Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In an effort to provide accurate and up-to-date information about the The Orthodox Church in America, the annual Sourcebook and Church Directory has been published for several decades. The task of gathering the information contained herein – directories of the Church’s hierarchs, central administration, dioceses, parishes, clergy, administrative offices, and so on – is, to say the least, monumental.

In light of the growing use of the internet for disseminating information, the 2006 Sourcebook and Church Directory is being published on-line in PDF format, rather than in the former, far more costly, printed edition. In this manner, individuals can print out the entire book for personal use. It is our hope that this will prove to be more convenient to those who regularly use the Sourcebook and Church Directory.

In addition to directories and other useful information on the Church’s many communities, the Sourcebook and Church Directory also features comprehensive directories of the Church’s numerous departments, offices, commissions, and boards as well as simple overviews of what each accomplishes. Thus, the constantly increasing number of resources available from The Orthodox Church in America are made more easily accessible on the diocesan, deanery, and parish levels.

It is my hope that you will find the 2006 Sourcebook and Church Directory useful on many levels, and that it will be a ready companion to everyone involved in the ongoing life and mission of the Orthodox Church in America.

With love in Christ,

+ HERMAN
Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All America and Canada
Metropolitan Herman Attends Inauguration of President Bush, Vice-President Cheney

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, was among a number of national religious and civic leaders present on the steps of the US Capitol for the inauguration of President George Bush and Vice-President Richard Cheney on Thursday, January 20, 2005.

Also attending the inauguration ceremonies was His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios, of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Despite extreme cold, thousands were on hand for the event, the 55th in the history of the United States of America.

While in the nation’s capital, Metropolitan Herman participated in a number of other activities associated with the inauguration, including the inaugural prayer service in the National Cathedral Church of Saints Peter and Paul.

ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 2005, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman participated in the National Prayer Service at the Washington National Cathedral, along with the Rev. Billy Graham, and His Eminence, William Cardinal Keeler (top left).

THE 55TH PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL CEREMONIES for George W. Bush took place on the steps of the Capital in Washington, DC (above).

METROPOLITAN HERMAN GREETS President Bush during the recessional (middle left) and Vice-President Richard Cheney and his wife Lynne (at left) at the conclusion of the National Prayer Service.
Thirty-five years ago, the North American Orthodox jurisdiction that had been known as the “Metropolia” was granted autocephaly, or self-governing status, thereby enabling it to order its internal life freely, without relying on any other ecclesiastical entity, while relating to its Orthodox sister Churches as an “equal.” The grant of autocephaly was made by the Orthodox Church of Russia, which formally had established a mission in North America in 1794. By the mid-19th century, that mission had evolved into the continent’s sole Orthodox diocese. The diocese experienced rapid growth until chaos befell the Church as a result of the Russian revolution, giving rise to multiple ethnic “jurisdictions.”

By the time autocephaly was granted 35 years ago, it had become apparent that the time had come to address the Orthodox ecclesiastical disunity and canonical abnormalities that appeared in the 1920s with the breakup of the North American diocese. It became equally apparent that the idea of an autocephalous Church was hardly a new or innovative one: As early as 1906, Saint Tikhon, during his tenure as archbishop of North America, had spoken of the need for an autocephalous North American Church embracing all Orthodox Christians, regardless of background, in keeping with the canonical principles of the Church.

During the late 1960s, the very concept of autocephaly was referred to as “a meaningful storm.” The late Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemann, together with such luminaries as the late Archbishop Kiprian of Philadelphia and others, were at the forefront of the move toward autocephaly. They fully recognized that there would be those who were bound to - and indeed did - react negatively. Yet, they recognized the need to address the lack of administrative unity among North America’s fractured Orthodox community and pushed forward, fully aware that while the granting and acceptance of autocephaly might not be “the” ultimate solution, it was certainly a meaningful step in the right direction.

Today, despite tremendous strides that have been made in the area of pan-Orthodox cooperation in foreign missions, humanitarian aid and charity, religious education, campus ministry, and radio broadcasting, the matter of administrative unity remains an issue still to be resolved. While the gathering of North America’s Orthodox hierarchs in Ligonier, PA, in 1994 held out great hope for the future, little has happened since that time, and “storm clouds” continue to gather as the call for unity is increasingly heard.

The Orthodox Church in America stands in a unique position. While there are those who do not recognize our autocephalous status, our canonicity is not questioned. And the fact that we are not dependent on any entities abroad - and this is the “reality” of our autocephaly - enables us to speak for ourselves, affirming the need for a single Orthodox Church in North America.

