

# THE NORTH STAR

WINTER 2004

A PUBLICATION OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX DIOCESE OF ALASKA

VOLUME 3

A VISIT TO THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS

RENOVATIONS AT SAINT HERMAN SEMINARY

GUIDELINES ON THE SACRAMENTS



## THE NORTH STAR

Published three times a year with the blessing of His Grace, the Right Reverend NIKOLAI Bishop of Sitka, Anchorage and Alaska

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Sunrise in the Lower Kuskokwim  
Holy Trinity Church  
Kasigluk, Alaska - April 2003



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### ORDINATIONS:

PRIEST INNOCENT DRESDOW  
DIACONATE: JUNE 28, 2003  
PRIESTHOOD: JUNE 29, 2003

### ELEVATIONS:

PRIEST MICHAEL TREFON  
TO THE DIGNITY OF ARCHPRIEST  
NOVEMBER 9, 2003  
PRIEST MAXIM ISAAC  
TO THE DIGNITY OF ARCHPRIEST  
JANUARY 14, 2004

### MEMORY ETERNAL:

ARCHPRIEST MICHAEL LESTENKOF  
BLESSED REPOSE:  
JULY 11, 2003

On the Cover: Saint Alexander Nevsky Chapel  
Akutan, Alaska



# A LIVING TRADITION

*An open letter to my Dear and Faithful Children of the God protected Diocese of Alaska*

**W**e are now into our third year as the spiritual father of this vast Diocese. It is from here that Orthodoxy came to North America, and where North America needs to be able to look at Orthodoxy and find her still living that Orthodoxy in its purest form. This letter will encompass just a fraction of the vision that was nurtured here many years ago by the early fathers of this great land - a responsibility that has been entrusted to me to nurture in this present time.

I was raised in the Serbian Orthodox church and inherited an Orthodox ancestry that extends nearly one thousand years. My first language was Serbian; I didn't begin speaking English until I entered the first grade. My family was faithful to the Church. Over the years as I grew in the faith and eventually went to Seminary I came to appreciate Orthodoxy even more deeply. Being a Slavic people, the Serbs are very close liturgically to the Russians. My spiritual life was formed in this cultural context and reflects the spirit of Russian Orthodoxy. During those formative years there were changes in the Church. I still remember when the priest in my home parish decided that the Church needed to have pews so that we could be more like the other churches. We were never like the other churches then and even less so today. I remember when we began using English and church school was held during liturgy, the women quit wearing head coverings and eventually we had fewer and fewer faithful.

God-willing, it is my hope to witness our Church rise up and assume what it was originally established to be - an indigenous Church in Alaska and an Orthodox Diocese. I won't allow pews in the Churches. There are those, who out of physical need must take the opportunity to sit, the weak and frail or mothers with infants. But even these must strive to get back up on their feet in order to pray and give glory to Almighty God, being mindful that in Church we are standing in His presence. My dear children at the second coming we will be crawling and begging God to accept us into His Heavenly Kingdom. It is in the Church where this reality is most profound. We are standing before His Throne, alone physically, but surrounded by the Saints and angels who hold us up.

I want to see every one of our Churches as the nicest building in that village or city. The faithful must know that the Church doesn't change and doesn't have to change to get people to come. This is not a numbers game: this is our very life on earth, working toward the Heavenly - Eternal Life in His Bosom!

The very beginning of our life in the Church typically begins at baptism. Parents want their children to be baptized in Church and our Lord gives that very example in the Jordan. This is what we want to exemplify. This means baptism by immersion, whether child or adult, a full immersion three times. We live in a land of abundant water. Let us not forget that the Church, in which these instructions were formed, was in a much dryer climate!

I don't want our children and the faithful to be called by any name other than the one, which they receive at Holy Baptism, the name of a Saint. Not just any Saint but one whom they know and one to whom they pray to protect themselves - the very Saint whose name they bear. No child should be given any name other than the one by which they will be called! We have included some points on this subject from the "Guidelines for Clergy" which we found most edifying and helpful for our people - you can read these later in this issue.

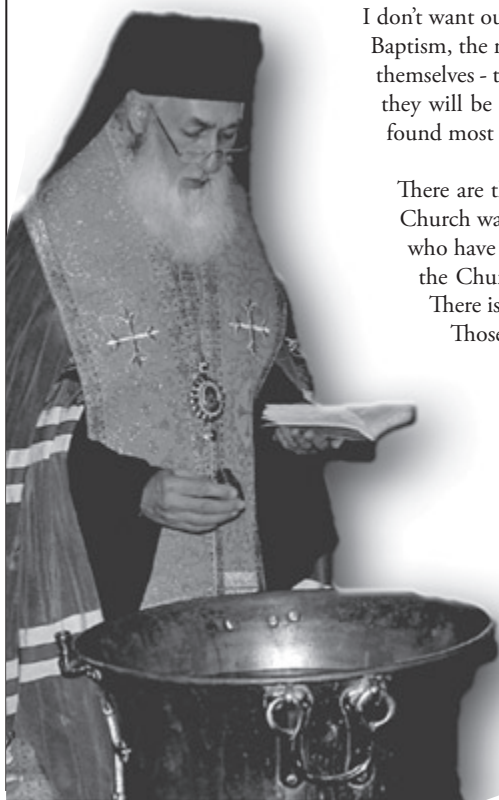
There are those who are also being received into Holy Orthodoxy by chrismation. This reception in the early Church was used to receive back those who had fallen away from the Church. Today it is used to receive those who have been baptized by an accepted baptism but not an Orthodox one. Those wanting to be received into the Church will have to be catechized or instructed and this can take anywhere from a year to a lifetime.

There is no hurry to receive them into the faith. It is more important that we spend the time teaching them.

Those who want to be part of the Church need to take this crucial time to learn about true worship by participating in this life. Let us not forget that it is a life long responsibility for our people to continually learn more about the faith. Just recently there was an article in the local paper that said forty percent of our youth leave the state after reaching adulthood. If they know their faith and if they have been practicing their faith they will attend other Orthodox Churches even if they choose to leave home. We even use the term practicing our faith. This isn't any different than doctors practicing medicine and lawyers practicing law - there is always more to learn.

Whether received by baptism or chrismation, those coming into the faith must have Orthodox sponsors or godparents.

Every Orthodox Christian is to receive Holy Confession before receiving Holy Communion. It is often asked "how often should I go to confession?" The answer is simple - every time we sin. We do not practice receiving absolution alone! Unless one confesses there is nothing that can be absolved. Absolution without confession is not an acceptable practice.





There are too many who think they can live together without the blessing of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. We must strive to have these people return to the Church and having their unions blessed in God's House: welcome them back and encourage them to reconcile with God.

Mixed Marriages are normal, especially today in this non-Orthodox world. We do perform marriages for Orthodox and non-Orthodox but there are standards. (See Guidelines article in this issue).

At the end of our earthly struggle we are expected to be buried from the Church. Only God knows whether one is worthy of such a rite, but all are entitled to it so long as they have not left the Church for another faith and have not blasphemed His Holy Church.

