. The presiding bishop would be freely elected, and perhaps rotate.

We are very willing to work with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Churches to resolve the issue of Orthodox unity in America, and we earnestly desire to resolve any obstacles. But we will not surrender our integrity as a local territorial indigenous Church. We have a kenotic vocation; but that only opens out into a more fully catholic expression of an indigenous local Church. I earnestly hope that we will all, eventually, come together to fully incarnate the one Body of Christ here in this land.

Archbishop Dmitri

True freedom

People generally use the word *freedom* to describe two things: the first, and perhaps most persistent, meaning of the term is simply lack of subjection to any kind of ownership or tyrannical authority, the lack of restriction of one's actions, the absence of obstacles to self-determination or personal choices, the right to make up one's own mind with regard to occupation, speech, assembly, religion, and so on. Naturally, this kind of freedom is entirely desirable and, in many ways, our very nation came into being out of a deeply felt need for this. Although our democratic system of government has experienced many pitfalls and defects, and throughout the course of our history we have not always been able to achieve perfect freedom in the sense just described, it is nonetheless true that few would question the desirability for such freedom. Men are still willing to make enormous sacrifices – their very lives at times – for the ideal of freedom.

Christian teaching lies at the very heart of such an ideal. And in spite of the ups and downs of Church history, wherein even the Church has seemed to be an accomplice to agencies and forces that would deny this kind of basic right to the human race, it would be inaccurate to say that the Christian Church in most of its classical forms teaches that men are not destined to be free in this very sense. It is incompatible with Christian teaching to maintain that man should be shackled with restrictions against his personal freedom to pursue a way of life to his own choosing.

At the same time, it appears also that freedom is being increasingly applied to a kind of license which says that man is not to be subjected to any kind of restriction that is not to his liking. Even when the common good demands the contrary, he is somehow to be free to “do his own thing.” The blame for much of the disorder and confusion of our own times could perhaps be laid to this concept of freedom: the near capitulation of our legal system in face of demands for freedom to peddle pornography, to sell drugs, to defy the law enforcement agencies of the cities, etc.

In this particular article, it is not our intention to dwell on the matter of freedom as described above, making this a plea for law and order. Rather, we wish to present a general account of the Orthodox Church's understanding of freedom, in light of Christ's work of redemption, His “breaking the chains of hell and overthrowing the tyranny of hades.”

Jesus said, “If you continue in my word, then you are my disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” And those who heard Him said, “We are Abraham's seed, and we were never in bondage to any man, how sayest Thou, you shall be made free?” And He answered, “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” [1 John 8:31-34].

He said in another place, “I am the way, the truth and the

life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If you had known me, you should have known my Father also; and from henceforth you know Him, and have seen Him” [John 14: 6-7].

Jesus Christ is the truth about God and the truth about man, since He is both God and man. God's real nature is completely revealed in the Son of God, the Incarnate Word, and the whole truth about man – his worth, value, and dignity – are realized and made manifest to man in the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth. And since man's fundamental sin was and is godlessness or atheism, we then understand what is meant by the statement that “Christ came into the world to save His people from their sins.”

An author once pointed out that “Mankind is in bondage until Christ sets men free.” Saint Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, says, “For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. But what fruit had you then from those things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now set free from sin and having become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and as your end, life everlasting” [Romans 6:20-22].

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Archbishop Dmitri retired as Archbishop of Dallas and the South on March 31, 2009.

Born in 1923 to Protestant parents, he converted to Orthodox Christianity at the age of 18. After his ordination in the 1950s, he organized St. Seraphim Church [now a cathedral], Dallas, TX. In the 1960s, he continued his education at St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, while teaching Spanish at Fordham University.

Consecrated to the episcopacy in June 1969, he initially served as auxiliary to Archbishop John [Shahovskoy] of San Francisco and to Metropolitan Ireney [Bekish]. In 1972, he was elected ruling Bishop of the Diocese of Hartford and New England. Six years later, he was named ruling Bishop of the newly created Diocese of Dallas and the South. In 1993, he was elevated to the dignity of Archbishop.

In addition to his diocesan duties – during his tenure the Diocese of the South grew from a handful of parishes to well over 60 parishes and missions – Archbishop Dmitri served as Exarch for Mexico. He was well known for his missionary efforts in Mexico and among Mexican-Americans, for whom he translated Orthodox liturgical texts and theological works into Spanish.

Archbishop Dmitri is also a prolific writer. Among his theological works are *The Doctrine of Christ; Orthodox Christian Teaching; An Introduction to the Orthodox Faith; The Kingdom of God; The Sermon on the Mount; The Parables of Christ; The Miracles of Christ; and The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary.* ■



Back to the catacombs

To be a confessing Christian today involves embracing a life that is now in open conflict with the reigning values of our culture.



Father Lawrence R. Farley

Father Alexander Schmemmann, in his essay titled “A Meaningful Storm,” described the history of the Church as consisting of a series of layers. The earliest layer – and most fundamental, I would suggest – is that of the early Church, a time of pagan persecution when the Church lived its life “in the catacombs,” so to speak, as a hounded and illegal sect. Then came the second layer, after the Peace of Constantine, when the first Christian Emperor called off the dogs of persecution and gave the Church a privileged place in the sun, beginning the long and glorious Byzantine experiment of Church-State *symphonia*. After about a millennium, when the Empire suffered increasing reversals and eventual overthrow in 1453 AD, this was followed by the third layer, characterized by the growth of national churches in the various territories of what used to be the Byzantine Empire. It has been called *Byzance après Byzance* – “Byzantium after Byzantium” – when the double-headed eagle of Byzantine Rome made a reprise role among the newly-formed nations in the Balkans.

The Orthodox Church in North America, of course, while inheriting all this layered history, never experienced it directly, being far from the territory of Byzantium. North America did, however, experience wave after wave of immigration, and became a kind of receptacle for a whirlpool of piety and practice from the Old World. And though some would minimize the Christian foundations of America, it can make a credible claim to have been a Christian nation: Abraham Lincoln called its citizens on three separate occasions to “a day of humiliation, prayer and fasting” in times of national crisis; the motto “In

God We Trust” is famously inscribed on its currency; and Christian holy days still offer the occasions for its public holidays. Even north of the US border, in the previous generation of the 1950s, pretty much everyone went to “the church or synagogue of their choice.” It wasn’t exactly Byzantium or Holy Russia, but it sure *felt* Christian (especially, one imagines, to its Jewish population).

Open season on Christianity? As anyone can see who hasn’t just emerged from a long snooze, things have changed. Our long kick at the Byzantine can is over, and we now live in a militantly post-Christian culture. Witness the notorious 1989 “work of art” by American Andreas Serrano, showcased at the Vancouver Art Gallery, which consisted of a picture of Christ in a container of urine. Witness the current debate over same-sex marriage – for it doesn’t matter which side “wins” the debate; the very fact that it can be held reveals that a Christian cultural consensus has been lost. Culturally speaking, it is *always* open season on the Christians, for Christian symbols and beliefs can be openly mocked in a way no others can in North America. (If you doubt this, ask yourself what the reaction would have been to a picture of Mohammed in a container of urine, and whether or not an art gallery of any major city would have allowed it to be shown.)

So what does this mean? I would suggest it means that it is time to “return to the catacombs.” Please don’t misunderstand me: this does *not* mean that we opt out of public debate, or cease to vote, or refuse to run for office. It does *not* mean that

Catacombs to 16

Catacombs from 15

we no longer value the good things in North American culture (including the freedom of speech to debate unpopular things). It does *not* mean that we eschew patriotism, as if love of country and love of God were somehow incompatible. (Byzantium at least taught us that.) It does *not* mean that we fill the moat, pull up the drawbridge, and retreat into a frightened and paranoid huddle, fearing any contaminating contact with the world.

What, then, *does* it mean? “Life in the catacombs” simply means that we acknowledge that to be a confessing Christian involves embracing a life that is now in open conflict with the reigning values of our culture. And, I further suggest, this involves the following.

1. We must at all costs retain the world-affirming sacramental approach of Orthodoxy and refuse to adopt a cultish mindset. In a lecture in Delaware in 1981, Father Schmemmann spoke of the need to live “between Utopia and Escape,” avoiding the extremes of imagining we could create Utopia through our own efforts, or of making a retreat from the world, escaping into closed communities dedicated to recreating Byzantium, Holy Russia, or some other mythical version of our past. It is significant that the liturgies of the early Church reflect a world-embracing concern for all, giving thanks for everything and offering it back to God in a spirit of peace and joy. One would never know these liturgies were prayed by people under threat of arrest and death. In “the catacombs” especially, it is important to remember that “the whole earth is full of His glory” [Isaiah 6:3], and to retain the joy of living in God’s world.

2. We must recover a sense that to be baptized means that we have come out of the world, and now belong not to this age, but to the age to come. In the movie “My Big Fat Greek Wedding,” the groom-to-be allows himself to be baptized in the Greek Orthodox Church, and then immediately afterwards says to his intended Greek bride, “Now I’m a Greek!” *Voilà l’ennemie!* – our enemy is the attitude which equates being a Christian with being a respectable member of an earthly culture. In fact Christians have always been “a third race” – neither Jew, nor Greek (i.e. Gentile of any kind, be that American, Canadian, or any other people), but the Church of God [see 1 Corinthians 10:32]. We must recover a sense of being *different*, of being, as Saint Paul says, “blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world” [Philippians 2:15]. Baptism brings us out of one culture and into another; it is an act of spiritual emigration from this world to the next. All immigrants know they have left one country and entered another. We too must recover this sense of distance from the culture around us.

3. Finally, living as a catacomb people will give us a particular love for others who share that space, even if they are not of our jurisdiction – even if (dare I say it?) they are Christians who are not yet Orthodox. Don’t get me wrong – our ecumenical mandate to heal the schisms remains. Bluntly put, we still need to offer the fullness of the Faith to all who love Christ, and pray for them to become Orthodox Christians. But living as part of an increasingly-marginalized Christian minority means the things we share with non-Orthodox Christians are more important

than the things that separate us, and nothing drives that point home like persecution targeting *all* who confess the Holy Name. It is possible that what the World Council of Churches could not accomplish, increased hostility from outside the churches will.

In conclusion, one might think that a “catacomb” existence would be a cramped one, darkened by fear and hopelessness and depression. I assert the opposite. The catacombs (as the early Church knew) are illumined by the light of Christ, and made spacious by His joy which swells the heart. And when things get *really* bad, we have been told to straighten up and lift up our heads, because our redemption is drawing near [Luke 21:28]. Life in the catacombs will be just fine, because in the catacombs or out of it, we live as glory-bound children of God. ■

Fr. Lawrence R. Farley is rector of St. Herman of Alaska Church, Langley, BC, Canada.

Preoteasa Nicole Miteescu

Beginning to pray

Metropolitan Anthony’s classic book remains a “must read”

Have you ever felt a bit intimidated before trying to read a “religious book?” One of the books that took me several tries before I was able to read it – and I was very glad I did! – is *Beginning to Pray* by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom of blessed memory.

Metropolitan Anthony was part of the courageous generations exiled from their homeland by war and political conflict. In fact, he was born in Switzerland, moved back to Russia, and then lived in Persia and France before finally settling in England. He was ordained in 1948 and became Metropolitan of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Sourozh Diocese in England in 1966. He fell asleep in the Lord in 2003.

At the beginning of the book, Metropolitan Anthony mentions that his father told him at one point, “Always remember that whether you are alive or dead matters nothing. What matters is what you live for and what you are prepared to die for.” This challenged, which he certainly lived up to, combined with his reputation for holiness and deep contemplative thought, nearly discouraged me from continuing to read the book. What could I possibly have in common with this holy man?

But the title encouraged me to continue reading since it seemed to be aimed at beginners in prayer – and indeed it is a wonderful book for beginners, and for all Orthodox Christians. Prayer is a fundamental cornerstone of our faith, and at the same time, a mystery for us all.

Our humble ascent to God. Chapter One, titled “The Absence of God,” questions how can one pray to a God Who

If you accept that this day was blessed of God, chosen by God with His own hand, then every person you meet is a gift of God – even circumstance you will meet is a gift of God, whether it is bitter or sweet, whether you like or dislike it. It is God's own gift to you, and if you take it that way, then you can face any situation.

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

seems to be absent. Metropolitan Anthony writes, "Obviously I am not speaking of a real absence – God is never really absent – but of the sense of absence which we have." By our act of prayer, we open a line of communication; we start to establish a relationship with God. It is a deep and personal relationship in which our prayer is "our humble ascent towards God, a moment when we turn Godwards."

So what do we need in order to begin to pray? According to Metropolitan Anthony, we must first be open and honest. And we must recognize Who God is – our King before Whom we surrender in humility and love. And, as Metropolitan Anthony adds, "We must be at least concerned with His will, even if we are not yet capable of fulfilling it." That doesn't sound too hard.

But we also need to recognize our fallen state. As he says, "What we must start with, if we wish to pray, is the certainty that we are sinners in need of salvation, that we are cut off from God and that we cannot live without Him, and that all we can offer God is our desperate longing to be made such that God will receive us, receive us in repentance, receive us with mercy and with love."

In the following chapters of the book, Metropolitan Anthony discusses how to go about praying. It is we who are "knocking at the door" in our prayer and for that reason, it must be a prayer that "makes sense to us." Further on, he advises us to "choose a prayer you can say with all your mind, with all your heart, and with all your will." We should try to pray "when we can do it with an undivided mind and heart."

What about the prayers in our prayer books? Metropolitan Anthony suggests that we learn as many of them as we can to help carry us through the moments of trial and crisis. "Learn those passages," he tells us, "because one day when you are so completely low, so profoundly desperate that you cannot call out of your soul any spontaneous expression... you will

discover that these words come up and offer themselves to you as a gift of God, as a gift of the Church, as a gift of holiness, helping our simple lack of strength."

More than words. There is a second part to prayer that is often overlooked, and that is the commitment to action. We have to be prepared to act in accordance with our prayers. As Metropolitan Anthony says, "Unless life and prayer become completely interwoven, prayers become a sort of polite madrigal which you offer to God at moments when you are giving time to Him." Ouch! Prayer is not just a series of words we say at a time that's convenient for us; it involves our whole being as well!

As Metropolitan Anthony says, prayer should be undertaken when you can focus on the prayer, on your personal relationship with God. But this does not mean that you should only pray when you are alone or in church. We can also use the "crumbs" of wasted time to try to build short moments for recollection and prayer. Even in times of noise and confusion, we can learn to create moments of inner peace when we can pray. Have you ever tried praying while waiting in line behind someone with a pocketbook full of coupons at the grocery store, or in the car when you are stuck in traffic? How about when an impatient driver cuts you off as you are driving home? Metropolitan Anthony shows us how to pray in those little moments. He suggests that a good way to start praying is to literally begin when waking up in the morning. Give thanks to God, know that you are His and that this day is His, then ask God to bless the day. "After that you must take it very seriously.... If you accept that this day was blessed of God, chosen by God with His own hand, then every person you meet is a gift of God, even circumstance you will meet is a gift of God, whether it is bitter or sweet, whether you like or dislike it. It is God's own gift to you, and if you take it that way, then you can face any situation."

Praying is not always an easy and smooth path. Metropolitan Anthony tells us that in "the process of searching, you will have endured pain, anguish, hope, expectation – all the range of human emotions. God will have been the desired One and He will have been the frustrating One." Our God is a God of love, and it is through our struggles and our prayer that He allows us to grow closer to Him.

Interspersed throughout his book are wonderful little stories to help us understand what Metropolitan Anthony is saying. He is not a remote "holy person" who is unfamiliar or untouched by the everyday problems and stresses that affect each one of us. He addresses us as his spiritual children, whom he loves and cares for, and to whom he offers his advice with gentleness and humility.

One of the miraculous facts about reading a great book is that no two people will read it the same way. There is a great deal more to discover in this little book of just over 100 pages. I truly encourage everyone to read – or re-read! – *Beginning to Pray* and to let its message speak to your heart. ■

Psa. Nicole Mitescu is a member of St. Anne Church, Pomona, CA, where her husband is assistant priest.

An historic visit

History was made in late September and early October as the wonderworking Pochaiv Icon of the Mother of God made its way from western Ukraine to Canada for the first time.

Tens of thousands of faithful across Canada had the rare opportunity to venerate the icon as it visited Montreal, Vancouver, and several major cities in between.

On September 19, the icon was taken by train from its home at the Pochaiv Monastery in western Ukraine to Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital. From there it was flown to Montreal, where on September 23 it was enshrined for two days in the city's Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. A steady stream of faithful – over 8,000 – filled the cathedral, which remained open late into the night. The cathedral was filled beyond capacity during the celebration of the Akathistos Hymn and the Divine Liturgy.

From Montreal, the icon was taken to Christ the Saviour Cathedral, Toronto, where even larger numbers of pilgrims venerated it. On Thursday, October 1, the icon was present at Ottawa's Holy Annunciation Cathedral for the episcopal consecration of His Grace, Bishop Irénée [Rochon] as Bishop of Quebec City and Auxiliary to His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada.

Thousands of faithful also venerated the icon in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, and Winnipeg.

