

Church Ministries / Committees

Committee on Late Vocations

Chairperson	His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill	Committee Email	latevocations@oca.org
Members	His Grace, Bishop Seraphim	Committee Web	www.oca.org /DOdept.asp?SID=5&LID=20
Coordinator	V. Rev. Gregory Safchuk 7126 River Rd. Bethesda, MD 20817		
	Home	301-320-0739	
	Office	301-229-6300	

Accomplishments/Progress Since the 13th All-American Council

The OCA Late Vocations Program (LVP) continues to provide for the education of qualified senior (age 35 and older) candidates who are unable to attend seminary, in preparation for their ordination to the permanent Holy Diaconate.

Management of the two-level program of study (basic and advanced) includes the administration of application materials, procedures, completion requirements, course syllabuses, and testing. In addition, guidelines for local diocesan and deanery educational programs are provided as needed. Evaluation of candidates who have completed local programs is provided via the National Standard Final Examination. The director reports to and works regularly with the Board of Theological Education to screen and approve candidates for recommendation to the Holy Synod of Bishops for ordination.

Since the last All-American Council, we have made an increased effort to coordinate with area diocesan and deanery programs. The National Standard Final Examination is also now used to evaluate candidates who have transferred in from the St. Stephen's Program.

The number of participants in the program continues to vary, but is now usually between 30 and 40. At this writing, enrollment stands at 38. A steady stream of inquiries for information about the program and requests for applications underscores the ongoing need for such a program within the Church. More consistent adherence to the guidelines for acceptance into the program, and to its stated mission, has helped to discourage attempted misuse of it as a bypass of seminary training and a "shortcut" to the priesthood.

Plans for the Future

With regard to the future, we hope to continue to meet the needs of applicants and candidates more efficiently and effectively. PDF versions of the application are now available to be sent as attachments in response to email inquiries about the program. The Board of Theological Education, at its most recent meeting, has requested to review the LVP curriculum in order to update and revise it. This will take place prior to the next meeting of the board, which is scheduled for October 2005. Also under consideration is a proposed increase in the minimum age for enrollment in the program.

There has been a transition in the ranks of those who serve as graders for the research papers within the advanced track. Some of these new readers have brought fresh perspectives on their fields of specialty and made valuable suggestions regarding source material and curriculum for both tracks of study within the LVP.