The decision for anyone who has committed or appears to have committed suicide is in the hands of the Bishop and him alone. It is only he who can allow or disallow the funeral in these circumstances.

Proper Dress in Church is something that has bothered me from the day of my arrival. I see our people wearing just any old clothes to Church. In asking and observing I see that this was not the practice in the past and cannot be allowed to be so in the future. We should be dressing with the very best we have as we are standing in His Holy House before Him. You know that I wear the same vestments in the smallest village as I wear in the largest Cathedral, I make no difference and you should know that you are expected to do the same -- wear the best you have.

In relation to proper dress I want to address head coverings for women. This comes from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians in which he states that a woman ought to cover her head. He is probably referring to the time a young girl comes into womanhood. It has nothing to do with having sex or being married. There is an excellent article on head coverings and excerpts from that article are in this Newsletter. If you want to read the entire article please just ask for it. I want women to dress like women and men to dress like men. Our women are beautiful and don't need make-up and pants, but head coverings and dresses are appropriate. I recently asked someone about the wearing of pants with the kuspuk and was told that was never the case, only recently?

The Akathist to St. Herman speaks of a monastic life here. I want to see that vision of his come to reality and soon. We will be asking for monks to come from Russia to establish the basics for monasticism in this great land on Spruce Island. Can you see a magnificent monastery in that setting where the first missionaries came to bring Orthodoxy to this unchristian land? Let us pray for this and for women monastics to come and to enrich us, too. Our Orthodox faith teaches us there is no spiritual life without monasticism.

Our Diocese has been blessed with her own Seminary and she has produced 68% of our present clergy. The Seminary is doing well and will continue to be a part of our life as long as God blesses it but He expects us to do more, too.

Most of the funds for the Seminary come from outside Alaska. We had a unanimous resolution at the Assembly in November to move from a Diocese that assesses a fee for each parish to a Diocese that practices the Scriptural mandate of giving one tenth of our income as our first offering. I am confident this will become the standard here and we will strive to meet what is given to us in the Scriptures and what God expects as a minimum. Nothing that we have is ours, all is God's and we must show Him our gratitude. I have spoken often that the PFD is a blessing that no one has earned, a gift from the natural resources He has blessed us with in this great land.

We recently purchased an old building in downtown Anchorage across from the Rasmussen Museum on the corner of A Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This building will house the Holy Trinity Chapel, a Museum, where visitors both Orthodox and non-Orthodox can come and experience our spiritual heritage and legacy, and a bookstore where churches and individuals may purchase Orthodox supplies personally and for use in their churches.

As a closing thought, in this past year we saw a dramatic change in the life of fasting in our Diocese. It was uplifting to observe that our people want to do what the Church prescribes and not simply what is easy. Our elders and forefathers were faithful, obedient and humble Orthodox Christians. We all want to become the same. What was passed down to us from the first missionaries is my vision for life here in Alaska. A place that exemplifies an acceptance and practice of the Orthodox standard, faithfully preserved. The tradition that was received by our forefathers and practiced diligently but has through the generations grown weak.

Let us all pray for this vision, not my own personal vision, but rather, a vision that was given to us by St. Herman and St. Innocent and our faithful elders.

Love and Blessings,

NIKOLAI  
Bishop of Sitka, Anchorage and Alaska



The faithful of Saint Lazarus Mission

# A VISIT TO THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS

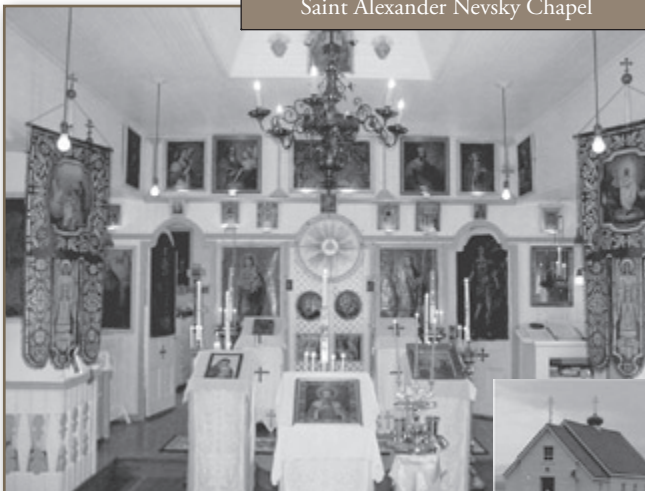


Online at: [www.alaskanchurch.org/aleutianchain.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/aleutianchain.html)

## AKUTAN

A visit to the treeless Aleutian Islands is always an adventure. A visit to the village of Akutan is a rare adventure only possible if the weather is fair. It requires boarding a vintage aircraft with some of the most experienced bush pilots in the world and offers a view of the lush green carpeted Aleutian Islands that will never be forgotten. The descent into Safe Harbor ends in a dramatic water landing right in front of the Aleutian fishing village of Akutan. In September His Grace visited the newly renovated St. Alexander Nevsky Chapel, in order to consecrate the Church.

## Saint Alexander Nevsky Chapel



with many of the villagers coming see His Grace's departure. As we took off on the water and flew by the village we could see the waves of the villagers and the glory of the Church.

## UNALASKA

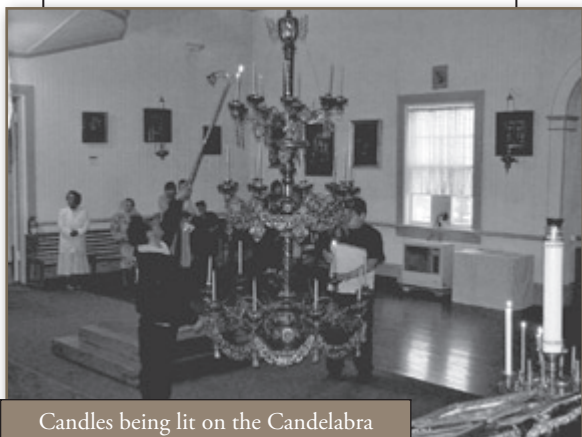
Travel schedules here are dependant on the weather. A visit to this island in the center of the Aleutian chain where St. Innocent first served in North America, makes it clear the sacrifice he and his family made to come and serve as missionaries. The hospitality and love of the people far exceed the adverse weather conditions! Services in Holy Ascension Cathedral are rich with tradition. Even the huge candleabra in the center of the Cathedral is still lowered by hand in order for the candles to be lit. The recent restoration of the Cathedral preserved its historical continuity and as a result one is truly immersed in the beauty and glory of our rich Russian Orthodox Tradition.

Traveling with His Grace and Archdeacon Isidore to assist were Priest Innocent Dresdow, Mother Capetolina and Anna Jarlson, choir director from St. Innocent Cathedral in Anchorage.