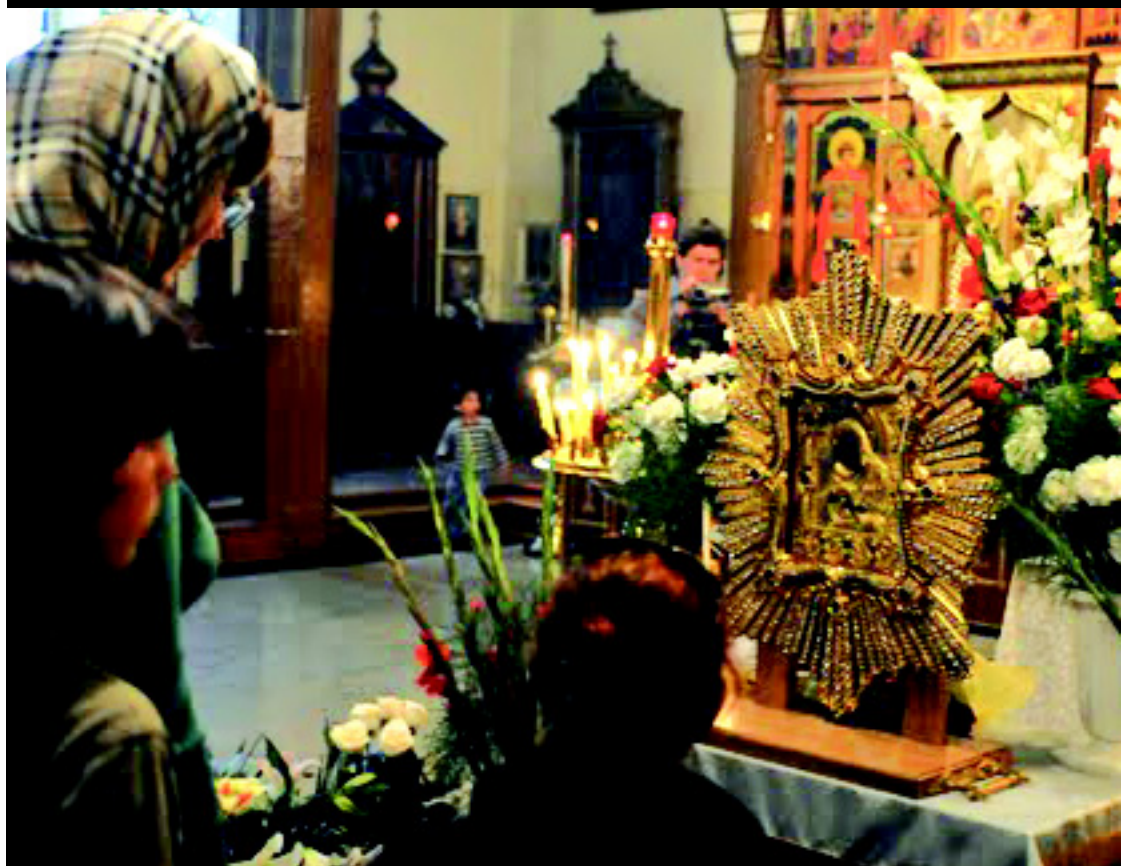
The visit of the icon brought together Orthodox Christians of all jurisdictions and backgrounds in a celebration of Orthodox Christianity's strong presence in Canada, which traces its roots to missionary efforts among the numerous immigrants who arrived in Canada in the late 19th and

early 20th centuries. The vast western prairie provinces remain dotted with hundreds of churches, especially in agricultural communities – some bearing Slavic names, such as Sary Wostok – established by Ukrainian, Bukovinian, Russian, Romanian, and other faithful a century ago.

After returning to Toronto on Sunday, October 11, the Pochaiv Icon returned to Ukraine.

The Pochaiv Icon of the Mother of God is among the Church's most venerable icons. It is enshrined in the Dormition Cathedral of the Pochaiv Monastery, a centuries-old bastion of Orthodox Christianity in what is today western Ukraine. The

Tens of thousands of faithful across Canada venerated the wonderworking Pochaiv Icon of the Mother of God.





miracles ascribed to the intercession of the Mother of God through the icon are numerous, spanning four centuries. Many are recorded in the monastery's records with signed testimonies of those whose prayers had been answered.

The monastery stands on a hill on which two monks had settled in 1340 AD. One day, one of the monks went to the top of the hill after he had prayed, and there he was astonished to see the Mother of God standing on a stone, encircled by flames. Immediately, he summoned the other monk to behold the marvel. The monks, together with a third witness, the herdsman Ioann Bosoi, saw the Mother of God and glorified God. They were further amazed to discover that the Mother of God had left the imprint of her right foot on the stone where she had stood.

In 1559, Patriarch Neophytus of Constantinople, on his journey through Volhynia, visited the noblewoman Anna Hoiskaya living at the estate of Orlya, not far from Pochaiv. As a farewell blessing, he presented her with an icon of the Mother of God which he had brought from Constantinople. They began to notice a radiance coming from the icon. In 1597, Anna's brother Philip was healed of an ailment before the eyes of a monk who lived on the hill at Pochaiv. She then gave the wonderworking icon to the monk. The icon was enshrined in a church which was built in honor of the Dormition of the Mother of God. The monastery was later established on the site, with Anna providing a large portion of the funds needed for its construction.

The monastery has endured many difficult historical periods,

border changes, and wars. In the year 1721, it was overtaken by Eastern Rite Catholics, or *uniates*. Even during this difficult period, the monastery chronicle records 539 miracles. During the time of the Catholic occupation, in the second half of the 18th century, the Count Nicholas Pototski became a benefactor of the monastery after seeking the Mother of God's intercession. In thanksgiving for answered prayers, he devoted himself and all his property to the building up of the monastery. From his wealth the present Dormition Cathedral was built, along with residential buildings for the monastics.

History is filled with accounts of miracles ascribed to the icon. One of the most famous relates how a Pochaiv monk had been captured by the Tatars and held as a slave. Yearning to return to Pochaiv for the celebration of the approaching Great Feast of the Dormition, he prayed tearfully to the Mother of God for deliverance from captivity. Suddenly the walls of the dungeon in which he was being held disappeared, and the monk found himself standing before the walls of the his beloved monastery.

In 1832, the Pochaiv monastery was returned to the Orthodox Church, marked by the miraculous healing of the blind maiden Anna Akimchukova, who had come on pilgrimage with her 70-year-old grandmother from Kremenets-Podolsk, a considerable distance. In commemoration of this event, the Archbishop of Volhynia and the monastery's Archimandrite Innocent established the custom of chanting the Akathistos Hymn before the wonderworking icon on Saturdays.

Prior to 1939, due to frequent border changes, the region in which the monastery is situated was in Poland, but in that year it became a part of Ukraine, which was under Soviet rule. The monastery survived closure by the Soviet regime, although it was frequently subjected to persecution and brutal harassment prior to the fall of communism.

The Pochaiv Icon is commemorated on July 23 and September 8 and on Friday of Bright Week. ■

The icon arrives at Montreal's SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.



Episcopal consecrations

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, together with other members of the Holy Synod, recently presided at the consecrations of a new ruling bishop for the Diocese of Pittsburgh and a new auxiliary for the Archdiocese of Canada.

Saint Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park, PA, was the site of the consecration of Archimandrite Melchisedek [Pleska] as Bishop of Pittsburgh and the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania on Saturday, June 27, 2009.

On the eve of the consecration Liturgy, the Rite of Nomination, Proclamation and Acceptance was celebrated.

Metropolitan Jonah and members of the Holy Synod of Bishops served as co-consecrators.

Bishop Melchisedek succeeds His Eminence, Archbishop Kirill, who fell asleep in the Lord on June 17, 2007.

Bishop Melchisedek was born Thomas Alexander Pleska in Dayton OH, on August 20, 1942. His father, who was born near Brest-Litovsk, Belarus, immigrated to the US in 1925, while his mother Johanna [Eugenia Stachuk] Pleska was born in Cleveland, OH and baptized at Saint Theodosius Cathedral. Despite the family's Orthodox Christian roots, he and his sister attended Protestant parishes in Dayton, but were taken to the

"Russian" Church in Cleveland for important holy days and other occasions. It was as an adult that Bishop Melchisedek describes himself as embracing Orthodox Christianity at Christ the Saviour Church, Cincinnati, OH.

Bishop Melchisedek attended the University of Michigan School of Music and Miami University, Oxford, OH, where he completed a BA with a major in philosophy. In the early 1980s, he graduated from Saint Vladimir's Seminary, where the late dean, Protopresbyter John Meyendorff, encouraged him to consider ordination. Through several encounters with monastic spiritual fathers, including Elder Dionysios of the Simono-Petras Monastery on Mount Athos and Archimandrite Dimitry [Egoroff], a monk of Old Valaam, he accepted the call to monasticism after ordination.

He was ordained to the diaconate on November 21, 1985, by His Grace, Bishop Job. On March 25, 1986, he was ordained to the priesthood by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius.

RIGHT/ Bishop Melchisedek ordains Subdeacon Evgeni Peykov to the holy diaconate.

BELOW/ The Rite of Nomination was celebrated on the eve of Bishop Melchisedek's consecration to the episcopacy.



In the fall of 1986, he accepted the position of Instructor of Dogmatic Theology at Saint Tikhon's Seminary. He also served as chaplain at Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery, Otego NY, and interim pastor of Holy Trinity Church, Pottstown, PA; Saint Michael Church, Old Forge, PA; and Saint Basil Church, Simpson, PA. It was at this time that he made acquaintance with the Elder Sophrony and his monastery in Essex, England.

From 1989 until 1998, he served as rector of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Meriden, CT. Thereafter, he traveled to Greece, where he served at the Monastery of the Holy Cross, an international women's community in Thebes. In 2003, he was appointed chaplain at the women's monastery of Saint George the Great Martyr in addition to serving his own brotherhood at the Monastery of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Petras.

In 2004, he was tonsured to the Great Schema, taking the name Melchisedek, and elevated to the rank of Archimandrite.

On April 2, 2009, after a lengthy and comprehensive search conducted by a diocesan committee, he was elected Bishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania.

Faithful from across Canada filled Ottawa's Annunciation Cathedral for the consecration of Archimandrite Irénée [Rochon] as Bishop of Quebec City and Auxiliary to His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada on Thursday, October 1, 2009.

Metropolitan Jonah and members of the OCA Holy Synod, together with four guest hierarchs – His Eminence, Metropolitan Sotirios of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto; His Grace, Bishop Iov of Kashira, Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in Canada and Acting Administrator of the Patriarchal Parishes in the USA; His Grace, Bishop Alexander of the Antiochian Orthodox Diocese of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York; and His Grace, Bishop Meleti of Khotyn, Auxiliary Bishop of the Church of Ukraine's Diocese of Chernivtsi – gave the consecration a truly pan-Orthodox character.

On the eve of the consecration, the Rite of Nomination, Proclamation and Acceptance took place at the cathedral immediately before the Vigil for the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God.

Bishop Irénée was born into a large French Canadian Roman Catholic family on December 25, 1948, in Montréal, QC. In 1961, he encountered Orthodox Christianity for the first time in Rawdon, QC, at the summer church of Saint Seraphim of Sarov. On January 20, 1967, he was received into the Orthodox Church by His Eminence, Archbishop Vitaly of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia [ROCOR], and participated in the parish life at Saint Nicholas Cathedral in Montréal. He also was active in the McGill University Orthodox Christian Fellowship.

In 1971, he completed his BA in Slavic Studies at the University of Ottawa, and then joined Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY. In March 1974, after three years of study at Holy Trinity Seminary, he was tonsured a rassophore monk. The following year, he was tonsured a stavrophore monk, receiving the name Irénée.

In February 1978, he was blessed by His Grace, Bishop Laurus, then Abbot of Holy Trinity Monastery, to serve in France. He was



Bishop-elect Irénée offers statement of faith.

Archbishop Seraphim with newly consecrated Bishop Irénée.



ordained to the diaconate on May 19, 1978, in Brussels, Belgium and to the priesthood on August 20 of the same year in Geneva, Switzerland by His Eminence, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva.

After serving for four years in Lyons, France, he returned to Montréal to serve the French-language mission there.

After the 1987 election of Bishop Seraphim as Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Canada, he and the members of the French Mission in Montréal petitioned to be received into the OCA's Archdiocese of Canada.

He was elevated to the rank of Igumen in 1992 to oversee the French speaking monastics in Québec. In 1993, he was assigned priest-in-charge of the Saint Benoît French language parish in Montréal and served as supply priest in many parishes in Montréal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Québec City.

In 1996, he was assigned Administrator of the Russian Cemetery and Saint Seraphim parish, Rawdon, QC, an obedience which he fulfilled until 2007. He also worked full-time in a local Montréal hospital until December 2008.

On April 2, 2009, the Holy Synod of Bishops elevated him to the rank of Archimandrite and elected him to the episcopacy as Auxiliary to Archbishop Seraphim. ■

Holy Synod elects Fr. Michael Dahulich to NY/NJ See

The Very Rev. Michael Dahulich, dean of Saint Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA, was elected Bishop of New York and New Jersey by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America on Tuesday, September 22, 2009.

The election took place after Father Michael's name, together with that of the Very Rev. David Mahaffey, were submitted to the Holy Synod by delegates to an extraordinary diocesan assembly held in Clifton, NJ August 31, 2009. As widely reported, the assembly delegates discussed a motion to postpone the selection of a candidate until later this year, but the motion was defeated in a 56/42 vote. In the subsequent vote, delegates cast 55 votes for Father Michael and 33 votes for Father David, with neither candidate receiving the necessary 2/3rd majority required for nomination. Delegates decided to suspend the rules of a second ballot and, according to election procedures, submit both priests' names to the Holy Synod for canonical election.

Father Michael was born in Johnson City, NY, on August 29, 1950. From the age of 10 until he graduated from college and entered seminary, he served as an altar boy under the guidance of his pastor, the Very Rev. Stephen Dutko, who was the inspiration for his vocation.

He graduated from Binghamton Central High School in 1967. Two years later he graduated from Broome Community College, Binghamton, NY, and began studies at Christ the Saviour Seminary, Johnstown, PA, from which he graduated in December 1972.

Married to the former Deborah Sandak in January 1973, he was ordained to the diaconate on February 3, 1973 and to the priesthood the following day in the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA. Later that month Father Michael and his wife assumed their first parish assignment at Saints Peter and Paul Church, Homer City, PA, a small mission community that previously had not had a full time priest. Two days after beginning this assignment, Matushka Deborah died as a result of a tragic car accident.

Following the death of his wife, Father Michael was encouraged to pursue further studies. He attended Saint Vincent College, Latrobe, PA, from which he graduated with a degree in Philosophy, and Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, from which he received a Master of Arts and PhD in Theology.

He continued to serve Saints Peter and Paul Church for 13 years, guiding its growth from 60 to over 130 members and from mission to parish status.

For 16 years he served as pastor of Holy Ghost Church, Phoenixville, PA, during which time the parish grew from 256



to nearly 450 members, including more than 100 children.

In addition to his pastoral duties, Father Michael served as Prefect of Student Life at Christ the Saviour Seminary, where he also taught ethics, Scripture, and homiletics. During his PhD studies at Duquesne, he served as an adjunct lecturer, teaching Scripture and Eastern Orthodoxy in the Theology Department. Father Michael served in the American Carpatho-Russian

Orthodox Diocese as Religious Education Director for the Johnstown Deanery; Associate Editor of *The Church Messenger*, the official diocesan periodical; personal secretary to His Grace, Bishop John; Vice-Chancellor of the Diocese; and Secretary to His Grace, Bishop [now Metropolitan] Nicholas of Amisos. He also served as Dean of the Diocese's Mid-Atlantic Deanery; Vice-Chairman of the Harvest 2000 Committee on Missions, Evangelization and Diocesan Growth; and a member of the Study and Planning and the Ecumenical Commissions of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas. He edited the diocesan prayer book, *Come To Me*.

In 1993, Father Michael was invited to teach at Saint Tikhon's Seminary, where he continues to serve as a faculty member. In 2001, he was released from the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese and received into the Orthodox Church in America to serve full-time at Saint Tikhon's as Administrative Dean and later Dean. He also served as the school's and Director of Recruitment, Development and Fund-raising while teaching New Testament, Old Testament, homiletics, pastoral theology, and ethics.

Father Michael was a member of the team that secured national accreditation for Saint Tikhon's Seminary from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and helped develop a revised curriculum for the school's Master of Divinity program. He served as editor of several seminary-related publications, including *The Tikhonaire*, *The Spirit of Saint Tikhon's*, *By the Waters*, and *Saint Tikhon's Theological Journal*.

Father Michael served as a member of the Board of Theological Education of the Orthodox Church in America and as the OCA's representative to the National Advisory Board of the American Bible Society. He also is a member and former National Secretary of the Orthodox Theological Society of America and a member of the Advisory Board of the Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology and Religion [OCAMPR].

The date of Bishop-elect Michael's consecration to the episcopacy has yet to be set, but it is expected that it will take place in the spring of 2010. ■

Late hierarchs' papers enhance OCA archives

The personal archives of the late Archbishops Gregory [Afonsky] and Peter [L'Hullier] have been added to the collections of the Archives of the Orthodox Church in America, located at its Chancery in Oyster Bay Cove, NY.

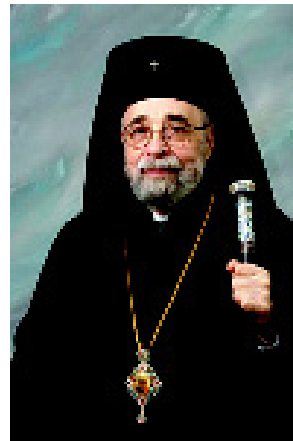
"The acquisition of these collections was in accordance with the Holy Synod's long-standing mandate that hierarchs of the Orthodox Church in America bequeath their personal papers to the Archives," according to Mr. Alexis Liberovsky, Archivist. "These new personal archives have been processed and organized and are now part of the Archives' Manuscript Division. These are available for research, alongside all other material in the Archives."

Archbishop Gregory [1925-2008], Bishop of Alaska from 1973 until his retirement in 1995, was a former OCA Archivist, noted author, and passionate researcher of Church history. His archives contain documents and correspondence pertaining to his research and writings on such diverse topics as Alaska, Russian and American Church history, dogmatics, canon law, ecclesiology, liturgics, and Russian literature. This collection also contains correspondence with people ranging from friends and spiritual children to ecclesiastical leaders and notable authors. His service as a priest and bishop is likewise well-documented. Many photographs round out the collection.

Archbishop Peter [1926-2007] served as ruling hierarch of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey from 1981 until his retirement in 2005. He was a world-renowned scholar of canon law. His papers span his entire life and include documentation on his family and childhood. The collection includes manuscripts of his writings and lectures, resource materials for his research, correspondence, notebooks from his student years, papers and theses of his students during his academic career, and a fascinating array of photographs.