Had it not been for the gift of autocephaly, which we especially remembered in 2005, surely we would not be in the unique position of being able to focus on what clearly is the next “meaningful storm”: Orthodox administrative unity in North America.
2005 Year in Review

Archimandrite Alejo Elected Bishop of Mexico City

During their spring session in March 2005, the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America elected the dean of Mexico City’s Holy Ascension Cathedral, Archimandrite Alejo Antonio [Pacheco Vera], bishop of Mexico City and auxiliary to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman.

The need for a resident bishop to oversee the OCA’s Mexican Exarchate was expressed by His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South, who has served as exarch since the repose of His Grace, Bishop Jose [Cortes y Olmos].

The exarchate, headed by Bishop Jose, was received into the Orthodox Church in America in the early 1970s. Numbering some 20,000 indigenous faithful, its primary mission is the evangelization of Mexican nationals. It enjoys positive relations with the nation’s Greek and Antiochian Orthodox communities.

Metropolitan Herman presided at Archimandrite Alejo’s consecration to the episcopacy during the centennial pilgrimage at Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, South Canaan, PA, on Friday and Saturday, May 27-28, 2005.

Bishop Alejo was born in Mexico on September 6, 1954. After his reception into the Orthodox faith on August 1, 1972, he studied theology through programs offered by His Eminence, Metropolitan Antonio Chedraoui, the Antiochian Orthodox Bishop of Mexico City.

On July 8, 1978, he was tonsured to monastic rank with the name Alejo by His Grace, Bishop Jose [Cortes y Olmos] of Mexico. On January 14 of the following year, he was ordained to the diaconate, after which he was assigned to the Cathedral of the Ascension in Mexico City.

Archbishop Peter Retires, Dioceses Merged

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America accepted the request of His Eminence, Archbishop Peter of New York and New Jersey, to retire during their spring session in March 2005.

Archbishop Peter first revealed his desire to retire during the Holy Synod’s fall 2004 session, after which he was granted a leave of absence. His retirement became effective April 30, 2005.

Metropolitan Herman and the members of the Holy Synod expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Archbishop Peter for his many years of hierarchical service and scholarly ministry. In light of Archbishop Peter’s retirement, the hierarchs decided to merge the Diocese of Washington and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey into a single Diocese of Washington and New York, effective April 30, 2005.

The move signals a return to the diocesan boundaries and structure that had existed until 1981, when the Diocese of Washington was created as the seat of the OCA Primate.

Metropolitan Herman serves as ruling bishop of the new diocese with the title of “Archbishop of Washington and New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada.”
With the blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and after several months of intense work on the part of members of the OCA's Department of Communications and several volunteers, the Orthodox Church in America's enhanced and completely redesigned web site made its debut on March 2, 2005.

It was on the Great Feast of the Nativity in 1996 that the OCA web site made its debut. Initially, the site featured directories of hierarchs, clergy, parishes and institutions, and ministries; essential information on the teachings, worship, history, and spirituality of the Church; the “Question and Answer” service; and a variety of other features.

The site was expanded in 1999, when the popular daily lives of the saints, liturgical resources, larger news sections, and many other features were added. The youth and young adult site and chat rooms also made their debut during this period. In addition, existing directories, departmental home pages, and the site’s educational, spiritual, and practical resources were greatly enhanced.

By 2004, the site had grown to well over 5000 pages. It became obvious that with the number of pages and features increasing literally by the day, a complete reorganization and redesign of the site had become a necessity. Through the herculean efforts of Mr. John Mindala, OCA Webmaster, the Rev. Joseph Frawley, Mr. David Lucs, Mr. Greg Sulich, Mrs. Tracey Sommerville, Mrs. Lisa McElearney and the Sandwire Corporation the redesign was completed.

Besides incorporating the latest technology, the site now boasts a variety of new features and resources. The thousands of individual pages added over the years have been reorganized and expanded, while enhanced, user-friendly features promise easier and faster navigation for the hundreds of thousands of visitors who log on to the site each year.

On Wednesday, April 13, 2005, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, celebrated a Memorial for the repose of His Eminence, Archbishop Iakovos, retired Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, at Holy Trinity Archdiocesan Cathedral, New York, NY.

His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, welcomed Metropolitan Herman at the cathedral and thanked him for his prayers on behalf of the clergy and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America.

Archbishop Iakovos, 93, died after a brief hospitalization in Stamford, CT, on Sunday, April 10. He served the Greek Archdiocese from 1959 until his retirement in 1996.

Upon learning of Archbishop Iakovos’s repose, Metropolitan Herman sent a letter of condolence to Archbishop Demetrios.