Villagers filled the chapel early Saturday morning and services began with the consecration of the Holy Table. As items were blessed and put on the Altar, His Grace took time to explain the significance of each item. After the Altar had been consecrated the remainder of the Church was blessed with Holy Water and Chrismated by His Grace. The Divine Liturgy then commenced and was a most joyous celebration.

Holy Ascension Cathedral is currently served by Archpriest Peter and Matushka Catherine Bourdukofsky. The cathedral is the central landmark in the community of Unalaska. Many people know Unalaska by its sister community, the rich fishing port of Dutch Harbor. A pictorial journal from the visit is available online. The wind swept islands, despite their seeming remoteness, have a deep history and rich Russian Orthodox tradition. †

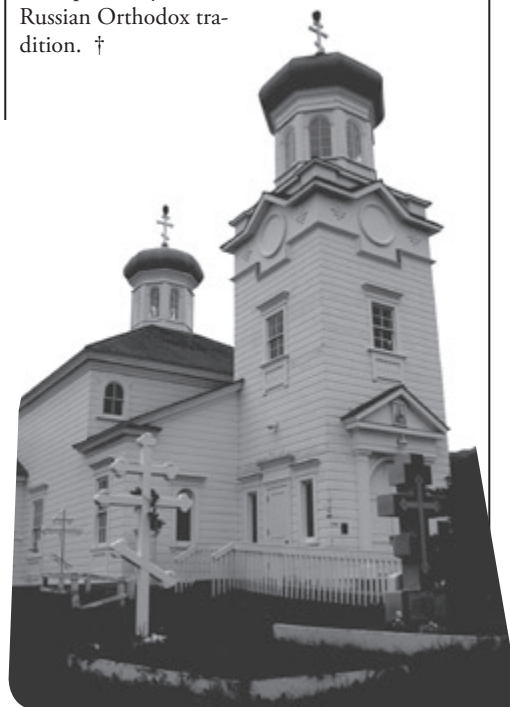
## Candles being lit on the Candelabra



Many villagers were present to greet His Grace upon arrival and the chapel was prepared for the upcoming consecration. Great Vespers with Litia was served by His Grace and after services many of the faithful came for confession in preparation for receiving the Holy Mysteries. Currently Akutan does not have a resident priest so the blessing of a visit by His Grace is an overwhelming joy.

Afterwards, His Grace exhorted the faithful, encouraging them to keep the Church open with regular reader services and hold fast to their rich tradition. Akutan is an Orthodox village, however with the large commercial fishing operation just outside of the village there is constant pressure exerted from other faiths which view the Orthodox heritage of the villagers as a misguided form of Christianity. Please join us in praying for the villagers in Akutan that they will grow in their faith and continue to defend their heritage.

The village hosted a wonderful banquet and the visit ended





# SAINT HERMAN PILGRIMAGE

Online at: [www.alaskanchurch.org/pilgrimage.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/pilgrimage.html)

## HOLY RESURRECTION CATHEDRAL

The thirty-third annual St. Herman Pilgrimage was celebrated with the best weather Kodiak has to offer and an overwhelming turn out of pilgrims. Adding to the magnificence and prayerfulness of this year's pilgrimage was the singing of The Spirit of Orthodoxy Choir, under the direction of Mr. Aleksei Shipovalnikov the great, great, grandson of the first Russian governor in Alaska.

His Grace, Bishop NIKOLAI, opened the Pilgrimage with a homily calling the pilgrims to focus their attention on the celebrations ahead, bearing in mind what the Akathist to St. Herman tells us about his life. The Pilgrimage would be a struggle, His Grace said, but the benefits of going through that struggle would be beyond words. His Grace also reminded the Pilgrims of the unfathomable gift of being able to celebrate this feast before the Relics of St. Herman and in the very places where he lived.

The Akathist to St. Herman was then celebrated before the Saint's Reliquary. His Grace was joined by Protopresbyter Joseph Kreta, retired Dean of St. Herman Seminary and Holy Resurrection Cathedral.

seminary this Fall. Priest John Dunlop, Dean of Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Kodiak and Priest Mikel Bock from St. Innocent Cathedral were in attendance as along with Protopresbyter John Rallis of St. John the Baptist Church in Des Plaines, IL, Priest



Anthony Karbo Rector of SS. Constantine and Helen Church, Colorado Springs, CO and Priest John Bartholomew of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey.

At the conclusion of the Akathist, the Reliquary was opened and the faithful were given the opportunity to venerate the relics of St. Herman and to receive a blessing from His Grace.

Everyone then gathered in the commons at Kodiak High School where His Grace hosted a tea and concert performed by the The Spirit of Orthodoxy Choir. The theme of the concert was, "Christmas in Kodiak" and featured numerous liturgical hymns from the Nativity services. The choir received a standing ovation and concluded their concert with an encore of "America the Beautiful".

## SPRUCE ISLAND

Friday morning dawned bright and warm. One could not have imagined better weather or calmer seas. His Grace, accompanied by attending clergy, celebrated the Divine Liturgy on the porch of SS. Sergius and Herman of Valaam Chapel on

Spruce Island, over St. Herman's grave. The faithful had the opportunity to venerate the ground where St. Herman was buried. Immediately after the Divine Liturgy Protopresbyter Joseph Kreta served a Litia in remembrance of Archimandrite Gerasim (Schmaltz) and Priest Peter Kreta, who are both interred on Spruce Island near the Chapel.

The events on Spruce Island culminated with a picnic on the beach at Monk's Lagoon provided by the parishioners of Nativity of the Lord Church in Ouzinkie (a village on Spruce Island) and the St. Herman Sisterhood from Holy Resurrection Cathedral.

On Friday evening, His Grace presided over the Vigil for the Feast, and on Saturday morning celebrated a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy with the clergy in attendance. This was followed by a salmon and halibut dinner provided by the St. Herman Sisterhood from Holy Resurrection Cathedral. As the Pilgrimage closed, those faithful who committed themselves to the struggle of which His Grace had spoken of at the opening, realized that they had indeed been richly rewarded. †



Archimandrite Benjamin and Archpriest Chad Hatfield, the current Dean of St. Herman Seminary, were also present well as, Archpriest Martin Nicolai who is started teaching music and church doctrine at the



## Annual Saint Herman Pilgrimage



When:  
Aug. 7-9, 2004

Where:  
Kodiak, Alaska  
Spruce Island

For more information visit us online at:  
[www.alaskanchurch.org/events.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/events.html)



# WORK TEAMS & MISSIONS

Online at: [www.alaskanchurch.org/missions.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/missions.html)

## KODIAK

The buildings on the St. Herman Seminary campus in Kodiak all have a fresh new look! The long overdue repairs were accomplished this past summer with much welcome help from volunteer teams. The first team came in June from parishes in Indiana and Jacksonville, Florida. This team was under the leadership of Priest Theodore Pisarchuk, rector of St. Justin Martyr Church, Jacksonville. This team worked in the daily rain to side the refectory and single-student dorm making many needed



to Alaska and serve so sacrificially.