Archbishop Gregory



Archbishop Peter

The Manuscript Division of the OCA Archives includes over 90 collections of the personal and institutional papers of hierarchs, clergy, and lay leaders, as well as dioceses, parishes, and Church-related organizations. These collections complement the official records of the Church administration dating back to the Alaskan Mission, which are the main focus of the OCA Archives. The largest collection in the Manuscript Division, comprising some 80 archival boxes, is the papers of Metropolitan

Leonty [Turkevich], who served the Church in North America for nearly six decades, including 15 years [1950-1965] as its Primate. Among the personal archives of prominent scholars, the Manuscript Division includes the papers of Protopresbyter John Meyendorff [1926-92] and Prof. Alexander Bogolepov [1886-1980].

The Manuscript Division, along with the official records of the OCA and the other collections in the Archives, which include photographs, films and videos, computer discs and other media, periodicals, etc., provide a rich chronicle of the Church's life and a basis for charting a course for the future. ■

Metropolitan Jonah guest of Church of Georgia

As editing of this issue of *The Orthodox Church* was being completed, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah and a delegation of the Orthodox Church in America were making their way to the Republic of Georgia as guests of His Beatitude, Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia of Tbilisi and All Georgia. The visit marks Metropolitan Jonah's second official visit to a sister Autocephalous Orthodox Church since his election and enthronement in 2008.

Departing on October 11, 2009 with Metropolitan Jonah were the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, OCA Chancellor; the Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, OCA Director of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations; the Rev. Alexander Tandilashvili; and Archdeacon Kirill Sokolov. Joining the delegation from Moscow was Archimandrite Zacchaeus [Wood], Representative of the Orthodox Church in America to the Patriarchate of Moscow.

A key area of discussion and mutual concern between Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia and Metropolitan Jonah is pastoral ministry among the growing number of Georgian immigrants in the US, many of whom attend OCA parishes.

Full coverage of the visit will be featured in the next issue of *The Orthodox Church* and on the OCA web site. ■

NOW AVAILABLE

St. Tikhon's Monastery is producing hand dipped, 100% beeswax candles to support its daily operations. For order forms visit sttikhonsmonastery.org.

Holy Synod, Metropolitan Council address numerous issues

The Holy Synod of Bishops and the Metropolitan Council reviewed a number of vital issues facing the Orthodox Church in America at joint and separate sessions in September 2009.

Detailed accounts have been posted on the OCA web site at www.oca.org. Highlights include the following.

- In opening the joint Holy Synod/Metropolitan Council sessions, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah cautioned against surrendering to the passions, the most destructive of which are spiritual in nature – resentment, gossip, fear, and retribution. He stressed that the faithful, meeting together in love, render service to Christ and for the good of all involved.
- Metropolitan Jonah also conducted mini-retreat on “Spiritual Sobriety,” during which he spoke of the importance of spiritual maturity and the ability to deal with resentment, which he defined as “the root of so many of our passions. When we resent somebody, we are beating ourselves up with their sin.” He went on to emphasize that resentment is healed by forgiveness. “Forgiveness is not justifying the abuser. Forgiveness means acknowledging the sin and sorting out what was the other person’s sin and what was one’s sinful reaction. If we watch ourselves, taking responsibility for our own sins, we cannot judge anyone.”
- In discussing conciliarity, Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council members stressed that the ecclesiastical structure of the Orthodox Church in America was motivated by an intentional effort to recover an ancient paradigm of the conciliar process lost in the Church for centuries. While acknowledging that this process had broken down in recent years, they affirmed that the fundamental principle of conciliarity and the mission of the OCA to evangelize the North American continent, are the bedrock of the Church’s life.
- In a related discussion on the strategic planning process, the next step of which involves affording the Church-at-large the opportunity to offer input into the plan through regional meetings facilitated by the planning process committee, Metropolitan Council members emphasized that in recent times the mission of the Church has become identified almost exclusively with the vision of a unified Church in North America. However, they noted that, while unity is indeed desirable and must be a goal of the OCA, Church structures are far less important than the proclamation of the Gospel and evangelization.
- The OCA Pension Plan was restructured in order to render the plan more equitable for all participants while remaining financially sound to secure the retirement of its participants.
- The draft handbook outlining the structures and work of the Metropolitan Council was reviewed.
- Deacon Martin D. Watt, CPA; Michael S. Strelka, CPA, CVA; Karen L. Simons-Durkish, CPA; and Vera Bozko-Summer were approved as members of the OCA’s Auditing Committee.

- A detailed discussion of the OCA’s sexual misconduct policies, which are currently under review, was held. It was emphasized that “these policies and procedures must be embraced by the whole Church in order to be effective.”
- Recent speculation alleging a merger of Saint Vladimir’s and Saint Tikhon’s seminaries was discussed. Metropolitan Jonah stated, “I don’t want to see Saint Tikhon’s close.... What we need is a united vision of theological education in North America that will develop a complimentary relationship between our schools that will yield the best possible training for our future clergy and lay leadership.”

Among the other issues reviewed, as reported on www.oca.org, were current legal matters facing the OCA, the ongoing investigation at Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, prospects for mission work in Guatemala, and preliminary preparations for the 16th All-American Council. ■

2009 eight-month financial report

In his report at the September 2009 joint meeting of the Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council, the Rev. Michael Tassos reviewed the OCA’s finances for the first eight months of 2009.

Father Michael noted that, while legal expenses for 2009 were initially budgeted at \$150,000.00, approximately \$325,000.00 had been spent through August, necessitating a revision of the budgeted figure to \$450,000.00. He added that with adjustments to the budget made at the recent Metropolitan Council meeting, a positive cash flow should be realized at the end of the year.

Father Michael also addressed financial projections for 2010, noting that “it is difficult to predict what exactly is going to happen with the economy, future legal matters, Church-wide funding, etc.”

The complete report and related information may be accessed at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2009/2009-0831-treasurers-report.pdf and www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2009/2009-0831-unrestricted-actual-vs-budget.pdf. ■

Melanie Ringa confirmed as OCA Treasurer

Members of the Holy Synod of Bishops confirmed Melanie Ringa as Treasurer of the Orthodox Church in America.

A Certified Public Accountant with an extensive background in accounting and finance, Ms. Ringa currently is Associate Chancellor for Finance at Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, Crestwood, NY. Her name had been presented to the Holy Synod by the Metropolitan Council during its 2009 Fall Session.

In discussing the selection of a new Treasurer, Metropolitan Council members also passed a motion expressing thanks to outgoing Treasurer, the Rev. Michael Tassos, for his exemplary work for the OCA during a very difficult chapter in the Church’s history. ■



Metropolitan Jonah addresses Anglicans

In the wake of ongoing controversies in the US branch of the Anglican communion, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah was invited to address the organizing Assembly of the Anglican Church in North America at Saint Vincent Cathedral, Bedford, TX, on June 24, 2009. Also speaking at the gathering was the Very Rev. Chad Hatfield, Chancellor of Saint Vladimir's Seminary. ■

Metropolitan Jonah speaks at Anglican-Orthodox conference

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah was the featured speaker at a two-day conference hosted by Nashotah House Seminary, Nashotah, WI, marking the 20th anniversary of the glorification of Saint Tikhon of Moscow, October 9-10, 2009.

Saint Tikhon, who served as Bishop and later Archbishop of North America from 1897 until 1907, maintained close contacts with the traditionalist Anglicans of his time.

Metropolitan Jonah spoke of Saint Tikhon as a model of how Orthodox Christians continue to reach out to traditionalist Anglicans with an open hand rather than a closed fist. He has encouraged the study of the history of the formal Anglican/Orthodox Dialogue and the possible reconstitution of the good work accomplished through the new traditionalist Anglican Province and the OCA directly.

Also speaking at the gathering was the Very Rev. Chad Hatfield, Chancellor of Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. ■

SVS to host open house November 12-14

Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, will hold its annual fall open house for prospective students and their families November 12-14, 2009. Guests will have the opportunity to experience campus life, interact with students and faculty members, join in liturgical worship, and enjoy an early Thanksgiving meal with the seminary community. Faculty members will be available for interviews.

Visit www.svots.edu/2009-1112-open-house for additional info. ■

Remembering Bishop Basil [Rodzianko]

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah presided at the commemorative events in Washington, DC as close family members, friends and spiritual children of His Grace, the late Bishop Basil [Rodzianko], gathered to commemorate the 10th anniversary of his repose.

On September 16, 2009, Metropolitan Jonah celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the house chapel of Bishop Basil's former residence, which is still maintained by Holy Archangels Foundation. A Memorial also was celebrated at Bishop Basil's grave in Rock Creek Cemetery.

The following morning, Metropolitan Jonah presided at the Divine Liturgy at Saint Nicholas Cathedral, where Bishop Basil had served until his death in 1999.

"Ten years ago Bishop Basil died and was buried – and yet he is alive in our midst," Metropolitan Jonah noted in his memorable sermon. "His presence is powerful, and the grace of the Holy Spirit allows us to perceive that presence – that grace that came forth from him during his life through his prayers and that grace that comes forth from him now through his prayers."

A memorial luncheon followed, during which many personal memories of Bishop Basil were shared. Alexis Liberovsky, OCA Archivist, read two letters written by the future Bishop in 1939 and 1952, in which he expressed an interest in coming to America to continue his pastoral service. These letters were recently found in the OCA archives, along with a particularly touching letter written by Bishop Basil less than a month before he died to a spiritual son, in which he stressed the importance of humility, obedience and prayer.

Following his retirement as Bishop of San Francisco and the West in 1984, Bishop Basil settled in Washington, DC, where he continued his broadcasting ministry to Russia.

Memorial services were also held at Holy Trinity Cathedral and Christ the Saviour Church, San Francisco; Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral, Los Angeles; and the OCA Representation Church of Saint Catherine, Moscow. ■



The V. Rev. Nicholas Yuschak

PHOENIXVILLE, PA – The Very Rev. Nicholas Yuschak peacefully fell asleep in the Lord at Phoenixville Hospital here after a lengthy illness on Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

Father Nicholas had served several parishes during his decades of ministry, including Saint Nicholas Church, Whitestone, NY; Saint John the Baptist Church, Campbell, OH; and until his retirement, Holy Trinity Church, Pottstown, PA. In retirement, he was attached to Saint Herman of Alaska Church, Gradyville, PA.

Father Nicholas is survived by his wife, Matushka Vera, and their children.

His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, presided at funeral services at Saint Herman Church on Sunday, May 17. Interment took place at Saint Tikhon's Monastery Cemetery, South Canaan, PA.

May Father Nicholas' memory be eternal! ■

The Priestmonk James [McLuckie]

VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA – The Priestmonk James [McLuckie], 64, who was attached to Holy Resurrection Sobor here, fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, July 22, 2009 after an extended illness.

Father James was born in Trail, BC, on August 20, 1944. He was raised in Castlegar, BC, where he received his elementary and secondary education. He received a BA from Catholic University, Washington, DC, from which he later received a STB. For several years he taught in the DC area. He was received into the Orthodox Christian faith in 1971 and continued post-graduate studies at Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, which he completed in 1973.

He was ordained to the holy priesthood by His Holiness, Patriarch Elias IV of Antioch on July 3, 1977, after which he was assigned to an assistant pastorate in San Francisco, CA. He also served as founding pastor of Saint John Church, Orinda CA, and other Antiochian missions. After his reception into the Orthodox Church in America in 1991, he was assigned rector of Saint Innocent Mission, Fremont, CA. [The mission initially met at the historic church of Mission San Jose, which Saint Innocent Veniaminov visited in 1836.]

On July 2, 1995, Father James suffered an unexpected heart attack and stroke after major bypass surgery, which greatly limited his ministry. The following year, he was transferred to the Archdiocese of Canada, and underwent extensive rehabilitation therapy. In 2000, he was attached to Vancouver's Holy Resurrection Cathedral and voluntarily ministered to recovering addicts and alcoholics in Vancouver and the Prince George area. On September 22, 2007, he was tonsured to monastic rank.

Father James was an accomplished iconographer, muralist, and restorer. He was also one of four individuals who collaborated on *The Icon Book*, a "classic" published by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese in the 1970s and still in use today.

May Father James' memory be eternal! ■

Matushka Ellen Gvosdev

BOCA RATON, FL – Matushka Ellen Gvosdev, 66, wife of the Very Rev. Kirill Gvosdev, rector of Saint Nicholas Church here, fell asleep in the Lord on Thursday, July 23, 2009.

Matushka Ellen was awarded a Ph.D. from the Union Institute in Pastoral Practice with emphasis on Sexual Malfeasance in the Church in 1994. Her core faculty was a professor from Yale, and her mentors included an Orthodox Christian monk with a Ph.D. in psychology and an Episcopalian priest with expertise in the same field. She underwent training with Dr. Marie Fortune (Director, Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Abuse and Violence, with emphasis on non-denominational clerical misconduct); Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, a center for women abused by clergy; Canon Margo Maris (Episcopal Diocese of Minneapolis, Clerical Sexual Abuse Advocacy Center); Survivors Network for Those Abused by Priests; Dr. Glen Gabbard, (Menninger Clinic); the Rev. Lloyd G. Rediger, a therapist to clergy abusers; Dr. Gary Schoener, a Minneapolis counselor, author, and lecturer on clerical sexual misconduct issues; and several attorneys. She completed an internship, and later lectured, at the Pastoral Counseling Center of Ft. Lauderdale. She was one of eight individuals who graduated from the first Saint Stephen's Masters equivalency program of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

Matushka Ellen's articles were widely published. She wrote for "Synergia," the publication of the Orthodox Christian Association of Psychology, Medicine and Religion; and prepared the clerical sexual abuse presentation for the Orthodox Church in America's Resource Handbook for Lay Ministries [www.oca.org/RHArticle.asp?SID=15&ArticleID=45]. The article was referenced in official documents of the OCA Holy Synod of Bishops on sexual misconduct. She presented lectures to OCA and Antiochian clergy wives, the pan-Orthodox Clergy Association of South Florida, the Ecumenical Association of Palm Beach County, Orthodox Christian Laity, Lutheran Association of Broward County, and many other groups. She served as a consultant on some diocesan misconduct problems. Among her numerous works is *The Female Diaconate, an Historical Perspective*.

In addition to her husband, Father Kirill, she is survived by one son, Dr. Nikolas Gvosdev of New Port, RI, and a grandson, Adrian Alexander Gvosdev Kranz. She is also survived by her mother, Mrs. Elena Dobson, of San Francisco, CA.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, July 25, at Saint Nicholas Church, Fort Lauderdale, FL.

May Matushka Ellen's memory be eternal! ■

The V. Rev. Joseph Hirsch

DENVER, CO – The Very Rev. Joseph Hirsch, rector of Holy Transfiguration Cathedral here, fell asleep in the Lord on the afternoon of August 24, 2009, after a brief illness.

A native of Kansas City, MO, Father Joseph was received into the Orthodox Church in 1975 from the Episcopalian tradition. He was the founding pastor of Saint Theodore of Tarsus Orthodox Church, Kansas City, MO. In July 1984, he

was released to the Diocese of the West and named rector of Holy Transfiguration Cathedral.

Globeville, the Denver neighborhood in which the cathedral is located, was a depressed area when Father Joseph, Matushka Paulette, and their three sons, David, Joseph, and Benjamin arrived. They organized a neighborhood association which over the years was able to bring a diverse community together and make substantial improvements to the neighborhood. Far from being an isolated island of Orthodox Christianity in the middle of a dying part of the city, the cathedral became in a very real sense the center of Globeville.

From its foundation in 1898, Holy Transfiguration Cathedral served a diverse community of Orthodox faithful. Carpatho-Russians, Serbs, Greeks, Syrians, and a host of converts from every imaginable background have found the cathedral to be a spiritual home and Father Joseph to be a loving image of Christ, the good Shepherd, who genuinely gave His life for His flock.

Father Joseph served for many years as the dean of the Rocky Mountain Deanery, a member of both the Diocesan and Metropolitan Councils, and the respected elder brother of the area's Orthodox clergy. He also was a respected teacher and a member of the faculty of Denver's Regis University.

Funeral services were celebrated at the Assumption Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Denver, on Monday, August 31.

May Father Joseph's memory be eternal! ■

Archimandrite Gabriel [Cooke]

CHINO VALLEY, AZ – Archimandrite Gabriel [Cooke] fell asleep in the Lord on Thursday, September 10, 2009.

A convert from Byzantine Rite Catholicism, he was ordained to the diaconate in 1986 at Saint Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Cathedral, Brooklyn, NY. The following year, he was ordained to the priesthood by His Eminence, Metropolitan Philip of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. He served in the Archdiocese's Western Rite Vicariate. In February 1996, he was elevated to the rank of archimandrite by His Grace, Bishop Joseph of the Antiochian Archdiocese.

On November 22, 1997, Father Gabriel was tonsured as a stavrophore monk by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman of the Orthodox Church in America at Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA.

Father Gabriel held a B.A. in Philosophy and Psychology from Holy Redeemer College and a Masters in Theological Studies and Art History from the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA. He also pursued graduate course work in Eastern Theology at the Papal College Josephinum, Columbus, OH. He received a Master of Divinity degree from Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY in 1986. In 2006 he was a Doctoral Candidate at Harvard Divinity School.

Father Gabriel served as Ecumenical Officer on behalf of Metropolitan Philip to the Interfaith Clergy Council of Oregon from 1987 to 1997; president of the Oregon Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood from 1988-1997; and president of the Arizona Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood from 2000-2006.

Father Gabriel served Antiochian and OCA parishes,

including Saint Michael Western Rite Antiochian Orthodox Mission, Seattle, WA; Saint Anne Mission [OCA], Albany, OR; and the Church of the Annunciation [OCA], Milwaukie, OR. In 1997, he was assigned to Saints Peter and Paul Church [OCA], Phoenix, AZ, which he served faithfully until June 2006, after which he served at the Prescott, AZ Orthodox Community while being attached to Saint John of Shanghai Monastery.

