

## Office of Institutional Chaplains

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## Accomplishments/Progress Since the 13th All-American Council

The creation of this office is itself a historic development since the 13th All-American Council! With the blessing of His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman, a formal endorsement process was put in place in May 2003 for those desiring to engage in institutional chaplaincy. Institutional chaplaincy includes pastoral care offered in hospitals, long-term care facilities, hospices, correctional facilities, and many other settings. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is typically required training for those desiring to provide pastoral care in institutional settings, along with theological education (usually an M.Div. degree), and work experience.

## Accountability

Credentialing bodies such as the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC), the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), and the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy (CPSP) require endorsement and in some cases commissioning prior to a candidate's requesting certification as a chaplain or CPE supervisor (providing CPE training). Those who have previously received endorsement have done so by direct request to their diocesan bishop or our Metropolitan. At the same time, as in military chaplaincy, one endorser is typically recognized. Metropolitan Herman has graciously blessed the formation of the Office of Institutional Chaplains to operate under his supervision, and he is the official ecclesiastical endorser. Many thanks also to Protospesbyter Robert Kondratik and the V. Rev. David Brum for all their assistance and guidance, and to the V. Rev. Alexander Garklavs, chair of the Department of Pastoral Life and Ministry.

Since the creation of the endorsement process and this office, five candidates have requested endorsement, two of whom went on to meet qualifications for certification with the APC: Elaine Mayol and Sarah Byrne Francis. Congratulations to both of them! We now have a growing community of Orthodox institutional chaplains, men and women, not only serving in institutional settings but also bearing witness to the Orthodox faith within these credentialing bodies and within the greater pastoral care and counseling movement. These developments have thus far been well received, and we are still attempting to identify and connect with others who are serving in institutional settings. I have been asked to present on institutional chaplaincy at several conferences during the past several years.

At the time of the preparation of this report, the above credentialing bodies have all been notified of the date of Pascha for the coming years, thanks to the information available on our OCA web site. We are also pursuing recognition by COMISS, the network on Ministry in Specialized Settings. This is a network including credentialing bodies and ecclesiastical endorsers from a broad spectrum of faith traditions. By obtaining recognition we will have a direct voice in the work of this network, as well as formal recognition of Metropolitan Herman as our endorser. It is our hope to have a meeting during this council bringing together those who are actively engaged in institutional ministry to further develop this office and carry out future plans.

# Church Ministries / Offices

As CPE liaison, I have worked to connect with credentialing bodies, provide consultation and screening for those desiring to request endorsement, connect those of us who are serving as institutional chaplains, as well as identify opportunities to bear witness to the Orthodox faith and pastoral care practice in the greater pastoral care and counseling community.

- ◆ I continue to work with the Seminarian Internship Program, currently serving as coordinator.
- ◆ Our web site for institutional chaplains is still in the planning phase, though the OCA web site lists a page for institutional chaplaincy.
- ◆ The development of mentoring training was one portion of a presentation on visitation ministries offered at the Parish Ministries Conference at St. Vladimir's Seminary in July 2004. Incidentally, this was a first-ever presentation offered by presenters who were all certified in institutional ministry: the V. Rev. Daniel Degyansky is certified through the National Association of Veterans Affairs Chaplains (NAVAC); Elaine Mayol was at that time in the process of obtaining certification through the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC); and I am certified as a chaplain and CPE Supervisor. This is a fruitful area for further development.
- ◆ We continue to work toward recognition by COMISS. Part of this recognition involves representing ourselves as an endorsing body.
- ◆ The endorsement process is in place. The next steps include developing a mission statement, and developing a service of commissioning that could be used in the parish setting.
- ◆ Accrediting bodies have been informed of our dates for Pascha for the coming years, so that these dates can be taken into consideration when planning conferences, etc.
- ◆ With Metropolitan Herman's blessing, I represented the OCA at the International Congress for Pastoral Care and Counseling (ICPCC), held in Bangalore, India, in August 2004. This is a gathering of pastoral care and counseling organizations from around the world. It was postponed for one year due to unrest between India and Pakistan and the SARS outbreak. I was elected to the Office of Public Relations and Communications on the Executive Council.

## Plans for the Future

- ◆ The next ICPCC will be held in Krzyzowa, Poland, August 7-14, 2007. As we enjoy a cordial relationship with the Orthodox Church in Poland, it is my hope to work together, through our Department of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, to have a formal delegation present at this upcoming congress.
- ◆ Develop means to connect those engaged in institutional chaplaincy in the Orthodox Church in America, and to reach out to those engaged in institutional chaplaincy in the greater Orthodox community in North America.
- ◆ Develop a mission statement and service of commissioning to be used in the parish setting.
- ◆ Complete additional writing in this area as well as seek opportunities to facilitate training of mentors to encourage pastoral visitation in the parish setting.
- ◆ Continue to work together to represent the Orthodox faith in the greater pastoral care and counseling community.