## MISSION TEAMS

On August 27th, members of teams from the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) in Florida arrived for orientation at St. Herman Seminary in Kodiak. Jordan Henderson, OCMC Staff, and Archpriest Chad Hatfield, Vice-President of the OCMC Board led the team orientations.



Iliamna bringing both communities much encouragement by the team's many presentations. This team was largely staffed by seminarians from Holy Cross Seminary, Brookline, Massachusetts.

Another team went to Ouzinkie and Port Lions to conduct vacation bible schools, teen work, and adult education. Priest John Rallis, rector of



repairs and installing new windows. Some of the team also organized a vacation bible school for Holy Resurrection Cathedral.

A second construction team travelled from Colorado, under the direction of Priest Anthony Karbo, rector of Ss. Helen & Constantine Church, Colorado Springs. This team worked on siding both the Administration Building and the Married Student Housing. The Chapel was power-washed and sealed giving it a wonderful new finish. Volunteers on this team worked on heating systems and electrical problems. Deacon David Fabula, from St. Andrew Church, Delta, Colorado organized the remodel of the kitchen.

Other summer volunteers include Shef and Noulie Priest from Minneapolis, Minnesota. They completed new walks for the seminary and are planning a spring return with a college age group of volunteers. John and Margaret Morris from Houston, Texas painted the interior of the refectory which now has a bright new look. Lee and Janet Frazier of Mulino, Oregon also freely gave of their time to come and assist with much of the remodeling. Our gratitude and thanks to everyone who came and to those who gave freely to help them raise the funds to travel

## Guatemala Mission Team

With the blessing of His Grace, Bishop NIKOLAI, a team from Alaska will be going as volunteer short-term missionaries to the Hogar Rafael Ayau Orphanage in Guatemala City, Guatemala in June 2004.

Archpriest Chad Hatfield, who took an OCMC team to the Hogar in 2001, will lead the Alaska Team. The dates are set for June 1-14. OCMC oversees the placement of short-term mission teams and long-term missionaries from America.

Each volunteer will raise their own funds to make the trip. Funds can be obtained from the Mission Center in St. Augustine, Florida by phone: (877) GO-FORTH or by contacting Archpriest Chad Hatfield at St. Herman seminary: (907) 486-3524.

Knowledge of Spanish is helpful but not required. Volunteers should be 20 years or older with an interest in children.

Over the years OCMC has sent many teams to Alaska. Here is wonderful opportunity for an OCMC team to come from Alaska and bear the fruit that we have so abundantly received.



St. John the Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois was the team's spiritual leader. Archpriest Chad Hatfield served as the local host for this team.

## LOOKING AHEAD

In 2004 teams are expected to come and serve vacation bible school in the churches on the Pribilof Islands as well as a construction team to Spruce Island to continue the renovations on Ss. Sergius and Herman of Valaam Chapel. †

The teams then left for two weeks of work in Russian Mission, Marshall and Camp in Ohagamiut. The Dillingham team also travelled to





## RUSSIAN ALASKAN LITURGICAL SUPPLY

Support the Diocese of Alaska by purchasing your liturgical supplies at Russian Alaskan Liturgical Supply.



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### RUSSIAN ORTHODOX MUSEUM TO OPEN IN ANCHORAGE

Remodeling has begun and soon Anchorage will have a new museum! The future home of the Russian Orthodox Museum is on A street in downtown Anchorage right across the street from the Rasmuson Museum. It will feature displays showcasing many artifacts from the history of the Russian Orthodox Church in Alaska. Tourism plays an important role in the witness of the Church in Alaska and the museum will serve as another venue for visitors to learn more about our rich heritage. Look for more information in the coming months on the museum's progress.

## SHS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Saint Herman Seminary alumni association is active in supporting the ongoing efforts at the seminary. Last year the association announced the Associate Alumni Program. This offers an opportunity for anyone who did not attend SHS to become associate alumnists. Annual dues are \$25 per year or \$500 for a life-time membership. These funds will be used to provide continuing education opportunities to Alaskan clergy. By joining this group members will receive an Associate Alumni Certificate issued at graduations and they will enjoy all of the privileges of regular alumni. This adoption by SHS is yet another way to support the work of Orthodoxy in Alaska. Applications can be obtained by calling or emailing Archpriest Chad Hatfield (907) 486-3524 [frchad@hatfield.net]

## HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT 3D?

More and more people, literally across the world, are joining in support of North America's largest Orthodox Diocese. This program, founded by His Grace shortly after his arrival in Alaska, continues to grow. Membership is secured by a \$100 donation, which is then renewed annually. Members have given in memory of loved ones, for each member of their household or in the name of their god-children. Minadora Jacobs now coordinates the program and, together with Matushka Anna Andrew they have embarked on an ambitious course to communicate with 3D members by informing them of events and opportunities in ongoing support of this God-protected Diocese. There is still time to become a founding member and receive a beautiful gramota personally inscribed and signed by His Grace. For more information visit us online at: [www.alaskanchurch.org](http://www.alaskanchurch.org) and click the Donate link. You can fill out an application to print and fax us or you can apply via a simple submit form. (*The Diocese accepts Visa and Mastercard. Later this year we will provide the ability to securely become or renew your membership online via our secure website.*)



## COMING EVENTS DATES TO REMEMBER

<i>Clergy Retreat</i>	March 23-25, 2004
<i>Feastday of Saint Innocent Metropolitan of Moscow, Apostle to America</i>	April 13, 2004
<i>Commencement at Saint Herman Seminary Kodiak</i>	May 23, 2004
<i>St. Herman of Alaska Iconography School Kodiak</i>	June 21-July 11, 2004
<i>Ss. Sergius &amp; Herman of Valaam Spruce Island</i>	July 11, 2004
<i>St. Herman Pilgrimage Kodiak &amp; Spruce Island</i>	August 7-9, 2004
<i>Feastday of the Holy Alaskan Martyrs Ss. Peter, Juvenaly &amp; his companion</i>	September 24, 2004
<i>Pilgrimage to Holy Russia hosted by His Grace Bishop NIKOLAI</i>	September 15-30, 2004
<i>Diocesan Assembly - 10th Anniversary of St. Innocent Cathedral Anchorage</i>	October 29-31, 2004

### KEEP IN TOUCH!

Moving? or do you know somebody who wants to receive The North Star? Simply fill out and return the form below or easily submit address changes/additions online at: [www.alaskanchurch.org](http://www.alaskanchurch.org) and click the link to join our mailing list!

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North Star Mailing  
P.O. Box 210569  
Anchorage, AK 99521-0569

### FOREMOST ORTHODOX BIO-ETHICIST TO GIVE ADDRESS AT SHS

Prof. H. Tristram Engelhardt Jr. MD. Ph.D; will be the keynote speaker at Saint Herman Seminary May 22-24, 2004. Professor Engelhardt teaches at Baylor University and is respected as the foremost Orthodox bio-ethicist in the world. He is author of the book *The Foundations of Christian BioEthics*.