Services were held at the Prescott Orthodox Community, Prescott, AZ, on Sunday, September 13.

May Father Gabriel's memory be eternal! ■

The V. Rev. George Breyan

NEW PORT RICHEY, FL – The Very Rev. George Breyan, 78, a retired priest of the Diocese of the South, fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, September 14, 2009.

Father George was stricken while on his way to Saint Andrew Church here, where he was attached, for services for the Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

A native of Bayonne, NJ, Father George was a graduate of Bayonne Junior College and Rutgers University. He completed late vocation studies at Saint Vladimir's Seminary. He also served with the US Navy for four years.

After his ordination, Father George served parishes in Manville, NJ; Hollywood, FL; Lakewood and Marblehead, OH; and Detroit, MI. He retired from active ministry in 1999, having helped establish Saint Raphael Mission, Inverness, FL. In retirement, he assisted at Saint Andrew Church, New Port Richey, FL.

Father George and his wife of 51 years, the former Natalie Kiryluk, daughter of the late Very Rev. Theodosius and Eugenia Kiryluk, were very active in the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America. He also served as secretary of the Greater Cleveland Pan-Orthodox Clergy Association and as a VFW chaplain.

He is survived by his wife, Natalie; two nephews, Mark Kiryluk and family and Thomas Kiryluk, and one sister Olga.

Funeral services were held at Saint Andrew Church, New Port Richey, FL, September 17-18. Interment took place at Saint Tikhon's Monastery Cemetery, South Canaan, PA.

May Father George's memory be eternal! ■

Protodeacon Nicholas Fedak

MIAMI, FL – Protodeacon Nicholas Fedak of Saints Peter and Paul Church here fell asleep in the Lord on Wednesday, October 7, 2009, at the age of 90. He had been in declining health for several months.

Protodeacon Nicholas faithfully served the Miami community since his ordination in 1968. He recently was awarded a Synodal Gramota in recognition of his years of dedicated and selfless ministry.

He is survived by his wife, Matushka Mildred.

Funeral services were celebrated at Saints Peter and Paul Church on Friday and Saturday, October 9-10, 2009. Interment followed at Woodlawn Cemetery, Miami.

May Protodeacon Nicholas' memory be eternal! ■

Official from 2

Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ May 16, 2009.

FETCHO, V. Rev. Vladimir is released from duties as dean of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery. He remains rector of St. Nicholas Church, Olyphant, PA/ May 6, 2009.

GARVEY, V. Rev. John is released from duties at Holy Trinity Church, East Meadow, NY and granted retirement/ June 1, 2009.

KASHEVAROF, Rev. Andrew is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Sand Point, AK and appointed rector of Holy Ascension of Our Lord Cathedral, Unalaska, AK/ June 1, 2009.

[KONDRATYEV], Priestmonk Peter awaits assignment in the Archdiocese of Canada/ December 24, 2008.

KOVALAK, V. Rev. Daniel, in addition to duties at Elevation of the Holy Cross Church, Williamsport, PA, is appointed dean of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery/ May 6, 2009.

LEVINE, Rev. Sean is attached to Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY/ May 16, 2009.

LIEN, Rev. Kevin, in addition to duties at Church of the Annunciation, Milwaukie, OR, is appointed priest-in-charge of Nativity Mission, Kelso, WA/ June 1, 2009.

McCARTNEY, Rev. Joseph is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ May 24, 2009.

McKEE, Rev. James is released from duties at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA, and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and transferred to the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West. He awaits assignment/ May 31, 2009.

MEINZEN, Rev. David is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Fort Wayne, IN, and from the Bulgarian Diocese. He is transferred to the Military Chaplaincy for active duty/ May 10, 2009.

OLEKSA, V. Rev. Michael, in addition to his other duties, is appointed priest-in-charge of St. Nicholas Church, Juneau, AK/ May 14, 2009.

PARKER, Deacon Gregory is attached to Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Kodiak, AK/ February 15, 2008.

PARKER, Rev. Gregory is attached to All Saints of Alaska Church, St. Herman's Seminary, Kodiak, AK/ March 15, 2009.

PASONICK, Deacon Michael is attached to Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre, PA/ May 24, 2009.

SPAINHOWARD, Rev. Michael is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Juneau, AK, as dean of the Sitka Deanery, and from the Diocese of Alaska. Remaining under the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco, he is transferred to the Diocese of the West and appointed rector of SS. Cyril and Methodius Mission, Chico, CA/ May 14, 2009.

WESCHE, V. Rev. Paul is reappointed dean of the Minneapolis Deanery for a three-year term. He remains rector of St. Herman Church, Minneapolis, MN/ May 18, 2009.

YOUNG, Rev. Nicholas is appointed priest-in-charge of the University Chaplaincy of Archangel Gabriel at

the University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada. All other duties remain the same/ April 12, 2009.

■ RELEASED

UDICS, V. Rev. John is released from duties at Assumption of the Holy Virgin Church, Philadelphia, PA, as dean of the Philadelphia Deanery, and from the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern PA; transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah; and granted a canonical release to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA/ May 31, 2009.

■ RETIRED

GARVEY, V. Rev. John is granted retirement. He is attached to Holy Trinity Church, East Meadow, NY/ June 1, 2009.

■ DEATHS

YUSCHAK, V. Rev. Nicholas, who in retirement was attached to St. Herman of Alaska Church, Gradyville, PA, died on May 12, 2009.

■ PARISHES

DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK/ New Location. Christ the Saviour Church, Milton [Ballston Spa], NY is relocated to Ballston, NY/ June 1, 2009.

DIOCESE OF THE WEST/ New Mission. Nativity Orthodox Mission, Kelso, WA. Meeting at 820 11th Ave., Longview, WA. Mailing address: 11373 SE Cascade View Ct., Happy Valley, OR 97086. Rev. Kevin Lien, priest-in-charge/ June 1, 2009.

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■ EPISCOPAL CONSECRATIONS

[PLESKA], Bishop-Elect Melchisedek was consecrated to the Holy Episcopacy at St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park, PA, and is now the Bishop of Pittsburgh and the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania. The following were the consecrating hierarchs: Metropolitan Jonah; Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate; Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest; Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada; Bishop Nikon of Boston, New England and the Albanian Archdiocese; Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania; and Bishop Benjamin, Bishop of San Francisco and the West/ June 27, 2009.

■ EPISCOPAL CHANGES

[MOLLARD], Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania is released from duties as Locum Tenens of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. All other duties remain the same/ June 27, 2009.

[PLESKA], Bishop Melchisedek is installed as Ruling Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania/ June 27, 2009.

■ RECEPTIONS

BLAGA, Rev. Octavian is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ June 17, 2009.

COTRIGASANU, Rev. Ioan is canonically received

into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ June 3, 2009.

DUMITRU, Rev. Antonel Marius is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ June 3, 2009.

HENDERSON, V. Rev. Benjamin is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Diocese of the South/ May 6, 2009.

HUDSON, Rev. David is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the Americas. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ May 30, 2009.

MORARIU, Rev. Stefan Dan is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ June 3, 2009.

■ ORDINATIONS

DUGONI, Lawrence was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Job of Chicago at St. Joseph Church, Wheaton, IL. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ May 3, 2009.

JONES, Deacon John was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Job of Chicago on behalf of Metropolitan Jonah at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Milwaukee, WI. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah/ May 2, 2009.

LAPUSTEA, Florin C. was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Justin, Vicar for the Diocese of Maramures (Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate) on behalf of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at Holy Cross Church, San Jose, CA. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ October 12, 2008.

LAPUSTEA, Nicolae B. was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Irineu of Dearborn Heights on behalf of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at Holy Cross Church, San Jose, CA. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ October 11, 2008.

MACIOLEK, Christopher was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Job of Chicago on behalf of Metropolitan Jonah at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah/ June 7, 2009.

ONOFREI, Rares was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at St. Dumitru Church, New York, NY. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ March 29, 2009.

PREDA, Ionut was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Irineu of Dearborn Heights on behalf of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at SS. Constantine and Helen Mission, Lilburn, GA. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ October 18, 2008.

PREDA, Deacon Ionut was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at Descent of the Holy Spirit Church, Ridgewood, NY. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ March 28, 2009.

SARAFIN, Deacon Christopher was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Job of Chicago at Protection of the Virgin Mary Church, Merrillville, IN. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ May 16, 2009.

UNGUREANU, Deacon Daniel was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at Descent of the Holy Spirit Church, Warren, MI. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ April 7, 2009.

WEIR, Deacon Joel was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Job of Chicago on behalf of Metropolitan Jonah at St. Stephen Church, Crawfordsville, IN. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah/ June 6, 2009.

ZAPRIANOV, Chterion was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Metropolitan Jonah at SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Lorain, OH. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Bulgarian Diocese/ June 14, 2009.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

BEAL, Rev. John is released from duties at Holy Martyr Peter the Aleut Church, Calgary, AB, Canada, and from the omophorion of Archbishop Seraphim and the Archdiocese of Canada/ May 6, 2009. He is transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah, attached to the Diocese of the South, and appointed priest-in-charge of Protection of the Virgin Mary Mission, Clarksville, TN/ June 1, 2009.

BLAGA, Rev. Octavian awaits assignment/ June 17, 2009.

CANTRELL, Rev. Matthew is released from duties at Holy Ascension Church, Frackville, PA and appointed acting rector of Assumption of the Holy Virgin Church, Philadelphia, PA/ June 7, 2009.

COTRIGASANU, Rev. Ioan awaits assignment/ June 3, 2009.

DUGONI, Deacon Lawrence is assigned to St. Joseph Church, Wheaton, IL/ May 3, 2009.

DUMITRU, Rev. Antonel Marius awaits assignment/ June 3, 2009.

ERICKSON, V. Rev. John is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY and granted retirement/ July 1, 2009.

FESTER, V. Rev. Joseph is released from duties as dean of the Dallas Deanery. He remains associate priest of St. Seraphim Cathedral, Dallas, TX and chancellor of the Diocese of the South/ May 14, 2009.

HENDERSON, V. Rev. Benjamin is attached to St. Seraphim of Sarov Cathedral, Dallas, TX/ May 6, 2009.

HIPSH, Rev. Seraphim, in addition to duties at St.

Sava Church, Plano, TX, is appointed dean of the Dallas Deanery/ May 14, 2009.

HUDSON, Rev. David is appointed pastor of Descent of the Holy Spirit Church, Merrillville, IN/ June 1, 2009.

HUTCHEON, V. Rev. Cyprian is released from duties as arch-dean of the Archdiocese of Canada. All other duties remain the same/ July 1, 2009.

JONES, Rev. John is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ May 2, 2009. He is released from this assignment and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and is transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job. He awaits assignment in the Diocese of the Midwest/ June 26, 2009.

KINCAID, Rev. Herman, who was acting rector, is appointed rector of SS. Peter and Paul Church, Burr Ridge, IL/ April 11, 2009.

[KONDRATYEV], Priestmonk Peter, who was awaiting assignment, is attached to the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada and to the Monastic Community of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada/ December 24, 2008.

LAPUSTEA, Deacon Florin C. is assigned to Holy Cross Church, San Jose, CA/ October 12, 2008.

LAPUSTEA, Deacon Nicolae B. is assigned to Holy Cross Church, London, ON, Canada/ October 11, 2008.

MACIOLEK, Deacon Christopher is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ June 7, 2009.

MILOSEVICH, V. Rev. Milorad is released from duties at St. Luke Church, McLean, VA and granted retirement/ June 30, 2009.

MORARIU, Rev. Stefan-Dan awaits assignment/ June 3, 2009.

NELSON, Protodeacon George is released from duties at St. Tikhon of Moscow Church, Anchorage, AK and attached to St. Nicholas Church, Eklutna, AK/ June 23, 2009.

ONOFREI, Deacon Rares is assigned to St. Dumitru Church, New York, NY/ March 29, 2009.

OSELINSKY, V. Rev. Dimitri is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem, PA and granted retirement. He is released from the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern PA and transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Diocese of the South/ June 30, 2009.

PARKER, Rev. Gregory is released from duties at All Saints of Alaska Church, St. Herman's Seminary, Kodiak, AK and appointed acting rector of Three Saints Church, Old Harbor, AK/ June 1, 2009.

PREDA, Deacon Ionut is assigned to Descent of the Holy Spirit Church, Ridgewood, NY/ October 18, 2008.

PREDA, Rev. Ionut is appointed assistant priest of Descent of the Holy Spirit Church, Ridgewood, NY/ March 28, 2009.

SARAFIN, Rev. Christopher is appointed associate priest of Protection of the Virgin Mary Church, Merrillville, IN/ May 16, 2009.

UNGUREANU, Rev. Daniel is appointed assistant priest of St. Nicholas Mission, Montreal, QC/ April

12, 2009.

VITKO, Rev. John is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY; transferred to the Diocese of Washington and New York; and appointed acting rector of St. Luke Church, McLean, VA/ July 1, 2009.

WASSEN, Rev. Gregory is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah; transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job of Chicago; and attached to SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Milwaukee, WI/ June 17, 2009.

WEIR, Rev. Joel is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ June 6, 2009.

ZAPRIANOV, Deacon Chterion is attached to St. George Church, Washington, DC/ June 14, 2009.

■ RETIRED

ERICKSON, V. Rev. John is granted retirement. He is attached to Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY/ June 1, 2009.

MILOSEVICH, V. Rev. Milorad is granted retirement. He is attached to St. Luke Church, McLean, VA/ June 30, 2009.

OSELINSKY, V. Rev. Dimitri is granted retirement/ June 30, 2009. He is attached to St. Mary of Egypt Church, Norcross, GA/ July 1, 2009.

■ SUSPENDED

BASHKO, V. Rev. Dimitri, who was attached to St. George Cathedral, Chicago, IL, is suspended from all priestly functions/ June 10, 2009.

■ PARISHES

DIocese of the South/ New Mission.

Protection of the Virgin Mary Mission, 2041 Madison St., Clarksville, TN 37043; 931/358-9360. Rev. John Beal, priest-in-charge/ June 1, 2009.

504 July 2009

■ EPISCOPAL CHANGES

[PAFFHAUSEN], Metropolitan Jonah had his title changed to Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada by the Holy Synod of Bishops. He is Ruling Bishop of the Diocese of Washington and appointed Locum Tenens of the Diocese of New York-New Jersey by the Holy Synod of Bishops. All his other duties remain the same/ July 1, 2009.

■ TONSURED

PIHACH, V. Rev. Dennis was tonsured to the rank of Lesser Schema Monk by Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa at St. Herman of Alaska Sobor, Edmonton, AB, Canada and given the name of Alexander/ July 11, 2009. He was elevated to the rank of Igumen by Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and is now known as Igumen Alexander [Pihach]/ July 12, 2009.

■ ORDINATIONS

BURGESS, Ian was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia on behalf of Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under

Official to 30

Official from 29

the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon and attached to the Diocese of the West/ July 5, 2009.

[DIDUN], Monk Peter was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Metropolitan Jonah at Holy Cross Monastery, Castro Valley, CA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Bulgarian Diocese/ July 5, 2009.

PEYKOV, Evgeni was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Melchisedek of Pittsburgh at St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park, PA. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Melchisedek and attached to the Diocese of Western PA/ June 27, 2009.

[SCOTT], Archdeacon Stephen was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Metropolitan Jonah at Holy Cross Monastery, Castro Valley, CA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Bulgarian Diocese/ July 5, 2009.

VASIU, Mircea was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Dearborn Heights, MI. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ May 3, 2009.

WORTHINGTON, Deacon James was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia on behalf of Metropolitan Jonah at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Diocese of New York-New Jersey/ July 25, 2009.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

BIBERDORF, Rev. Basil is released from duties at St. Anthony the Great Church, San Antonio, TX and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and the Diocese of the South, and transferred to the omophorion of Bishop Melchisedek and the Diocese of Western PA. He awaits assignment/ July 23, 2009.

BURGESS, Deacon Ian is attached to St. Nicholas of Japan Mission, Redding, CA/ July 5, 2009.

[DIDUN], Hierodeacon Peter is assigned to Holy Cross Monastery, Castro Valley, CA/ July 5, 2009.

JADICK, V. Rev. James is released from duties at SS. Peter and Paul Church, East Herkimer, NY and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and the Diocese of New York-New Jersey and transferred to the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and attached to the Diocese of Eastern PA/ July 31, 2009. He is appointed rector of Holy Ascension Church, Frackville, PA/ August 1, 2009.

JILLIONS, V. Rev. John is appointed Ecumenical Officer of the Archdiocese of Canada. All other duties remain the same/ July 1, 2009.

KARLGUT, V. Rev. Alexey is appointed administrator of St. Nicholas Church, Whitestone, NY. All other duties remain the same/ July 24, 2009.

MATHEWS, Rev. Justin is released from duties at St. Anne Mission, Knoxville-Oak Ridge, TN and from the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the Diocese of the South, transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job of Chicago, and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ March 20, 2009. He is attached to Holy Trinity Church, Overland Park, KS/ July 14, 2009.

McKEE, Rev. James, who was awaiting assignment,

is appointed priest-in-charge of the Orthodox Mission, Bend, OR/ July 9, 2009.

OLEYNIK, Deacon Mark is released from duties at St. Mark Church, Bethesda, MD and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and the Diocese of Washington and transferred to the omophorion of Bishop Melchisedek and the Diocese of Western PA. He awaits assignment/ July 23, 2009.

PEYKOV, Deacon Evgeni is attached to Holy Assumption of St. Mary Church, Pittsburgh, PA/ June 27, 2009.

[PIHACH], Igumen Alexander, in addition to his other duties, is a member of the Monastic Community of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, AB, Canada/ July 11, 2009. He is also appointed Abbot of the Hermitage of St. Elias, Dickie Bush, AB/ July 12, 2009.

[SCOTT], Priestmonk Stephen is assigned to Holy Cross Monastery, Castro Valley, CA/ July 5, 2009.

SWANSON, Rev. Christopher, in addition to his duties at St. Elizabeth Mission, Poulsbo, WA, is appointed priest-in-charge of Holy Ascension Mission, Spokane, WA/ July 9, 2009.

VASIU, Deacon Mircea is assigned to SS. Peter and Paul Church, Dearborn Heights, MI/ May 3, 2009.

WORTHINGTON, Rev. James is attached to SS. Peter and Paul Church, Endicott, NY/ July 25, 2009.

■ RELEASED

ROSU, Rev. Eugen is released from duties in the Romanian Episcopate and from the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel, transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah, and granted a canonical release to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America/ July 23, 2009.

■ DEATHS

[McLUCKIE], Priestmonk James, who was attached to the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada and the Monastic Brotherhood of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada, died on July 22, 2009. *Memory eternal!*

■ PARISHES

CHANGE IN DIOCESAN BOUNDARIES/ The Diocese of Washington and New York is separated back into two separate dioceses by the Holy Synod of Bishops. The **Diocese of Washington** is led by Metropolitan Jonah as his diocesan see, and contains the parishes formerly in the Washington, DC Deanery of the former diocese. The **Diocese of New York-New Jersey** is led by Metropolitan Jonah as Locum Tenens, and contains the parishes and institutions formerly in the New Jersey, New York City, and New York State Deaneries of the former diocese/ July 1, 2009.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA/ Reopened Monastery. The Hermitage of St. Elias, Dickie Bush, AB. Mailing Address: 15922 107Ave. NW, Edmonton, AB, Canada T5P 0Z2. Igumen Alexander [Pihach], Abbot/ July 12, 2009.

DIOCESE OF THE WEST/ New Mission. Orthodox Mission, Bend, OR. Mailing Address: c/o Dolores Hogue, PO Box 1937, La Pine OR 97739-1937. Rev. James McKee, priest-in-charge/ July 9, 2009.

DIOCESE OF THE WEST/ New Mission. Holy Ascension Mission, Spokane, WA. Mailing address: 6534 NE Plum St., Suquamish, WA 98392. Rev. Christopher Swanson, priest-in-charge/ July 9, 2009.

■ RECEPTIONS

DUMITRASCU, Rev. Ion Irinel is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Romanian Orthodox Church. He is under to the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ June 17, 2009.

McFARLAND, Deacon Gary is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Jonah from the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and attached to the Diocese of the West/ August 18, 2009.

■ ORDINATIONS

AIRINEI, Deacon Mircea was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia on behalf of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre, PA. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ July 26, 2009.

ARDELEAN, Deacon Emil was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Bishop Irineu of Dearborn Heights on behalf of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit at SS. Michael and Gabriel Church, Sacramento, CA. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ February 24, 2008.

BURDIKOFF, Michael was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Metropolitan Jonah at Christ the Saviour Church, Ballston, NY. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Diocese of Washington/New York/ May 30, 2009.

PRESTON, Nathan was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Nikon of Boston, New England and the Albanian Archdiocese at St. Nicholas Church, Jamaica Estates, NY. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Nikon and attached to the Albanian Archdiocese/ August 30, 2009.

TAYLOR, David E. was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia on behalf of Archbishop Job of Chicago at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ July 19, 2009.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

AIRINEI, Rev. Mircea awaits assignment/ July 26, 2009.

ARDELEAN, Rev. Emil is appointed pastor of SS. Michael and Gabriel Church, Sacramento, CA/ February 24, 2008.

BIBERDORF, Rev. Basil, who was awaiting assignment, is appointed assistant priest of Holy Trinity Church, State College, PA/ August 10, 2009.

BURDIKOFF, Deacon Michael is attached to Christ the Saviour Church, Ballston, NY/ May 30, 2009.

DUMITRASCU, Rev. Ioan Ionel is appointed pastor of St. Anne Church, Jacksonville, FL/ January 1, 2009. He continues this assignment, now as a priest of the OCA/ June 17, 2009.

HEWLETT, Rev. Justin, who was priest-in-charge, is appointed rector of St. John of Shanghai Mission, Vancouver, BC, Canada. He is also released from duties at St. Herman of Alaska Church, Langley, BC/

September 15, 2008.

HOSKING, Deacon Steven is released from duties at Holy Annunciation Church, Maynard, MA and attached to St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Church, Clinton, CT/August 14, 2009.

JENSEN, Rev. Gregory is released from duties at Holy Assumption Church, Canton, OH and St. John the Baptist Church, Campbell, OH. He is attached to SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Milwaukee, WI/August 17, 2009.

JILLIONS, V. Rev. John is released from duties as dean of Annunciation Cathedral, Ottawa, ON, Canada, but remains attached to the same cathedral. All his other duties remain the same/September 1, 2009.

JONES, Rev. John, who was awaiting assignment, is assigned to SS. Cyril and Methodius Church, Milwaukee, WI/August 28, 2009.

KONKLE, Rev. John is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY and attached to St. Sergius of Radonezh Chapel, Oyster Bay Cove, NY. He will service Dormition of the Mother of God Monastery, Rives Junction, MI/July 28, 2009.

McFARLAND, Deacon Gary awaits assignment/August 18, 2009.

[MAJKRZAK], Hierodeacon Philip is released from duties at St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco Monastery, Manton, CA and from the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West; transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah and attached to the Diocese of Washington; and attached to St. Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, DC/August 19, 2009.

NELSON, V. Rev. Joseph is released from duties at SS. Cyril and Methodius Mission, Hartshorne, OK and granted retirement/August 14, 2009.

OLEYNIK, Deacon Mark, who was awaiting assignment, is assigned to Holy Trinity Church, State College, PA as second deacon/August 10, 2009.

PARTIOC, V. Rev. Alexander, who is retired, is released from duties at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Dearborn Heights, MI/August 1, 2009. He is attached to St. George Cathedral, Southfield, MI/August 2, 2009.

[PIHACH], Igumen Alexander is appointed interim dean of Annunciation Cathedral, Ottawa, ON, Canada. All his other duties remain the same/September 1, 2009.

PRESTON, Deacon Nathan is assigned to St. Nicholas Church, Jamaica Estates, NY/August 30, 2009.

RICHTER, Rev. Anastasy [Stacey] is released from duties at St. Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, MN and appointed acting rector of Holy Assumption Church, Canton, OH/August 17, 2009.

RODGER, Rev. Symeon is released from duties at Annunciation Cathedral, Ottawa, ON, Canada and attached to the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada/September 1, 2009.

TAYLOR, Deacon David E. is attached to St. Herman Church, Minneapolis, MN/August 26, 2009.

WESCHE, V. Rev. Paul is appointed priest-in-charge of St. Mary Church, Cornucopia, WI. All other duties

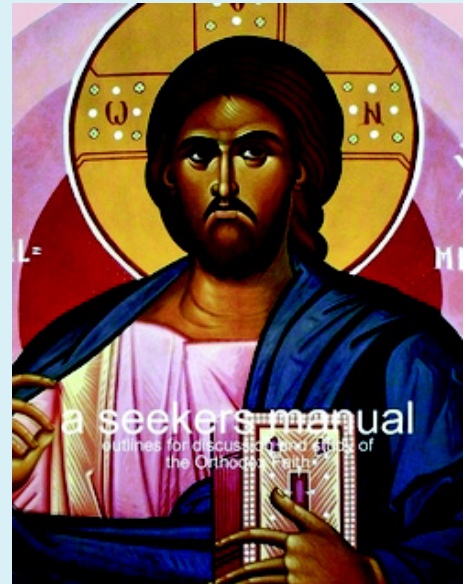
Official to 47

Hot off the press

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Nearly 50 years ago, Archimandrite Kyprian explored pertinent issues regarding pastoral ministry. His writings on clericalism and problems with the abuse of power and authority in the Church are as fresh today as when they were first written. While he is probably the least known among recent the 20th century's Orthodox theologians in the West, his voice is now being heard for the first time in English.

Orthodox Pastoral Service is a collection of lecture notes from Archimandrite Kyprian's classes in pastoral ministry. In this book, he deals with important issues such as clericalism, the importance of the Eucharist for the life of the priest, and intellectual, spiritual, and personal preparation for the priesthood. Finally, the book may be seen as an historical document inasmuch as it offers a detailed exposition of pastoral ministry in 19th century Russia.

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Also available on-line at www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org for \$11.95 plus shipping. ■

Alexis Liberovsky

Metropolitan Platon

Guiding the Church through one of its stormiest periods

Among the Church's notable historical anniversaries this year, April 20 marked 75 years since the repose of Metropolitan Platon [Rozhdestvensky]. He was the only hierarch to serve two separate terms as head of the Orthodox Church in America. Between these two periods of service in North America, he rose to prominence and top leadership positions in the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church, and he was even among the leading candidates in the patriarchal election of 1917.

Born Porphyry Feodorovich Rozhdestvensky on February 23, 1866, Metropolitan Platon was the son of a priest in the Kursk Province. After graduating from the Kursk Seminary in 1886, he married. He was ordained to the priesthood on January 6, 1887, and served as a village priest in the Kursk Diocese. His wife gave birth to a daughter, but died in 1891.

Deciding to further his education, Father Porphyry enrolled in the Kyiv Theological Academy, from which he graduated in 1895. He received monastic tonsure and took the name Platon in 1894 while still a student. Upon graduation, he became a teaching assistant at the academy. The following year, he began working as an instructor while continuing his studies, receiving a Master of Theology degree from the academy in 1898. That year, he was raised to the rank of archimandrite and, in quick succession, was appointed assistant inspector, then inspector [dean of students] and professor of the academy. In 1902, he was appointed rector of the academy and simultaneously superior of the Kyiv Brotherhood Monastery.

On June 3, 1902, Archimandrite Porphyry was consecrated Bishop of Chigirin, auxiliary of the Kyiv Diocese. In 1906, he became editor of a journal called *Church and People*. Due to his popularity among the people of Kyiv, especially as a preacher and orator, they elected him to membership in the Second State Duma on February 12, 1907.

On June 8, 1907, he was raised to the rank of archbishop and appointed to the See of the Aleutians and North America.

Building upon the visionary course and missionary initiatives of his predecessor, Saint Tikhon, Archbishop Platon skillfully guided the continuously growing North American Church for the next seven years. Many new parishes were established in the North American Diocese during his first archpastorate here. The seminary established by Saint Tikhon in Minneapolis was relocated to Tenafly, NJ and renamed in honor of Archbishop Platon's patron saint. In 1909, he was summoned to membership in the Holy Synod in Russia.

On March 20, 1914, he was appointed Archbishop of Kishinev [today Chisinau, the capital of Moldova] and Khotyn. On December 15, 1915, he was transferred to the see of Kartalin and Kakheti, becoming the last Exarch of Georgia from the Russian Church before the restoration of the autocephaly of the ancient Georgian Patriarchate in 1917. Having a particular interest in

missionary work, he was appointed chairman of the Council to Strengthen and Spread the Faith [the missions department of the Holy Synod] on June 17, 1917. On August 13, 1917, just before the opening of the All-Russian Church Council in Moscow, he was raised to the rank of metropolitan with the title Metropolitan of Tiflis [Tbilisi, Georgia] and Baku [in Azerbaijan], Exarch of the Caucasus, notwithstanding that in March 1917, without their exarch's prior knowledge or approval, a group of bishops had declared the autocephaly of the Georgian Church restored. The Russian Church did not recognize this autocephaly for decades.

As the All-Russian Council opened, Metropolitan Platon was among the senior ranking hierarchs of the Russian Church. He was a most active participant in the Council. When the Council decided



to restore the Patriarchate of the Russian Church, Metropolitan Platon was among the leading candidates to become Patriarch. Although he was not among the three candidates elected by the Council for final selection of the Patriarch by lot, Metropolitan Platon received a significant number of votes in each of the four ballots in the patriarchal election process. The election of the Patriarch took place just as the Bolsheviks took power in Russia. With armed conflict and bloodshed taking place, the Council appointed a special delegation, headed by Metropolitan Platon, to negotiate with the revolutionary military leaders in the Kremlin in an effort to end bloodshed and establish peace. Metropolitan Platon's heart-wrenching account before the Council of his encounter with the revolutionaries was so moving that it was even suggested that his name also be included in the final list of patriarchal candidates, but as the list had already been finalized by decision of the Council, this could not be done. When Patriarch Tikhon was elected, Metropolitan Platon was

among the senior hierarchs who enthroned the new patriarch. In December 1917, the All-Russian Council elected him as a member of the Holy Synod, and he subsequently was named to lead a delegation representing Patriarch Tikhon at the All-Ukrainian Church Council in Kyiv in January 1918, where the Ukrainian Church's movement towards autocephaly was averted. On February 22, 1918, after election by the diocese of Kherson and Odessa, he was appointed its ruling hierarch.

Along with many other hierarchs, clergy, and laity, Metropolitan Platon fled from the advance of Bolshevik armed forces during the Russian Civil War and returned to the US as a refugee in 1919. He was joyfully welcomed by Archbishop Alexander [Nemolovsky] at Saint Nicholas Cathedral in New York City, where just months earlier, as Metropolitan Platon had been reported to have perished at the hands of Bolsheviks, he had been commemorated among the departed. A few years later, Metropolitan Platon's daughter and her family were also able to come to America from Bulgaria. Their descendants currently live in Connecticut.

The Church in America was then in crisis as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and Archbishop Alexander of North America was having understandable difficulties in his archpastoral leadership. In order to assist him and to rally prayerful support for the suffering Church in Russia, Metropolitan Platon was informally appointed as Patriarch Tikhon's special representative in America. Despite Archbishop Alexander's courageous efforts to lead the American Church under most difficult circumstances, by 1922 he had become overwhelmed by the situation and decided that, for the good of the Church, he would remove himself as ruling hierarch. Before leaving for Europe, he asked Metropolitan Platon to take over as ruling hierarch.

The Third All-American Sobor convened in Pittsburgh November 7-9, 1922 to firmly establish Metropolitan Platon as the canonical Primate of the Church by conciliar decision. This council duly elected him, esteemed and trusted both in Russia and throughout North America, as the canonical ruling Primate of the American Church. At the time of this election, he was the first to be given the title "Metropolitan of All America and Canada."

Following the Third Sobor, Metropolitan Platon's leadership position continued to be challenged. On the one hand, the schismatic "Living Church" intensified its divisive activities; on the other hand, conflicting messages were emanating from Moscow. While in 1923 Patriarch Tikhon had confirmed Metropolitan Platon's election by the Third Sobor in 1924, a Patriarchal decree appeared in the press in which Metropolitan Platon was supposedly relieved of his position for "counter-revolution directed against the Soviet state." According to the decree itself, it was to have no validity until announced personally to Metropolitan Platon by the hierarch appointed to succeed him – an inconceivable scenario at that time. The resulting situation was one of chaos and instability.

Therefore, the Church turned once again to her conciliar conscience to deal with this challenging crisis. On April 2-4, 1924, the Fourth All-American Sobor was convened in Detroit, MI. Not wishing to sway the council's decision by his presence, Metropolitan Platon wisely missed the opening session.

His election at the previous sobor was resoundingly reconfirmed at this session. Due to great respect for his leadership skills, his primacy was deemed essential for the Church's survival. With increasing difficulties in communication with the Russian Church, as evidenced by the aforementioned conflicting information, and its tenuous situation under totalitarian rule, the Fourth Sobor decided to declare the North American Church to be



An ardent missionary, Metropolitan Platon presided at the first pastoral conference of Canada's clergy.

"temporarily self-governing" until such time as normal and regular relations could be reestablished with the Mother Church in Russia. This was a step towards the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America. In order to maintain freedom of action and an ecclesiastical existence that he deemed appropriate in the North American context, Metropolitan Platon, over the subsequent years of his tenure, rebuffed affiliation with both the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia [ROCOR] and the persecuted Moscow Patriarchate, for which he was placed under canonical interdict by the Church of Russia.

Indeed, Metropolitan Platon tenaciously faced countless challenges in leading the Church through a period of disunity and canonical chaos. On April 20, 1934, Metropolitan Platon fell asleep in the Lord at age 68 and was buried at Saint Tikhon's Monastery. Patriarch Aleksy I of Moscow posthumously lifted the ecclesiastical sanctions against him in 1946.

The century of subjugation of the Georgian Church by the Russian Church is generally considered a dark period in Georgian history. It is therefore noteworthy that during his US visit in 1998, Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II of Georgia expressed interest in – and even reverence for – Metropolitan Platon when he celebrated a spontaneous memorial service at his grave.

May we also continue to honor the memory of this eminent hierarch. ■

Alexis Liberovsky is Archivist of the Orthodox Church in America. He may be contacted at alex@oca.org.



St. Mark's teens master the finer points of brass polishing in preparation for pilgrimage to Spruce Island.

Fr. Gregory Safchuk

Northern stars

Teens serve in the footsteps of Saint Herman

It all began last year in one of our Church School parent classes. We discussed our desire to provide our parish's teen class with a potentially life-changing service project.

My first suggestion was to take them to Saint Innocent Orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico, on one of the house building work trips offered by Project Mexico. The idea was well received, and we were well on our way in our planning and fund-raising to make it happen for the summer of 2009. However, soon after, news reports began surfacing that a widespread and violent drug war had begun in Mexico with outbreaks near, and even over, the US border. Despite the fact that the Project Mexico's staff had assured us that Tijuana was safe, that news, coupled with reports of the swine flu outbreak in Mexico, raised a lot of concerns from parents who understandably did not want their children to travel there. That's when we turned our gaze north to Alaska.

I contacted Father John Dunlop, Dean of St. Herman's Seminary in Kodiak, and offered the services of our teen group and adult chaperones for any projects for which they might need us in exchange for housing us at the seminary and providing an opportunity to participate in the annual pilgrimage

help prepare for the pilgrimage, and the other to participate in it with Metropolitan Jonah, who was going there for the first time.