*For more information contact Saint Herman Seminary. (907) 486-3524*



## St. Michael's Cathedral Summer Internship

An interview with Sub-deacon Paul-Gabriel Erickson



**H**ow do we share the treasure of our faith? In Sitka, Alaska it means opening up a historical Cathedral for the world to see. During the tourist season an average of 6000 tourists descend upon Sitka, 2000 of whom tour St. Michael's Cathedral each week-day. The task of maintaining the Cathedral and accommodating so many is under the caring guidance of Archpriest John and Matushka Elizabeth Zabinko. Together, with the volunteer help of 71 year-old Christine Littlefield, they answer questions, give tours, run the bookstore and daily clean the Cathedral. This year relief arrived through the OCA internship program in the person of Sub-deacon Paul Gabriel Erickson. Paul is currently in his third year at St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary and wanted to spend his summer in a way that would further his understanding of the Church in Alaska. Sub-deacon Paul was assigned by His Grace Bishop NIKOLAI to assist in Sitka for the summer. The following interview was conducted in August before his return to seminary.

**Northstar:** What did you find were the most challenging aspects while serving in Sitka this past summer?

**Paul-Gabriel:** The sheer volume of people coming through the Cathedral on a daily basis. Finding ways to connect with as many people as possible in a given tour became a priority. Most of the time this connection would start with a simple question like, "why do the crosses

tions with them. A few have negative reactions but many sense the holiness despite their admission that they aren't "spiritual" people.

**Northstar:** People visiting from all over the world, how did you deal with the language barrier?

**Paul-Gabriel:** That was interesting. I saw how the Church speaks universally. People seemed to understand they were in a holy place; it unites us as human beings and overcomes language barriers.

**Northstar:** How does the Cathedral balance tourists and services?

**Paul-Gabriel:** At the Cathedral the services take precedence over the tours. Services are announced and tourists are informed that they are welcome to come and participate but that tours are not taking place. The Cathedral is one of the main reasons many tourists decide to stop in Sitka. Every effort is made to make sure the Church is open for them. If a ship arrives off schedule, many times accommodations will be made so that the Church will be open for tours but services are never cancelled or delayed for tours.

**Northstar:** What seemed to connect most with the majority of tourists?

**Paul-Gabriel:** It was evident that a majority of tourists do not come from a liturgical background. Matushka Maggie pointed out to me that many of the tourists purchase icons from the bookstore after their tour.

**Northstar:** What is the cost per person for a tourist?

**Paul-Gabriel:** There is a minimal \$2 fee charged for the tour which helps defray maintenance costs as well as helping fund the upkeep of the cathedral.

**Northstar:** How did you spend your time off and would you consider spending another summer in Sitka?

**Paul-Gabriel:** I did a lot of bike riding and coached a local youth soccer team. As for serving another summer here in Sitka? In a heartbeat! †



have three bars?" For the majority of people, this is their first encounter with the Orthodox Faith.

**Northstar:** What are some of the tourists' reactions to the Cathedral and how did you respond?

**Paul-Gabriel:** Many people are impressed and as a result they give you their undivided attention. This is a tremendous opportunity because it allows us to share our faith with hundreds of people each day. People often would share about their own spiritual backgrounds and this would constantly challenge me in my interac-

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One night, under a canopy of stars in the desert, I cried out: "God, if you are there, I want to find You!" But my mind refused to accept the Bible stories of sacrificial lambs and Christ crucified and resurrected. Descartes said, "I think, therefore I am," and I agreed. My ability to reason was my life! With a heavy heart I gave up on the "mindless" Christian solution. But when all seemed lost, a quiet little thought lodged in my head: "If it were true - would you accept it? And can you prove that it is not?" The question would not let go. In fear and trembling I chose to "sacrifice" my reason, accept the incomprehensible in hopes it would prove true, and live the rest of my life as if it were. It felt as if I were dying, but I saw no other way.

The proof of the pudding, of course, was in the eating. The truth of the Bible could only be tested through obedience. I determined to do whatever "leapt at me" in the daily reading of Scripture. I disagreed with St. Paul's view of women, but he did say, "there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Clearly we were equal in salvation and worthiness - then why different rules? Were they only cultural, not applicable to us today?

Then one day I prayed, "God, You made me a woman; I want to live the fullness of womanhood as you meant it - spiritually, emotionally, every way, even if it means doing as St. Paul says!"

Soon after that, during morning prayer, I Corinthians 11:10 leapt at me. It seemed silly, but I got up from my knees, found a kerchief to put over my head, and went on with prayers. Somehow it felt right. One day I wore the scarf in my Southern Baptist church. There were glances, but no comments. Gradually it became more of a habit, both during prayers at home and in church. As the only woman with a head-covering, I felt conspicuous at times, but could not bring myself to take it off. I decided I would rather err on the side of obedience than against it. And there were the angels to consider. By now I believed in them, but why they should care about my head was still a mystery.

St. Paul had said "ought," not "must." It was my voluntary obedience, even if I didn't understand the "why's." By now I had no intention of giving up the benefits. I felt blessed and protected, feminine, and paradoxically, confident and free - in the presence of guardian and ministering angels.

In Orthodox worship the angels were even more in evidence. The Divine Liturgy is full of references to the various ranks of angels, emphasizing our participation with them in the joyous worship of the Holy Trinity.

St. John Chrysostom (d. A.D. 407), in a

## On Account of the Angels

### Why I Cover My Head

by Elisabet

sermon at the Feast of the Ascension, spoke both of angels and the veiling of women: "The angels are present here... Open the eyes of faith and look upon this sight. For if the very air is filled with angels, how much more so the Church!... Hear the Apostle teaching this, when he bids the women to cover their heads with a veil because of the presence of the angels."

The Church taught that it mattered to the angels whether women cover their heads. But why? Was covering "a sign of submission to her husband," as some commentaries say, or "a cultural statement of inferiority," as one woman told me in explaining why she would not wear a veil?

A friend and former dean of a Lutheran seminary in Norway, Hakon

Haus, pointed to another possible reason. He looked

up I Corinthians 11:10 in Greek: "Therefore the woman shall have *exousia* [right, power, authority] on her head for the sake of the angels." The word *exousia*, said Hakon, also occurs in John 1:12: "As many as received Him, to them He gave *exousia* to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

I felt a light go on. Was St. Paul saying that the head-covering was an outward sign of my "authority, right, power" as a female child of God, recognized by the angels? It rang excitingly true! God asks voluntary submission and obedience of His children. I chose to wear the sign of my feminine - as distinguished from masculine - authority. But why should the angels care?

In her book, *The Holy Angels*, Mother Alexandra writes: "The Celestial hierarchies are the...spiritual reality of ordered creation, the stable patterns in which disruption is unknown..."

Obedience is characteristic of the angelic realm. Dionysius the Areopagite, influential since the fifth century, wrote of nine orders or hierarchies of celestial beings, arranged in three choirs. Seraphim and Cherubim are in the first, archangels and angels in the third choir, closest to us.