On August 3, sixteen of us boarded a plane for the first leg of a 12-hour journey to Kodiak, Alaska. When we finally sat down for supper in the seminary refectory – four time zones away! – I reminded the group that it took Saint Herman and his fellow monks a year to get to Kodiak in 1794. Their journey

to Spruce Island in honor of the feast day of Saint Herman. Father John was very enthusiastic and suggested that we also do some work in and around Kodiak's Holy Resurrection Cathedral. Father Innocent Dresdow, cathedral rector, and the seminary staff drew up a list of projects – construction of water drainage ditches, gardening, cleaning, and making general repairs. The number of people interested in going began to grow, especially when it became known that we would likely be able to make two trips to Spruce Island – one to



Venerating the relics of St. Herman of Alaska.

had begun with a walk across Siberia, followed by a sailboat ride across the North Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea. Clearly, times had changed. We had nothing to complain about! But, this was no doubt the most ambitious project we had undertaken involving our parish teen group. The potential of meeting our goal of providing a possibly life changing experience for all, was now clearly in sight of being met.

From the first two days of rain and hard physical labor – the digging, the mud, the rock carrying, the rotting sea kelp, then the sunshine and the magnificent splendor of mountain tops and ocean views, the pilgrimage to Spruce Island, the emotional and spiritual intensity of the Divine Liturgy and Communion over Saint Herman's grave – to the closing banquet and tearful good-byes at the airport, our lives were indeed changed and enriched. We had been blessed by God to have a glimpse of a very special place and people. We were afforded an opportunity to give of ourselves and receive in turn the love and appreciation of those whom we had helped. New friendships were made and existing relationships among us were deepened and renewed. By the time we were finished, I had wished that our entire parish had been there. The kids were great – very few complaints and a lot of enthusiasm and good will prevailed. The adults also pitched in, watching over and generally making the whole endeavor work smoothly. My deep appreciation goes out to all of them, especially to Deacon Mark and Kelly Oleynik.

To share our experience, a blog was established with daily input from the team at saintmarksprojectalaska.blogspot.com. Please feel free to check it out and consider taking the initiative to provide a potentially life changing and enriching experience for your parish and its youth! ■

Fr. Gregory Safchuk is rector of St. Mark Church, Bethesda, MD.

Keeping in touch

OCA students launch OCF's fall semester podcast

Jonathan Bush of Saint Anne Mission, Knoxville, TN, a student at the University of Tennessee, and Andrew Boyd, a first year student at Saint Vladimir's Seminary and a member of Saint Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Church, Clinton, CT, were the driving force behind a revamped ministry of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship – the OCF podcast.

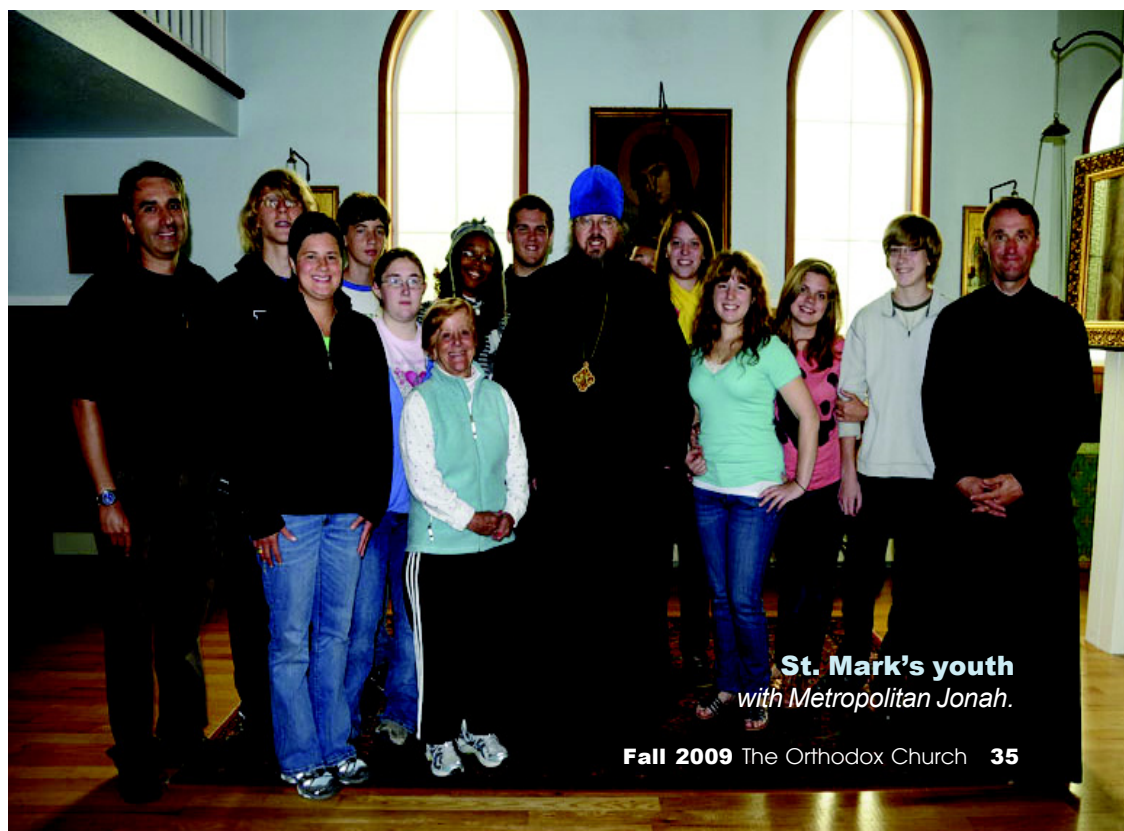
Featuring music, interviews, and other recorded presentations, the OCF podcast helps keep Orthodox Christian students connected to the Church.

The first episode of the podcast discusses the transition to college life and features clips of an interview with His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah and an excerpt from a sermon by the Rev. Stephen Freeman, rector of Saint Anne's.

The podcast may be downloaded at http://ancientfaith.com/podcasts/ocf/transitions_and_new_beginnings.

The revamped podcast is the product of the recent New Media in College Ministry workshop hosted in Chicago in August 2009 by the Orthodox Church in America's Department of Youth, Young Adults and Campus Ministry, which cooperates closely with OCF. [See www.oca.org/news/1907.]

The OCF podcast is a free ministry of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship, the official campus ministry of the Standing conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas [SCOBA]. For more information please contact Jonathan Bush at ocfpodcaster@gmail.com or Protodeacon Joseph Matusiak at jmatusiak@oca.org. ■



St. Mark's youth
with Metropolitan Jonah.

An exercise in recycling!

A Canadian iconostasis finds a new home in North Carolina!

When the faithful of Ottawa's Annunciation/Saint Nicholas Cathedral offered their old iconostasis to the Exaltation of the Holy Cross Mission in High Point, NC, the parishioners were delighted by the good news. But the "other" news was that the iconostasis was in Canada, which meant that someone had to make the nearly 2,000 mile round trip trek from North Carolina to Ottawa to pick it up.

Excited by the prospect of a road trip, Adam Oldham and his friend Rob volunteered.

"After driving for well over a dozen hours, we arrived in Ottawa on a Saturday at 7:30 p.m., just as Great Vespers ended," said Adam. "Since there weren't enough people around to pack up the iconostasis that night, we decided to wait until after the Sunday Divine Liturgy to load the truck.

"We met some of the most wonderful people during our short stay in Ottawa," said Adam. "One of the parishioners gave us her house for the evening, even though she was going out of town. Later, we ate with Deacon Gregory Scratch's fantastic family before unpacking and settling in for a good night's sleep."

The next morning, Adam and Rob attended the Divine Liturgy, celebrated by His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada. They soon discovered that they would be transporting more than just an iconostasis.

"The Liturgy that morning was quite special – on the one hand, it was the first hierarchical Liturgy I had ever attended, and it was the first time I had witnessed the blessing of a new church building," said Adam. "After a fellowship meal, we set out to fulfill our task – packing the truck with the iconostasis, piece by piece. In the process, Deacon Gregory was intent on loading up the truck with other items, including an old chandelier and an icon shrine. Mission accomplished!"

By 3:30 p.m. Sunday afternoon, Adam and Rob began the 14 hour drive back to North Carolina – knowing that they both had to go to work the next morning!

Holy Cross Mission was planted in 2005 by a small group of families from Greensboro, Winston-Salem and High Point, NC. At their first meeting, the fledgling mission's members prayerfully decided to work diligently to establish a new community. After contacting the Orthodox Church in America, the Rev. Marcus Burch of Greenville, SC and the Rev. William Mills of Charlotte, NC generously offered their help, celebrating Vespers every other Sunday night and the Divine Liturgy once every few months. Eventually, through the help of the Carolinas



Step-by-step, the iconostasis that for years had graced Ottawa's cathedral transformed the interior of Holy Cross Mission, High Point, NC.

Deanery Missions Fund and the Diocese of the South, mission members were able to support financially a priest and his family.

In the summer of 2006, the Rev. Christopher Foley arrived, and the mission faithful – 18 adults and 16 children – began celebrating the Divine Liturgy weekly in a hotel banquet room. Several months later, they located a rented facility that allowed them to celebrate a more regular and complete cycle of services.

"We were able to acquire the beautiful iconostasis from Canada, which really helped create a more permanent looking Church home," said Father Christopher. "During our second year, we applied for the OCA Department of Evangelization's Church planting grant, which we began receiving in January 2008."

The grant made it possible for Father Christopher to minister full-time and to devote more energy to the building up of the parish.

"Through the hard work of all of our faithful, we have continued to grow," said Father Christopher. "Currently we serve about 60 communicants, and some Sundays we are pushing 80 worshippers. The exciting thing is that of these 60, almost 20 of them embraced Orthodox Christianity at Holy Cross!"

The iconostasis is in place, but perhaps not for long.

"We are in the process of looking for suitable land upon which we could build a permanent church," said Father Christopher. "God is good, and it is wonderful to see everyone working together as missionaries eager to welcome new folks and to communicate the fullness of the Orthodox Christian Faith here in the South." ■

Valerie Zahirsky

Teaching middle schoolers

They're hardly the beasts
they're sometimes made out to be!

Diversity is a key word when considering middle schoolers – students in the sixth to eighth grades. They differ so greatly in appearance and physical development that some look like high school students, while others seem to belong in elementary school. They also vary widely in cognitive and social development. And, while some are terrorized by the very concept of teaching a middle school class, those who take the time to understand their students can attest to the fact that it can indeed be a rewarding experience.

It's important to be aware of some of the contradictions that students at this age can present.

- ◆ While technologically smart and savvy, they may not be good at organizing and evaluating data.
- ◆ While socially active, they may lack the social skills that make for meaningful interactions.
- ◆ While having independent minds, they may be extremely susceptible to the enticements of society and the influence of peers.
- ◆ While capable of intellectual work and effort, they may not have much experience in higher cognitive thinking.
- ◆ Though accustomed to having immediate access to information, they may not have developed the motivation to stay with and complete tasks.

Teachers who are aware of these contradictions can be better prepared to motivate and help their students. Here are some suggestions for doing so.

To help students learn to organize and evaluate data, grouping is useful. For example, ask students to find and relate five Bible stories about women who encountered Jesus Christ, or to name five saints who were bishops, or to identify five people who worked with Saint Paul. The numbers of items – and the items themselves – can be any you choose. But this exercise will help both with organization and evaluation.

Students' social skills can be developed by having them work cooperatively as teams of three or four people, or in pairs. Magazines such as *Children's Ministry* carry articles telling how cooperative learning can be effective in Church school classes.

Our students' susceptibility to society's enticements is something we can always pray about. We can also pray that they and their peers will be led in good directions and will find positive influences. In the classroom,

sharing the stories of people who found faith only after years of struggle and sin, such as Mary of Egypt, provide reassuring examples.

Developing students' higher cognitive thinking requires us as teachers to know what they are capable of at various ages. Many books provide guidance in this. Sophie Koulomzin's *Our Church and Our Children*, published by Saint Vladimir's Press [order on-line www.svspress.com], contains extremely useful charts and guidelines on the cognitive development not only of middle schoolers, but children and teens of all ages.

To motivate students to complete tasks, breaking the work into steps or sections is helpful. For example, a study of Saint Paul's journeys might consist of a series of lessons in which students read Paul's words, study the social and demographic conditions of places he visited, look at maps, and write in journals. Groups of students could be assigned to work together on a few places each, and the study would be pulled together by each group's reporting to the whole class. This would not only address various learning styles, but would break the work into manageable units.

Middle schoolers' diversity challenges us to be flexible in our planning and teaching. Provide opportunities for the students to verbalize and express what they really think – even if it's not what *you want them to think!* Use open-ended stories to provide choices for several valid solutions to a problem. Divide students into small groups and use role playing. Offer encouragement and positive feedback to ensure self worth, so often lacking at this age.

Whatever you do, it will be well worth the effort to help middle schoolers through a time in their lives that is full of essential but often confusing change and growth – and prepare them for the even more complex world of high school and beyond! ■

Valerie Zahirsky is co-chair of the OCA Department of Christian Education.



Fr. Steven Kostoff

Never on Sunday

“Remember the Lord’s Day,
to keep it holy.”

Iwould like to offer some pastoral reflections on a contemporary issue that is forcing parents to make some difficult choices: the issue of Orthodox Christian children involved in Sunday sports events – and/or any other activity held on a Sunday morning that precludes participation in worship. No one seems pleased with this situation, yet it is a choice that many parents are making today for their children, so in a spirit of love and concern, I want to examine the source of this fairly recent development and its consequences.

In reality, the issue is not that of activities, athletic or otherwise, on Sunday. We do not consider Sunday to be the Christian equivalent of the Jewish Sabbath, on which activities are not allowed. And surely the world of sports is good, wholesome, healthy, team-oriented, etc. Children participating in such activities have an excellent learning and character-building experience. The real issue is the conflict of scheduling on Sunday that will force children either to miss the Divine Liturgy or “rush out” before the service or Church School is over. The issue is further complicated when different children in the same family pursue different sports or are on different teams, which can present even further “scheduling conflicts.”

The over-all issue. We live in a time of the *secularization* of our society. The word *secular* comes from the Latin word for “world” “worldly.” In a secularized society, God and

religious belief are removed from public life, discourse, and consideration. God is relegated to the realm of the “personal” and “private.” Therefore, the “God factor” is taken less and less into consideration in matters of public or community events. Sunday – the “Lord’s Day” – has become just like any other day – or, to be more precise, a “non-religious recreational day.” There are no activities that a person cannot find being done on Sundays. In fact, unchurched families frequently look for activities to fill the void. The uniqueness or sacredness of Sunday is now being thoroughly eroded from our public consciousness, though Christianity is by far the predominant religion in America. (Long gone are the exhortations, “The family that prays together, stays together” and “Worship at the church of your choice!”) And that now includes Sunday morning sports for young children as an unquestioned matter of choice. Local sports leagues are simply accepting the assumptions of our secular society, and they now feel perfectly free to schedule games on Sunday. If I may put it this way, when one signs up one’s child for a league, one is accepting – consciously or not – the secularizing tendencies that no longer acknowledge the uniqueness of the Lord’s Day.

Of course, I am not claiming that this is some sort of insidious plot! It is simply a tendency that everyone is accepting and taking advantage. Many athletic leagues will at least wait until noon before they begin, or so I am told. That means that they do respect the fact that at least *some* of the kids on the teams still go to church! (I would imagine that the coaches can assume that half of the team does *not* go to church). But, since team members probably have to be present and accounted for on the field 11:30 a.m. or so, it does complicate things on Sunday morning, at least for Orthodox Christians. Few parishes have multiple Sunday liturgies, and the Saturday evening Great Vespers or Vigil is not the equivalent of the Liturgy. Hence, the dilemma parents face, and the choices they have to make.

What can be done? The first choice may be that a family maintains the principle that, while children may indeed be involved in sports or other activities, they will seek out those that occur at other times. This is not an “extreme” or overly zealous position. Once settled upon, it could be seen as “family policy,” not to be circumvented. This way, no “mixed signals” will be projected to children about Sunday morning worship as a priority and as the center of family life. The “mixed signals” begin precisely when the Liturgy is missed for the sake of a sporting event. This is a choice that those who have yet to face this issue may want to seriously consider. Otherwise, once well along on the road of Sunday morning sports, there is no turning back.

Another issue avoided is that of a child’s *attention* and *concentration*. When a child wakes up on Sunday morning, is he or she looking forward to the Liturgy and Church school, or to the “big game” about to be played? (Knowing how some parents get involved in their children’s games and performance, this may be an issue for them too!)

Other possibilities. It is well worth it to seek out other leagues in a given area, and there may very well be other



Family to 46



Joseph Kormos

Facing tough times

When it comes to stewardship, never waste a good recession!

A key concern for many parishes in the current economic environment is “falling income” and the inability to meet parish budgets. Of course, such concerns may very well signal that the time has arrived for the parish, led by the parish council, to move from a “dues entitles membership” mentality to a financial stewardship approach based on personal generosity and proportional giving – to which the response is all too often “in this economy?!!”

However, on the possibility that we are unusually tone deaf on the economy issue, we did some digging to develop a better understanding of how experts in Church administration in America are viewing the impact of the economy. We had heard good things in the past about the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving, a program of The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. We’ve combined some of their insight with anecdotal observations from other sources.

Plan conservatively. While much of what the Lake Institute has published on this topic is 6-12 months old it still is likely to be of some value to parish leaders. They recommend caution and confidence.

- “Historically, recessions have had little effect on religious giving. Therefore the impact of the economy on charitable giving might not be as dire as popular opinion might indicate. We do however, appear to be heading into uncharted waters which may not follow precedent,” said one November 2008

advisory letter. “The economic outlook for religious giving and fund-raising is – at best – uncertain, if not downright sobering.”

- “Prepare a flat budget as you move from calendar year 2008 to 2009. [NOTE: This from an 11/08 bulletin.] At best do not plan for an increase in giving and/or pledging beyond 2%. It would also be wise to prepare a worst case scenario of a 5% loss in contributions.” Obviously small parishes have even greater risk of violent swings in income.

- The Barna Group, a consultancy in California, reported that in the last three months of 2008, one in five households decreased its giving to churches.

- “Many congregations conduct their annual fund-raising/stewardship event in the late fall. Carefully analyze the pledging of the first wave of your stewardship program to discern your congregation’s giving trend for the following year.”

- At a recent Lake Institute event, a panel of members from a variety of religious congregations reported that “among donors giving less than \$1,000, 44% gave the same over the past year while 30% increased their giving. Among donors giving more than \$1000, one-third increased their giving, one-third remained the same, and one-third decreased their giving.”

Positive signs. We did, however, encounter a number of positive signs.

- At a recent Lake Institute Conference, “a small but vibrant urban Catholic congregation with a history of community outreach and a priest who unabashedly talks about the faithful use of possessions reports that it is ahead of budget for the 2008-2009 year and optimistic about its giving in 2009-2010.”

- A recent article in the Cincinnati Enquirer notes that the Cincinnati Catholic Archdiocese’s annual fund drive, which supports a wide range of charities and ministries, reached \$3.4 million – topping the previous year’s result by \$1 million. “Anyone who still has income and assets can relate to people who don’t. It causes people to reach deeper. It’s a really a faith-filled expression of hope,” said the diocese’s Director of Stewardship. He credited expanded use of internet fund-raising, mailing of appeal letters directly to parishioners and direct personal appeals by pastors.

- A similar situation recently occurred in an OCA parish in the Midwest. In 2008, the parish had committed itself to a half-million dollar expansion of its facilities. Everything was in place to begin construction this past spring, until the appraiser devalued the parish property by \$120,000. [“Commercial” properties, like homes, have suffered in this economy.] Faced with a dilemma, the rector and parish council called a special parish meeting to seek the parishioners’ “collective wisdom.” The consensus was to attempt a three month capital campaign to raise \$120,000 – risky during a recession, and especially during June, July, and August – in order to secure the construction loan. As of this writing, the parishioners had contributed \$87,000 in cash while putting up an additional \$40,000 in CDs as collateral. Construction is on the horizon. By observation, the campaign’s “success” was rooted in a consistent, basic communication about budget status to the

Stewardship to 40

parish; saying “thank you often” for good and responsible stewardship of all types; and active efforts to link the parish to the local (secular) community and its needs.

Never waste a good recession! The Lake Institute offers the following advice for Church leaders.

- Those congregations who are riding out this recession with more aplomb are those who have been pro-active in their teaching and preaching about money and what it means to be faithful in the use made of the possessions with which people have been blessed.
- A down economy is an opportune time for a church to realign its budget and ministry priorities. This is a time for congregations to plan for a more robust future – which is sure to come.
- Lead and act from your strength. For a majority of your members giving to their church remains the top priority in all charitable giving.
- Don’t frame your planning and communication in anxiety and guilt. Most stewardship pleas sound like people (“boards”) are scared.
- Invite people to rethink their own money story. Ask questions that invite autobiographical reflection: How did they come to have what they have? How much is enough? What do they do with their “more than enough?” What does it mean to be “faithful” in the use they make of their possessions?
- Tell stories about the difference your congregation makes in meeting the needs of hurting people. Emphasize the needs you meet rather than the need you have to raise money.
- It is our observation that those congregations that are coping well with the challenges of the present are congregations that have in the past been intentional in integrating money-talk and public conversations on the responsible use of possessions into their preaching and teaching. ■

Joseph Kormos is the Parish Health Facilitator for the Diocese of the Midwest.

Something to think about

Some would, of course, argue that the current economic times are no time to talk about “extras” – expanded ministries and programs, building projects, etc. – in terms of parish budgets. Others argue that now may be the perfect time to start thinking three to five years down the road about what the budget of an increasingly vibrant parish should look like. Consider the following.

- ♦ Is now the time for a parish conversation about doing *more* in your parish – and whether additional budget funds are needed to support those efforts?
- ♦ Is now the time to move toward becoming a “fund the vision” parish as opposed to a “meet the budget” parish? Parish mission and vision statements are sometimes valuable, but your budget is probably a more accurate and useful indicator of your community’s hopes and your values. ■

“When I was in prison...”

OCPM holds first-ever convocation



Fifty-two Orthodox Christian prison chaplains and volunteers representing 22 states and several Orthodox jurisdictions gathered in Denver, CO July 28-30, 2009 for the first convocation for prison ministers and workers sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry [OCPM], an official ministry of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas.

The Rev. Duane Pederson, OCPM’s founder, headed the lineup of speakers, which included the Rev. Stephen Powley, Chaplain at the Florence, CO federal penitentiary; the Rev. Emmanuel Mantzouris, Correctional Chaplain in the New York State correctional system; and the Very Rev. John Kowalczyk, Director of Pastoral Field Education at Saint Tikhon’s Seminary.

Also offering presentations were Carla Thomas, M.D., who provides medical care to prisoners in the Alabama state correctional system; and Mr. Dennis Dunn, who runs a reentry program in Atlanta, GA. Chaplain Patrick Tutella, OCPM’s executive director, shared the work of the Lazarus Project, a mentoring-based reentry and reintegration program he developed in Berks County, PA. A highlight of the convocation was a presentation by Mr. Jason Irwin, a graduate of the Lazarus Project and a convert to Orthodox Christianity.

Attendees enjoyed sharing their own ministry experiences, agreeing that the exchange of ideas that flowed from the presentations was remarkable.

Also present were the Very Rev. John Behr, Dean of Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, and Mr. Jeff Citro, Director of the Office of Social Ministry at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Brookline, MA. OCPM was particularly honored to have in attendance Mr. Soren Johnson and Mr. Peter Walker, who represented Prison Fellowship International, an organization with which OCPM has had a long and fruitful relationship.

OCPM brings the light of Christ to the imprisoned by offering encouragement, material support, transition and reintegration services; Christian education; spiritual guidance; and the Church’s sacramental life to prisoners and their families. OCPM is a tax-exempt, 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization. Donations may be sent to PO Box 468, Fleetwood, PA, 19522. ■

Criminal intent

Orthodox Christian parishes are not immune to the recent increase in vandalism, theft, arson – or worse

In the early morning hours of September 2, 2009, vandals smashed all six of the full-length plate glass doors at the front entrance of Saint Anthony the Great Church, San Antonio, TX. According to the parish's rector, the Very Rev. Leo Poore, and parishioners, the wooden interior doors that lead into the nave also were damaged with what appeared to be a blunt object.

In what may be a "sign of the times," the vandalism at Saint Anthony's was hardly an isolated incident. According to "Crimes Against Christian Organizations in the United States," a new report released by the Christian Security Network, churches lost more than \$6.3 million in property due to burglary, theft, robbery, arson, and vandalism during the first half of 2009. Even more disturbing, of the 17 violent crimes reported by Christian churches during the same period, six resulted in homicides.

2009 marks the first year the Christian Security Network [CSN] started tracking incidents of violence, theft, and other criminal acts against churches, an effort believed to be the first ongoing tracking system to systematically record and categorize crimes against Christian churches and organizations.

Nearly 500 incidents in 42 states are documented in the report. Burglary accounted for 64 percent of the crimes against



Shattered glass, a sign of the times

The front door of the OCA's St. Anthony Church, San Antonio, TX.

churches, a devastating blow for many churches already impacted by losses due to the economic downturn. Arson and general theft were the second and third most common crimes, accounting for 13 percent and seven percent of the incidents respectively.

"It's not mandatory that churches report these crimes to any governmental agency, which greatly contributes to the lack of data and statistics available on crimes against churches," said Jeffrey Hawkins, CSN executive director.

"While we've attempted to put together a comprehensive report on these crimes, we also understand many churches do not report criminal activities because of their stance on forgiveness or fear of public embarrassment. We estimate the number of burglaries are probably five to six times greater than the number reported," he said.

Of the 472 incidents tracked in the report, 17 were violent acts, including six homicides and the stabbings of a priest and a church employee. In five of the incidents, the police, faulty weaponry, and other factors averted gunmen, preventing more tragic occurrences and greater loss of life.

Internal theft was reported more frequently in the second quarter than in the first, including the case of a church volunteer in Knoxville, TN, who stole from fellow worshippers over a period of several years. Losses from all internal theft incidents reported in the first six months of 2009 totaled more than \$2.3 million, more per incident than any other crime.

"We frequently receive calls and e-mails from church members who are worried and frustrated that their church leadership is not more proactive about church security," said Hawkins. "As a society, we protect businesses, schools, banks, and other institutions. Now, more than ever, that same level of protection needs to be extended to churches and faith-based organizations."

For a copy of "Crimes Against Christian Organizations," send a request to tmays@inchristcommunications.com or visit CSN's web site at www.christiansecuritynetwork.com. ■

Property stewardship

There has always been this idea that churches are generally exempt from crime and that it "just doesn't happen here." And in the past that was probably true – churches were held as a place of reverence and not a place targeted by criminals. However, now churches are regarded as "soft targets" that have valuable assets inside and take little precaution to protect them. Most often to the criminal, the church is just another building – most are not Hate Crimes, they are just crimes of opportunity. Church leaders have to understand that they are spending a lot of time building their ministry for the Lord and asking people to tithe to support these Godly efforts. But the second part of that effort is to do what the Bible instructs us to do and that is to be good stewards of what He provides. Not taking reasonable and prudent measures in my mind is not being a good steward of what God has provided.

– **Jeff Hawkins, CSN Executive Director**

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visits US

In his ongoing efforts to build awareness for wise stewardship of God's creation, His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew returned to the US this fall to lead the Eighth Environmental Symposium, "The Great Mississippi River: Restoring Balance."

Patriarch Bartholomew, who arrived in New Orleans, LA on October 20, is the patron of the series of environmental symposia on various water bodies around the world. He is internationally known for his efforts in building environmental awareness.

"This trip of His All Holiness to America will be a unique

opportunity for all the American people to hear the Ecumenical Patriarch's message of reconciliation among all religions and people of the world, a message of respect for human rights and religious freedom for all, and a message of respect and reverence for God's creation, our natural environment," said His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. "Finally, for the Orthodox Christians in America this trip will truly be a blessing."

The symposia are organized by "Religion, Science and the Environment," a movement conceived in 1988 on the Aegean Isle of Patmos during a meeting of environmental and religious leaders concerned for Earth's water environment. Earlier symposia were held in the Aegean, Black, Adriatic, Baltic, and Arctic Seas and the Danube and Amazon Rivers.

Patriarch Bartholomew also will visit New York, Atlanta, and Washington, DC before his departure on November 3. ■

Message for the Day of the Protection of the Environment • September 1, 2009

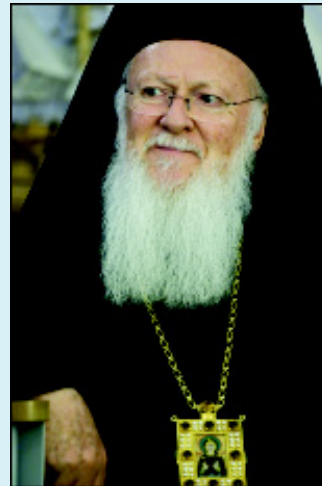
Caring for creation

As we come again to the changing of the Church year, we reflect once more on the state of God's creation. We think about the past and repent for all that we have done or failed to do for the earth's care; we look to the future and pray for wisdom to guide us in all that we think or do.

These last twelve months have been a time of great uncertainty for the whole world. The financial systems that so many people trusted to bring them the good things of life have brought instead fear, uncertainty, and poverty. Our globalized economy has meant that everyone – even the poorest who are far removed from the dealings of big business – has been affected.

The present crisis offers an opportunity for us to deal with the problems in a different way, because the methods that created these problems cannot provide their best solution. We need to bring love into all our dealings, the love that inspires courage and compassion. Human progress is not just the accumulation of wealth and the thoughtless consumption of the earth's resources. The way that the present crisis has been dealt with has revealed the values of the few who are shaping the destiny of our society; of those who can find vast sums of money to support the financial system that has betrayed them, but are not willing to allot even the least portion of that money to remedy the piteous state the creation has been reduced to because of these very values, or for feeding the hungry of the world, or for securing safe drinking water for the thirsty, who are also victims of those values. On the face of every hungry child is written a question for us, and we must not turn away to avoid the answer. Why has this happened? Is it a problem of human inability or of human will?

We have rendered the Market the center of our interest, our activities and, finally, our life, forgetting that this choice of ours will affect the lives of future generations, limiting the



**His All Holiness
Ecumenical Patriarch
Bartholomew**

number of their choices that would probably be more oriented towards the well-being of man as well as the creation. Our human economy, which has made us consumers, is failing. The divine economy, which has made us in the image of the loving Creator, calls us to love and care for all creation. The image we have of ourselves is reflected in the way we treat the creation. If we believe that we are no more than consumers, then we shall seek fulfillment in consuming the whole earth; but if we believe we are made in the image of God, we shall act with care and compassion,

striving to become what we are created to be.

Let us pray for God's blessing on the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December, so that the industrially developed countries may cooperate with developing countries in reducing harmful polluting emissions, that there may exist the will to raise and manage wisely the funds required for the necessary measures, and that all may work together to ensure that our children enjoy the goods of the earth that we leave behind for them. There must be justice and love in all aspects of economic activity; profit – and especially short-term profit – cannot and should not be the sole motive of our actions.

Let us all renew our commitment to work together and bring about the changes we pray for, to reject everything that is harming the creation, to alter the way we think and thus drastically to alter the way we live. ■



2008 Orthodox Basic Training participants pause for a group photo.

Helping Mexico's poor

Orthodox Basic Training program offers opportunities to serve others

Are you looking for ways to serve God, participate in works of mercy, and extend your hand to those in need? If you're thinking, "Yes, yes, yes!" then Project Mexico [PM] offers a terrific opportunity!

"At Project Mexico, we believe that as Orthodox Christians, we are truly the light of the world," says Madi Franck, who coordinates PM's work trips and outdoor education programs. "We are committed to shining our light into the communities and hearts of the Mexican people in the Rosarito/Tijuana area and into the lives of orphaned teenage boys."

Since 1988, PM has been involving young people in the alleviation of suffering by building homes for Mexico's poor.

"Hundreds of homes have been built for needy families with the help of nearly 10,000 volunteers," says Madi. "In 1996, our outreach expanded through the opening of Saint Innocent Orthodox Orphanage in Tijuana, which provides a home for teenaged boys who live on the streets or who have been put out of other orphanages."

Project Mexico has built over 180 homes for impoverished families, changing the lives of one family at a time.

"Three years ago, we expanded our program by introducing Orthodox Basic Training [OBT], a program by which several hundred Orthodox Christians from all over the country gather with the common goal of answering Christ's call to serve the poor," Madi adds. "Divided into small groups, they go out into the community to build a home for a Mexican family in need. Everyone stays in tents at Saint Innocent Orphanage. These weeks include fellowship, daily prayers, evening speakers, and a chance to speak with clergy, monastics, and people currently working in the mission field."

With the success of last year's home building season, PM can now accommodate 300 volunteers in each week of OBT 2010 season June 22-28 and July 6-12.

"There is still space available, so if you have been thinking that there must be some way for you to shine your light, perhaps this is your calling," says Madi.

To sign up for a week, or for more information, contact Madi at mfranck@projectmexico.org. ■

First steps

SCOBA hierarchs discuss, plan first meeting of Episcopal Assembly

At a special session convened at the New York headquarters in New York on September 25, 2009, member hierarchs of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas [SCOBA] devoted their attention to the documents related to the organization of Episcopal Assemblies in regions of the world that exist beyond the borders of the autocephalous Churches.

Representing the Orthodox Church in America at the meeting was its Primate, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah.

The Assemblies were authorized by the Fourth Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Switzerland June 6-13, 2009. [See related articles on pages 44 and 45 of this issue].

It was decided unanimously by the SCOBA hierarchs to convene the first Episcopal Assembly during the week after Pentecost 2010 – the last week of May. The likely days of the Assembly will be May 26-27, 2010. There was also discussion as to the location of the Assembly, with a specific venue to be decided after investigation of locales and resources.

The hierarchs also outlined an initial staging process, combining hierarchs of SCOBA with sub-committees, which will formulate the outline the Assembly's agenda. ■

Ecumenical Patriarch presides at annual UN service

His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, presided at the Ninth Annual Orthodox Prayer Service and reception for the United Nations community at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral, New York, NY, on Monday, October 26, 2009.

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Jonah, was be among the hierarchs of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas who attended the service, cosponsored by SCOBA and the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches of America. ■

Ecclesiological concerns

Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference approves establishment of Episcopal Assemblies throughout the world

At the invitation of His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, representatives from the world's autocephalous Orthodox Churches gathered at the Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy-Geneva, Switzerland June 6-12, 2009 for the historic Fourth Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference. The Conference was a direct result of the Synaxis of the Heads of all Orthodox Churches, convened by Patriarch Bartholomew at the Ecumenical Patriarchate October 10-12, 2008. At that time, the “desire for the swift healing of every canonical anomaly that has arisen from historical circumstances and pastoral requirements, such as in the so-called Orthodox Diaspora, with a view to overcoming every possible influence that is foreign to Orthodox ecclesiology,” was expressed.

[The Orthodox Church in America, whose status as an autocephalous Church is not universally recognized, was not invited to send representatives to either gathering.]

At the October 2008 meeting of the Heads of the Autocephalous Churches, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew called upon the Primates to “activate the 1993 agreement of the Inter-Orthodox Consultation of the Holy and Great Council in order to resolve the pending matter of the Orthodox Diaspora.” This agreement provided a plan for the establishment of an Episcopal Assembly with appropriate authority for the bishops to guide the entire Church in each of the regions of the so-called Orthodox Diaspora.

Acting as formal representatives of

the autocephalous Churches, the members of the Chambésy conference affirmed “that it is the common will of all of the most holy Orthodox Churches that the problem of the Orthodox Diaspora be resolved as quickly as possible, and that it be organized in accordance with Orthodox ecclesiology, and the canonical tradition and practice of the Orthodox Church.” Conference participants decided to establish an Episcopal Assembly in each specific region beyond the boundaries of the autocephalous Churches. Twelve regions throughout the world, each of which will have an Episcopal Assembly, were initially identified. North America is one of the 12 regions.