Without obedience there is chaos and disorder. St. John Chrysostom in a sermon on I Corinthians, speaks of how distinction in male and female dress - and particularly the veiling of women - "ministers effectively to good order among mankind." Taking off the veil was "no small error," said St. John; "...it is disobedience." It "disturbs all things and betrays the gifts of God, and casts to the ground the honor bestowed...For to [the woman] it is the greatest of honor to preserve her own rank."

The answer to my prayer nearly thirty years ago, that I might know what it means to be a woman, and to live it as God wills for me, is becoming clearer in obedience - often in little things, like putting on a scarf. The mystery of womanhood is still incomprehensible, but now I think, so it must be. I don't have to understand fully what it means to be a woman in order to know that I *am* a woman and to live it. God knows the meaning and I trust Him. I don't have to fight for my place or my right; it is given me in the glorious ranks of angels and mortals.

†

(Reprinted by permission from the Spring 1997 issue of *The Handmaiden*, Conciliar Press)







# GUIDELINES ON THE SACRAMENTS

The following guidelines for the Sacraments of the Holy Orthodox Church are taken from *The Guidelines*

for Clergy of the Orthodox Church in America (Syosset, NY 1998) with additional comment by the Diocese of Alaska in brackets where our practice differs slightly from the practice recommended by the guidelines. The selected guidelines were chosen as most edifying to both clergy and laity alike.

## BAPTISM

Baptism is normally performed in the temple. In the case of an adult baptism, the rite may take place outdoors at a suitable aquatic site. Preferably, each deanery should have at least one large baptismal font designed for the immersion of adult catechumens. (IV 1)

The candidate for baptism should bear the name of a recognized Orthodox Saint. This matter should be discussed with the prospective parents long before the birth of a child. [The service of naming a child is also part of our tradition as Orthodox Christians. There is a service in the Book of Needs for the naming of children which the parents should have served by the priest once their baby is born]. An adult convert to the Church should also bear the name of an Orthodox Saint, especially if the name given at birth is unusual to the Orthodox Tradition (IV 2). *[Parents should be thinking long before a child is born of what to name their child. They should consult the priest for the names of saints that are close to the date of birth or learn more about the saint whose name they want their child to bear. There is no such thing as a person having a Church name and another one for use outside the temple.]*

The Mystery of Holy Baptism is administered in full accordance with the Office of the Service. No exorcism or prayer is to be shortened or omitted. Baptism is properly performed by triple immersion; therefore, mere pouring is not normally permitted. It is necessary to have a font large enough for full immersion (IV 3),

The sponsor of a candidate for Holy Baptism is a guarantor to the Church that the person will be reared and/or educated in the Orthodox Faith; s/he must be a practicing member of the Orthodox Faith. A person can guarantee only that which s/he possesses and practices; therefore, a non-Orthodox is unable to guarantee sponsorship because s/he has neither the faith nor the practice. The sponsor should

be of the same gender as the candidate (IV 5).

## GODPARENT / SPONSOR

A worthy sponsor is already leading a full sacramental life, confessing sins through the Mystery of Penance and receiving Holy Communion. The priest is to instruct the parents and the sponsors of their respective obligations to the catechumen, and to exhort them to live a full sacramental life. The sponsor, as well as the parents, should be prepared to receive the Eucharist at the time together with the newly baptized person (IV 6).

## CHRISMATION

Chrismation is to take place immediately after the Mystery of Baptism according to the prescribed ritual (V 1).

Catechumens who previously have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity in a manner recognized as authentic by the Church, after having completed the established catechetical instruction and making a personal affirmation of the Orthodox faith, are received through the Mysteries of Penance, Chrismation, and Holy Eucharist according to the prescribed ritual. This group includes Roman Catholics and some Protestants *[in addition to these requirements in the Diocese of Alaska it is required that the catechumen have one year of instruction and life in the Church before chrismation. It is also traditional in the Church to receive people on the following days: Lazarus Saturday, Holy Saturday, the Saturday before Pentecost, the Day before Theophany]* (VI 2). *[The priest is to submit to the Bishop the form for reception of converts into the Church (which can be obtained from the Diocese) and cannot arrange any reception until this is approved.]*

Catechumens from non-Christian religions who do not believe in the Holy Trinity, or from those that do not baptize with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are to be received into the Church through the Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation, and Holy Eucharist. This is preceded by an adequate period of catechetical instruction as determined by the local hierarchy. This group includes Baptists, Buddhists, Jews, etc. (VI 3).

Catechumens from all non-Trinitarian groups and cults, including Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Quakers, Unitarians, and adherents of Bah'ai, Unification, and Unity, must be baptized (VI 4).

## HOLY CONFESSION

Confession, the mystery of reconciliation with the Church, must be regular and frequent. It must be an abiding element in the lives of the faithful, deformed and revitalized as the most common and normal actions of a people continually united and reunited with each other and with God (Section VII Introduction)

The priest, as spiritual father and confessor of the flock entrusted to his care, must determine the frequency with which the spiritual child confesses his/her sins (VII 1). *[A good indicator for confession is for one to make a point of going as often as he sins but as an absolute minimum faithful should confess at least once a month, and if they miss a Sunday they should go to confession as well.]*

## HOLY COMMUNION

The reception of Holy Communion is not a right, rather a privilege and only those who have prepared themselves by fasting at least from midnight the night before and having received the sacrament of Holy Confession and absolved are to receive Holy Communion.

## MARRIAGE

The priest should make known to his faithful that before setting a date, renting a hall, or considering any activity related to the social aspect of the marriage day, a couple planning marriage must first seek the blessing, guidance, and advice of their parish priest (VIII 4).

The couple must respect the seasons, times, and days during which marriage may be blessed. The priest must also uphold the teaching of the Church in regard to these things. The most appropriate time for a wedding is Sunday, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy (VIII 5).

Marriages are not to be celebrated on:

- evenings before Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year,
- Saturday evenings throughout the year,
- evenings of the twelve Great Feasts or patronal feast of the parish,
- during the course of all the fasts,
- the Great Forty Day Fast, Apostles' Fast, Dormition Fast, and Nativity Fast,

# GUIDELINES ON THE SACRAMENTS



- from Sunday of Meatfare to the Sunday of Cheese-fare,
- during the course of Bright Week,
- from the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord (January 7) through the Feast of the Synaxis of St. John the Baptist (Jan. 20),
- on the evening and day of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist (Sept. 12), and
- on the evening and day of the Elevation of the Cross (Sept. 27). (VIII 6).

*[The practice in the Diocese of Alaska is only to allow Sunday weddings. All other days need prior blessing from the Hierarchy.]*

The ritual of the marriage ceremony is to be celebrated in an Orthodox Church building. Halls, gardens, and other places are not appropriate (VIII 8).

A petition for a mixed marriage must be submitted to the diocesan hierarchy for his blessing (VIII A, 1) *[Those wishing to marry should not begin to make any marriage plans until they have received a blessing from the hierarchy and completed any pre-marriage counseling required.]*

In a mixed marriage, the Orthodox partner should not consent to have children of the union baptized outside the Orthodox Church as a pre-marriage agreement (VIII A, 2)

Active participation of non-Orthodox clergy in this service, as in all the mysteries of the Orthodox Church, is not allowed. Conversely, Orthodox clergy may not participate in non-Orthodox services and rites (VIII A, 4)

The Orthodox norm for those who marry is one marriage. A second marriage is tolerated under certain conditions. A third marriage is extended under certain precise circumstances. *[Forth marriage is never permitted under any circumstances]* (VIII B, 1).

The Church does not grant divorces. However, it recognizes that because of human weaknesses and sin marriages sometimes disintegrate and are ended by civil decree (divorce) (VIII B, 2).

## HOLY UNCTION

The Mystery of Holy Unction is administered to Orthodox Christians for the healing of soul and body. It may be for a particular person or for a number of persons gathered together *[The*

*practice of the Diocese of Alaska is that 'general unction services' not be served (for example the practice of serving Holy Unction on Holy Wednesday was once common) – the sacrament needs to be celebrated according to the prescribed order and for a specific sick person.)* (IX, 1).

While especially appropriate for the sick and dying, the Mystery of Holy Unction is intended for the living. Those who are already dead must not be anointed with this Holy Unction (IX, 2).

This mystery is bestowed on those who have confessed and are at peace with God in their souls. One cannot expect to receive healing



without repentance; confession precedes the healing (IX, 4).

## FUNERALS

The Church has no specific rules determining the length of time between death and the burial. Interment varies according to the climate, civil ordinances, customs, and circumstances, and may be held immediately following death, or after a number of days (X, 1).

The hour of interment is also not fixed; it may be at any time during the day to accord with cemetery regulations and parish needs (X, 2).

The body of the departed may be brought into the temple at any time prior to the time of the Funeral Service, whether days before or on the day thereof *[it is the preference of the Hierarchy of this Diocese that no unattended bodies be left in the Church; clergy should contact the Hierarchy for answers regarding the placing of the body in Church prior to a funeral as there are numerous situations where this is not permissible.]* (X, 7).

The Funeral Service and burial is generally not officiated on Sunday or Pascha. If the Funeral Service is scheduled for Monday, the body may be brought into the temple only after the service

of Vespers on Sunday evening. There may be circumstances for which immediate burial may be necessary, and in this case pastoral discretion is to be used. *[never unless approved by the Diocesan Bishop]* (X, 12).

Saturday is the usual day for a memorial service. It can be scheduled immediately before the Vigil or Vesper Service. In this way, the prayers for forgiveness and repose preceding these services are illumined through the proclamation of the Lord's Resurrection in the hymns that are sung in the following services (X, 17).

In addition to these specific times, the faithful may have the names of the deceased remembered at the Proskomedia and during the Divine Liturgy (X, 19).

Memorial services are not permitted on feast days or from the Nativity of our Lord to Theophany, and from Palm Sunday to the Sunday of St. Thomas (X, 20).

Membership in the Body of Christ, His Holy Church, is defined by participation in the Holy Eucharist. Inasmuch as a person, by refusing to partake of the Divine Body and Blood of Christ during his/her lifetime, has chosen freely not to be incorporated into the Body of Christ, unless there is reason to assume that the person has returned to Christ at the end of his/her earthly existence, that person will not be buried from the temple (X A, 1).

If a priest is asked to bury a non-Orthodox person, he must consult with his diocesan hierarchy, and with the hierarchy's blessing bury the person according to the service prescribed in the Book of Needs (X, B, 1).

The Orthodox Church normally denies a Church burial to a person who has committed suicide. However, factors bearing on the particular case may become known to the priest who must share this information with the diocesan hierarchy; the hierarchy will consider the factors and make the decision concerning Funeral Services (X C, 2).

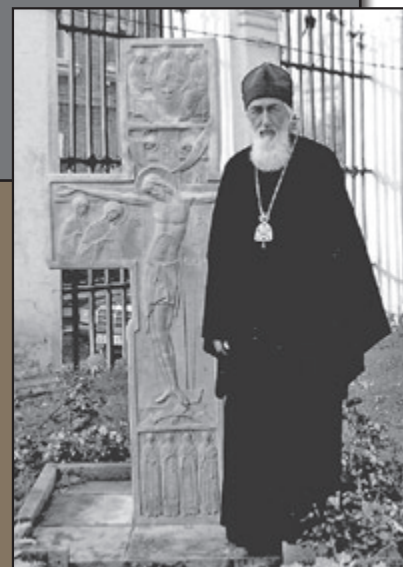
The practice of cremation is not a Christian one and is to be discouraged. Cremated remains are not to be brought into the temple for a burial service or for any other reason (X, E 1). †



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### DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY 2003

Clergy and delegates alike gathered at St. Innocent Cathedral in Anchorage on Nov. 7-9 for the annual diocesan assembly. His Grace opened the assembly with the faithful by serving an Akathist to St. Tikhon Patriarch of Moscow before a holy relic of the Saint.

A brief session followed and a meal was served. Afterwards His Grace gave his annual address on

the state of the diocese. The report highlighted the growth and activity of the diocese during the past year.

On Saturday morning Hierarchal Divine Liturgy was served by His Grace surrounded by every priest in the diocese! At its conclusion the assembly commenced. Highlights included an exciting report on the continued growth of Saint Herman Seminary, an update on the downtown Anchorage museum and the newly opened Russian Alaskan Liturgical Supply Store (RALS). However, the most momentous decision came when it was agreed to replace the Church assessment system with a commitment from each Church to tithe 10% to the diocese annually. Saturday night Vigil was celebrated followed by a Hierarchal Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning.

### MATUSHKA RETREAT

One week before the diocesan assembly, the matushki of



the Diocese of Alaska gathered for a retreat entitled: "Simple Ways of Healing". Dr. Pam Taylor, ND, traveled from Illinois to conduct the retreat in which the matushki learned natural remedies for coping with illness and the stresses of being a priest's wife. A highlight for many were the times of sharing native remedies as well as exploring the connection between physical healing and spiritual well-being through practicing our Orthodox faith and long-standing natural remedies. †



# ADOPT A SEMINARIAN

Online at: [www.alaskanchurch.org/outreachalaska.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/outreachalaska.html)

This was the first year of the Adopt A Seminarian project for St. Herman Theological Seminary. Thanks be to God, all qualifying

to have the seminarian you are sponsoring come and visit your parish or even being able to visit Alaska and meet the seminarian you are sponsoring perhaps even accompanying them their home village! Imagine the joy of being able to attend their graduation in Kodiak or to be present at their ordination! What a beautiful bond in Christ's love! This is the love that was expressed in the early Church as well, through writing



seminarians were sponsored from various Orthodox jurisdictions. Parishes, individuals, groups, and clergy have come together throughout the lower 48 to provide much needed support for the education of clergy to serve our Lord's Vineyard in Alaska. September 2002 through May 2003 eight seminarians and their families were provided \$150 per month to assist them with the varied expenses of balancing the needs of a family with the demands of schooling. All sponsors have made a 3-year commitment to the project.