In each region, the Episcopal Assembly will include all the canonical Orthodox bishops in that region. For example, in North America, the representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch – His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America – will chair the Episcopal Assembly. The Assembly will meet yearly and will have an Executive Committee that will meet every three months. Other committees, composed of clergy and laity, will be established to address particular concerns.

The official English translation of the communique issued at the conclusion of the Chambésy gathering may be read on page 45 of this issue. ■

SOURCE

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese www.goarch.org

Hierarchs representing the autocephalous Churches deliberate at the Ecumenical Patriarchate's Center in Chambésy-Geneva, Switzerland



Communiqué

of the Fourth Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference June 6-12, 2009

The Fourth Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference, convened by His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, with the mutual consent of Their Beatitudes, the Primate of the local Orthodox Churches, as expressed during the Holy Synaxis held at the Phanar from October 10 to 12, 2008, gathered at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy-Geneva from June 6th to 12th, 2009.

The proceedings of the Conference, which began with a Pan-Orthodox Divine Liturgy on the Feast of Pentecost, were chaired by His Eminence, Metropolitan John of Pergamon, representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch, with the assistance of the Secretary for the preparation of the Holy and Great Council, His Eminence, Metropolitan Jeremiah of Switzerland. The proceedings were attended by representatives of all Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, at the invitation of His All Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew.

The Primate of the local Orthodox Churches conveyed greetings to the participants of the Conference through messages or else through their representatives. The members of the Conference sent telegrams to all the Primate of the local Churches, requesting their prayers and blessings for their impending task.

The theme of the Fourth Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference was, in accordance with the will of the Primate and the representatives of the local Orthodox Churches, as expressed in the Message of their Holy Synaxis at the Phanar (October, 2008), the discussion of the subject of the canonical organization of the Orthodox Diaspora. The relevant decision regarding the agenda was agreed upon by the Conference at the opening of its proceedings.

The Conference examined the texts prepared by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Committee in its conferences at Chambésy, namely: a) from November 10-17, 1990; and b) from November 7-13, 1993; as well as the document of the Conference of Canon Lawyers held in Chambésy from April 9 to 14, 1995. These texts, together with the relevant clarifications, supplements, corrections and additions, were unanimously agreed upon.

The Conference expressed the common desire of all Orthodox Churches for a solution to the problem of the canonical organization of the Orthodox Diaspora, in accordance with the ecclesiology, canonical tradition and practice of the Orthodox Church. The Conference decided



to establish new Bishops Assemblies in certain regions throughout the world in order to resolve the problem of the Diaspora, namely for the Orthodox faithful that have settled outside the traditional boundaries of the local Orthodox Churches. The Presidents of these Assemblies are the primate hierarchs of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in that region or, in their absence, the next in order of the Church Diptychs.

The members of these Assemblies include all those recognized by all Orthodox Churches as canonical bishops, who shepherd the existing communities in each region. The mission of the Bishops Assemblies is the proclamation and promotion of the unity of the Orthodox Church, the common pastoral ministry to the Orthodox faithful of the region, as well as their common witness to the world. The decisions of the Bishops Assemblies are made on the basis of the principle of unanimity of the Churches, which are represented therein by bishops.

The Conference also approved – by means of clarifications, corrections and additions – the draft Regulation of how the Bishops Assemblies would function, whereby the fundamental principles of organization and operation [are established].

The remaining issues of the Holy and Great Council, namely the manner of proclamation of Autocephaly and Autonomy, as well as the order of the Diptychs, will be examined in the following Conferences of Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Committees and will be submitted to the next Preconciliar Panorthodox Conference for approval.

In Chambésy-Geneva, June 12, 2009

The President of the Conference
Metropolitan John of Pergamon

The official translation of the **Chambésy decision** is available on-line at www.goarch.org/archdiocese/documents/chambesy/diasporadecision-pdf, while the **regulations** that will guide the work of the Episcopal Assemblies are available at www.goarch.org/archdiocese/documents/chambesy/rules-pdf.

True freedom

The deepest and most fundamental of the Church's understandings of freedom is simply the freedom from sin and its wage or consequences. The understanding that Christ has given to men a freedom that cannot be taken away, no matter what the external circumstances of life may be, has provided the strength, the dynamism, the very life of the Church in the different periods of her bondage, her restrictions. There was the long three century persecution of the Church by the Roman Empire, and the very martyrs were witnesses and advocates of their freedom in Christ. The Moslem conquest and domination of much of the world that had been Christian, and the reduction of Christians to second-class citizenship, the restrictions against their proclaiming the Gospel, brought no despair to those who knew Christ and His truth. This lasted well into the 19th century in certain places. And in the 20th century, restrictions and persecutions, perhaps heavier and more severe than in any other time, in communist lands failed to extinguish the light of Christian truth, and finally the most essential Christian freedom.

It is in Christ, as perfect Man, that man comes to the full realization of what it means to be "in the image and likeness of God." For man's freedom is an Icon, an image of the Divine Freedom Itself. It is just when our freedom lies outside the *opus Dei*, the "work of God," that it ceases to be true freedom. The "Let it be to me according to thy word" of the Virgin at the Annunciation does not come from a simple submission to His will; her very acceptance expresses the ultimate freedom of her being. In this sense, she was the first fruits of the intervention of God into human time and history, the first product of the Incarnation. She is the image of the Church, of those who receive the Word of God and keep it, and of those who would lose their life and gain it. Christ, in becoming Incarnate, has permitted us, not to imitate, but to relive His life, to conform ourselves to His essence.

In each Christian's response to God, in saying "let it be to me according to Thy will," he identifies himself with the God-Man Christ, and in this way – the Divine Will – freedom comes as an expression of one's own will. The will of God, His work, His freedom have become one's own. "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me," says Saint Paul [Galatians 2:20].

None of the foregoing is said to diminish or to negate in any sense the validity and importance of all human beings, especially Christians, to seek and to work for freedom in the usual earthly, if you will, sense of the word: social justice, equality, and the right to pursue, without restrictions, a better life here and now for the human race. The Christian, if he takes his commitment seriously, can never be guilty of putting restrictions in the path of others, of coercing, of forcing. On the other hand, what has been said is conceived as a reminder that much of the Christian world, my own Church, has a long experience of this, has lived under repression in places where freedom, justice, equality, and the right to differ, were given lip-service, but were not realities. The hope of Christians, their consolation, is based on a higher freedom, which only God can give, which our Lord Jesus Christ showed us. ■

St. Tikhon's vision

Whether this is possible or not remains to be seen. But let us explore all possible avenues, with the best minds working at the task together in free and open discussion. Only in this will we be able to move forward in the mission to which God has called us. Let us build a community of love and mutual respect, because the Church can only be incarnated in a spirit of love.

In the meantime, let us strengthen the bonds between ourselves. Local clergy associations are an excellent way to overcome the division of jurisdictions. They provide a context of common activity and build the communion between the Churches on a grass roots level. So also it is very valuable for the bishops of each region to come together to serve the Liturgy and discuss common issues.

If certain of our jurisdictions should wish to join together, before all can come into unity, it is a good and wonderful thing that contributes to the unity of the whole. For example, if the OCA and Antiochian Archdiocese were to join together – or rather, to come back to their previous unity – who could dare object?

Most of all, let us keep Jesus Christ, Crucified and Risen, before our eyes and in our minds and our hearts as we seek not to build up institutions and organizations, but the very Body of Christ, to the glory of God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit. ■

Family from 38

Never on Sunday

teams that make a conscious effort not to schedule practices and games on a Sunday morning or early afternoon. Gather sufficient information so that unexpected surprises – "we practice on Tuesday but play our games on Sunday" – do not arise.

Inform coaches of your dilemma. It is possible that a coach may accommodate you. While it may be challenging, if you have other children who are not involved in sports, it might be wise for parents to drive separately, so that the child who must make it to the playing field by noon can leave after Liturgy and Church school while the other children can remain at church.

I fully realize and understand how all parents want their children to belong and participate in such wholesome activities – my own children were all involved in local sports leagues – but my wife and I did not have to deal with Sunday morning practices and games. Clearly, times have changed. I also realize that different sports are seasonal. But it's important to realize that, given this change, we need to examine our secular culture *critically*, understanding that the choices we make have consequences. Focus must be maintained on making the Lord's Day a priority, and to recognize that our lives are *so* busy – perhaps *too* busy – that we should not want to complicate them further, to the point of not knowing whether we are "coming or going," even on Sundays! ■

Fr. Steven Kostoff is rector of Christ the Saviour/Holy Spirit Church, Cincinnati, OH.

Communities

Scouts celebrate “trail” Liturgy

CIMARRON, NM – This summer, Orthodox Christian Scouts from parishes in the Pacific Northwest area took an exciting and adventurous trip to Philmont Scout Ranch here. As part of their experience, the scouts participated in the first known Divine Liturgy to be celebrated at Philmont.

The Liturgy was celebrated on Sunday, July 12, during the scouts’ 11-day, 85-mile trek.

The event was organized by Troop 67, jointly sponsored by the Seattle area’s Eastern Orthodox parishes.

Nine scouts and five adults, including John Prekeges, group leader and crew adviser, and Fr. Dean Koudukis, pastor of Seattle’s Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, participated. ■

Orthodox scouts join Fr. Dean Koudukis for the Sunday Liturgy during 11-day trek through the wilderness.



Official from 31

remain the same/ August 26, 2009.

WOJCIK, Rev. Christopher is released from duties at St. Mary Church, Cornucopia, WI. He remains rector of Holy Trinity Church, Clayton, WI/ August 26, 2009.

■ LEAVES OF ABSENCE

MIRONKO, V. Rev. Arkady is granted an extension of his Leave of Absence for two years. He remains attached to SS. Peter and Paul Church, Bayonne, NJ/ August 18, 2009.

■ RELEASED

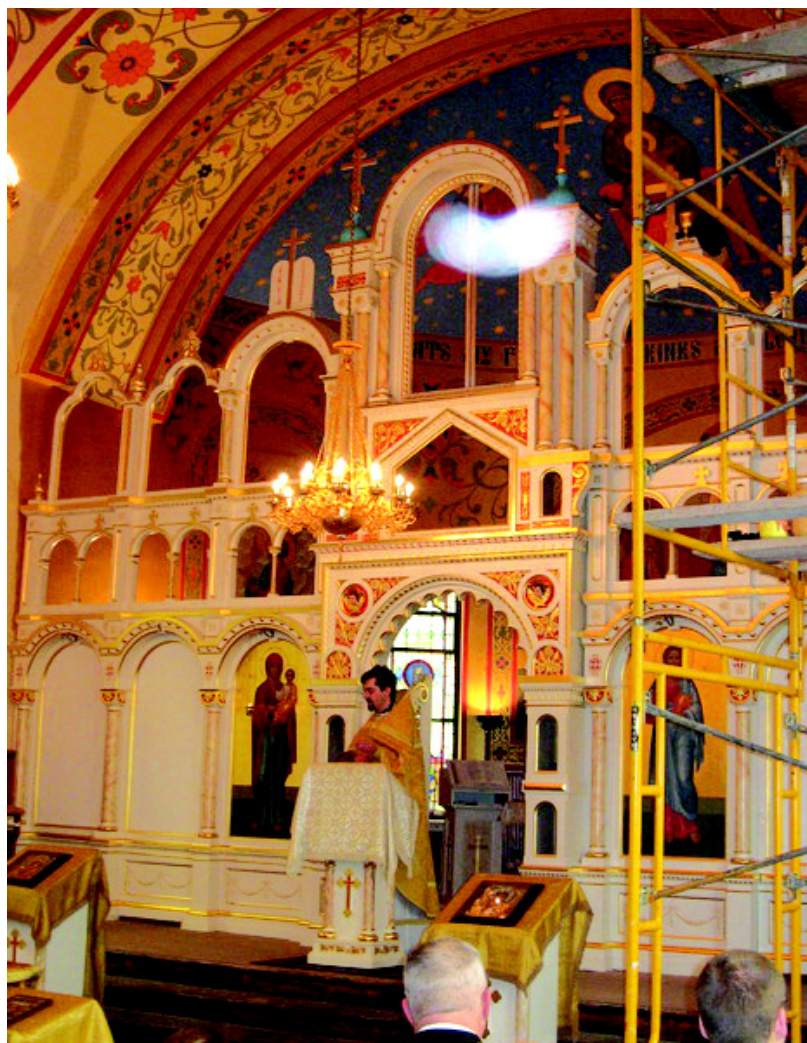
BULZ, Rev. Gabriel is released from duties at SS. Constantine and Helen Mission, Lilburn, GA, and from the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and the Romanian Episcopate; transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Jonah; and granted a canonical release to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America/ August 3, 2009.

■ RETIRED

NELSON, V. Rev. Joseph is granted retirement. He is attached to Holy Apostles Mission, Tulsa, OK/ August 14, 2009.

■ DEATHS

HIRSCH, V. Rev. Joseph, who was dean of Transfiguration of Christ Cathedral, Denver, CO, and dean of the Rocky Mountain Deanery, died on August 24, 2009. *May his memory be eternal!* ■

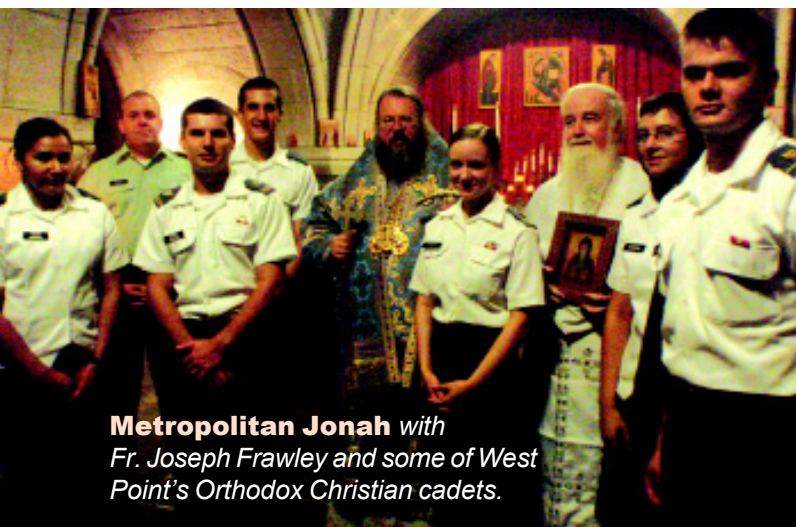


Reconstruction work at Olyphant, PA’s All Saints Church, nears completion.

Up from the ashes: Olyphant, PA parish rebuilds after fire

OLYPHANT, PA – On March 5, 2006, the eve of the first day of Great Lent, members of All Saints Church here were horrified to witness flames shooting out of the roof of their century-old church building. While parishioners and firefighters saved what they could – vestments, banners, and other liturgical items – the interior damage was so extensive that services had to be celebrated in the church basement.

Today, the interior renovation of the church is nearing completion. The refurbished iconostasis is complemented by new floor-to-ceiling murals and frescoes, the work of Moscow iconographer Ivan Rumiantsev. Services are once again being celebrated in the church proper, and the parish’s tenacious faithful, under the guidance of Fr. David Cowan, look forward to completion of the reconstruction project. ■



Metropolitan Jonah with Fr. Joseph Frawley and some of West Point's Orthodox Christian cadets.

Metropolitan Jonah visits West Point chapel

WEST POINT, NY – Metropolitan Jonah celebrated the Divine Liturgy for Orthodox Christian cadets at St. Martin Chapel at West Point Military Academy August 23, 2009.

Fr. Joseph Frawley, chaplain, welcomed Metropolitan Jonah, who enjoyed brunch with the cadets after the Liturgy.

At the conclusion of the Liturgy, Cadet Tornike Todria from Tbilisi, Georgia, presented an icon of St. Tornike to Metropolitan Jonah on behalf of the chapel community.

Fr. Joseph and his wife Irene have served the Saint Martin community for many years. ■

would be to get together to share our concerns, thoughts, and fellowship about our lives,” said Matushka Diane Pelesh, who coordinated the gathering with Matushka Frances Vansuch. “In the peaceful surroundings of the monastery grounds, we had the opportunity to pray and reflect on God’s blessings as well as share with each other in the journey of continuing on alone without our husbands.”

Participants were especially grateful for the hospitality extended to them by Mother Christophora and the monastery sisterhood.

Plans are underway for similar gatherings in the future. ■



Fr. John Parker [right] with Fr. Alexander in ship chapel.

NC faithful discover common faith aboard a Russian ship!

CHARLESTON, NC – Fr. John Parker and nearly two dozen parishioners of Holy Ascension Church, Mt. Pleasant, NC had the rare opportunity of visiting one of the world’s largest ships, the Russian Kreuzenstern, docked in Charleston harbor with 200 Russian sailors-in-training.

“We were welcomed aboard with red-carpet treatment,” said Fr. John, who was greeted on board by the ship chaplain, Fr. Alexander. “I speak very little Russian and Fr. Alexander speaks very little English, but with the help of some bilingual friends we were made preparations to celebrate a Service of Thanksgiving with the blessing of water aboard the ship.”

The following day, the priests concelebrated the Liturgy at Holy Ascension Church.

“Our unity of faith was palpable to everyone present,” said Fr. John. “We finished the morning, as is our local custom on feast days, with bagels and strong black coffee. From the parking lot we offered our good-byes, encouraged by this blip in time when two worlds collided – two worlds held together by a common faith, in which strangers who don’t speak the same language can embrace each other in Christian love, as brothers and sisters. ■



Clergy widows enjoy retreat

ELLWOOD CITY, PA – Eight clergy widows enjoyed an uplifting and spiritually rewarding weekend retreat at Holy Transfiguration Monastery here September 25-27, 2009.

The retreat was held with the blessing of Metropolitan Jonah.

“For some time, a few of us had discussed how nice it