This was also a first effort to develop a level of communication between the seminarians and their sponsors - learning about each other and from each other. Interaction between sponsors and seminarians is a crucial piece of the Adopt a Seminarian project. Involvement is not only about the giving of treasure but also about the giving of time. The Church in Alaska has suffered over many years from neglect and isolation. The interaction between Alaska's future clergy and those within the Church in the lower 48 can be of immense value. The bond will last through a lifetime of service by offering encouragement as we labor together. Wouldn't it be wonderful

## CONGRATULATIONS 2003 GRADUATE SPONSORS!

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All participating sponsors are listed on the website:  
[www.alaskanchurch.org/html/outreachalaska.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/html/outreachalaska.html)

sponsors for Priest Nicholai Isaac with the ordering of a set of new vestments for presentation to him during the commencement activities. This sponsorship consisted of 4 Kansas parishes. Together they collected the funds to pay for the beautiful new vestments, which was a real surprise for Priest Nicholai and seminary staff.

A large enrollment for 2003-2004 means we are in need of additional

sponsors. Please consider this opportunity to educate and become part of the family of Alaskan clergy. Without clergy there is no Church. We must all, as the Orthodox faithful in America recognize the importance of the Church in Alaska.

This is our first Orthodox heritage on this continent. He who denies his heritage has no heritage. Your involvement in Adopt a Seminarian will strengthen the Church for all of us. †



and support of one another. When there is great distance and cultural differences, communication is necessary to understand each other and learn from those who have had similar struggles and successes. Sponsors and seminarians have an opportunity to interact in ways that will lead to growth that cannot be learned through text books. Preparation for serving the Church, through building relationships and faithful stewardship by example are an integral part of the Adopt a Seminarian program.

## FIELD REPORT

Out of 8 sponsored seminarians, 3 completed their studies and graduated in a wonderful 2-day commencement program on May 20-21st in Kodiak. Outreach Alaska provided 25 printed invitations for the graduates to send to family and friends. Sponsor parishes for Priest Thomas Andrew, Priest Nicholai Isaac, and Deacon Daniel Charles were invited to attend the graduation ceremonies. It was a pleasure for me to travel from Wichita, Kansas for the commencement Program. I presented our 3 new graduates each a \$450 check as a gift from their sponsor - the final payment for their adoption program. Outreach Alaska assisted the

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# SAINT HERMAN SEMINARY NEWS

Online at: [www.alaskanchurch.org/shs/home.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/shs/home.html)

## GRADUATION 2003

On May 20th graduation at St. Herman Seminary in Kodiak was an uplifting event that challenged everyone present to focus anew on the natural "missionary spirit" of our Church and diocese. The speaker was Protopresbyter Martin Ritsi, Executive Director of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center in St. Augustine Florida. Before his ordination, Protopresbyter Martin came to Kodiak as a commercial fisherman. He returned to inspire all of us with his challenge to once again find the missionary zeal which originally brought the Orthodox Faith to Alaska over 200 years ago. Protopresbyter Martin and his family served for many years as missionaries in Kenya and Albania before his call to the OCMC as executive director. He has worked closely with His Grace, Bishop NIKOLAI to bring many teams to serve in Alaska.



The Diploma in Orthodox Theology was awarded to Priest Nicholai Isaac (cum laude), Priest Thomas Andrew and Deacon Daniel Charles.

Reader's certificates were awarded to David Ogan, Andrew Kashevarof, Alexie Knagin, Michael Fredericks and Leonty Johnston.

Twenty-five people became "Associate Alumnus" of the seminary representing eleven different states. This new program provides funding for continuing education programs for Alaskan clergy. To become an "Associate Alumnus" visit us on the web at: [www.alaskanchurch.org/shs/alumi.html](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/shs/alumi.html)

Another highlight was the presentation to graduates from the parishes which adopted them through the "Adopt-a-Seminarian program. Mary Ann Khoury, the programs director, traveled from Kansas to make the presentations. The program supports seminarians and their families in their last three years of study at St. Herman's.

## 2003-04 ENROLLMENT

The Fall term for St. Herman Seminary began with orientation on Spruce Island on Monday, September 8th. Classes began on the 9th. First year students are Evan Berezkin from Unalaska, Stephanie Trefon from Kenai and Aleksandr Bozinoski from Macedonia. Returning second year students include, Michael Fredericks from Chuathabluk, Leonty Johnston from Kasigluk,

Alexie Knagin from Port Lions and Andre Kashevarof from St. Paul.

Completing fourth year studies, as a full-time student in Anchorage, is David Ogan. Deacon George Nelson, Deacon Daniel Charles and Nicholas Jarlson are also participating in fourth year classes in Anchorage.

Archpriest Martin Nicolai has joined the seminary faculty where he is teaching Church Music and Introductory Doctrine courses.

## ARCHIMANDRITE BENJAMIN TAKES NEW POST

The Diocese of Alaska said goodbyes recently to Archimandrite Benjamin, who was the Administrative Dean of St. Herman Seminary, and the former Dean of St. Innocent Cathedral in Anchorage. Father Benjamin, was recently nominated by the Diocesan Assembly of the Diocese of the West to be Bishop TIKHON of San Francisco's Auxiliary Bishop. Father Benjamin moved on January 8<sup>th</sup> to Boulder City, NV, where he will take up residence at The Life-Giving Spring Retreat Center (a retreat center owned by that Diocese) and becomes Chancellor of the Diocese of the West January 20th. St. Herman Seminary and the Holy Resurrection Cathedral community in Kodiak held a festive going-away potluck in Fr. Benjamin's honor, which Vladyka NIKOLAI was able to attend. The event highlighted festive native dances performed by students, lively singing of Scottish folk songs and moving speeches. "We are grateful to Father Benjamin for all the



good work he has done as Dean in Anchorage and Kodiak, and for his service as Acting Chancellor prior to our arrival here in 2001. He will be missed. We wish him every blessing from God," said Bishop NIKOLAI.

While waiting for his flight in Anchorage, Father Benjamin was blessed with a visit from the Star. Numerous St. Innocent Cathedral faithful met him at the airport and sang Christmas hymns and carols.

## BOOKS DONATED

A generous donation of nearly two tons of books were shipped to Saint Herman Seminary this year, a gift from

His Beatitude Metropolitan THEODOSIUS. The books will be used to help build up the seminary library giving seminarians easier access to a wide variety of theological works, writings of the Fathers and Saints as well as a rich archive of theological journals. †



## SEMINARIAN SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

*For the first time, two St. Herman seminarians participated in the OCA's summer internship program. Deacon Daniel Charles served at Eklutna under the mentorship of Archpriest Paul Merculief and Reader Michael Fredericks served in Kodiak at Holy Resurrection Cathedral under the mentorship of Archpriest Chad Hatfield. This program provides valuable pastoral experience and directed reflection on priestly ministry.*





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