“IT is with great sadness that we have learned of the falling-asleep in the Lord of the ever-memorable Servant of God, His Eminence, the Most Reverend Iakovos, former Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America,” Metropolitan Herman wrote. “Throughout his life, Archbishop Iakovos served Christ and His Holy Church with deep faith and great devotion. We are confident that the Lord will now reward him for his dedicated archpastoral service by granting him eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven.

“In expressing our sadness at this loss, I ask that you please accept the heartfelt condolences and prayerful support of the hierarchs, clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America,” Metropolitan Herman continued. “Be assured of our fervent prayer that the Lord will grant rest with the saints to His newly departed servant, Archbishop Iakovos, and make his memory to be eternal!”

Archbishop Iakovos was widely known for his work in the areas of ecumenism and human and civil rights. He courageously walked with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Selma, AL, an historic moment captured on the cover of the March 26, 1965, issue of Life magazine. He is also credited with establishing the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas in 1960.

In 1994, he co-hosted the unprecedented gathering of the continent’s Orthodox Christian hierarchs at Antiochian Village in Ligonier, PA, to share and discuss the prospect of establishing an administratively united Orthodox Church in North America.

Greek Archbishop Iakovos Dies

HIS EMINENCE, ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS stands side-by-side with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, AL in 1965.
2005 Year in Review

OCA Represented at Enthronement of Pope Benedict XVI, Funeral of Pope John Paul II

His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of South Canaan, Auxiliary to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and the Very Rev. David Brum, the Metropolitan’s secretary, represented the Orthodox Church in America at the enthronement of Pope Benedict XVI on April 24, 2005.

Bishop Tikhon and Father Brum were among dozens of other Orthodox leaders who attended the enthronement at Saint Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City, where Pope Benedict’s predecessor, Pope John Paul II, was buried two weeks earlier. Representing Metropolitan Herman and the OCA at the funeral were His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada, vice-chair of the OCA department of external affairs and interchurch relations, and the Rev. Alexander Rentel, a department member and assistant professor of canon law and Byzantine studies at Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, Crestwood, NY.

Upon learning of the 84-year-old Pope’s death on Saturday, April 2, 2005, Metropolitan Herman sent letters of condolence to Angelo Cardinal Sodano, Vatican Secretary of State, and Walter Cardinal Kasper of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. Metropolitan Herman recounted how, in word and deed, the late Pope “constantly reminded all humanity of our shared responsibility to defend the rights of the poor, the defenseless, and those who have no one to speak for them” and remained steadfast “in proclaiming the ‘Gospel of Life’ and in safeguarding the dignity and sanctity of life in all its stages. This, perhaps, will be his greatest legacy, not only to the faithful of the Roman Catholic Church, but also for all Christians and all people of good will.”

Chaplains Serve Military Personnel in Middle East

As the conflict in Iraq continued, several Orthodox chaplains and clergy served the needs of military personnel in the war zone.

On Holy Pascha, Chaplain Peter Dubinin celebrated Paschal services at Camp Victory, Saddam Hussein’s former palace in the Iraqi capital. He also celebrated services during Bright Week in Saddam’s mother’s former palace in Tikrit. Paschal services were also celebrated at Kuwait’s Ali Al Salem Air Base by Chaplain John Stefaro, who also served Bright Week services at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar and Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates.

Several other chaplains served the liturgical and personal needs of military personnel in the Middle East, Germany, and elsewhere in 2005.
Thousands Celebrate Centennial of St. Tikhon’s Monastery

Following a tradition established by Orthodox Christian faithful a century ago, thousands of clergy and lay pilgrims joined the Church’s hierarchs over Memorial Day weekend to mark the centennial of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery, May 27-30, 2005.

Founded by Saint Tikhon, during his tenure as Archbishop of North America, and Archimandrite [later Archbishop] Arseny [Chagovets], the monastery is North America’s oldest Orthodox monastic house. For a century, countless faithful have passed through its arches to worship in the monastery church, pray before its shrines, and pursue spiritual growth and comfort. Under the guidance of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, who has been intimately involved with the monastery since his days as a student at Saint Tikhon’s Seminary in the 1960s, the monastery has continued to grow and prosper.

During the centennial pilgrimage, a special session of the Holy Synod of Bishops was held, and Archimandrite Alejo was consecrated to the episcopacy of the Exarchate of Mexico. A new set of centennial bells were blessed, as was the new Metropolitan Theodosius Museum and seminary bookstore. In addition to housing priceless icons, antique liturgical appointments, vestments, and other religious artifacts from around the world, the museum features numerous items bequeathed to the monastery by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, retired OCA Primate.

More than 500 hierarchs, clergy, and faithful enjoyed the centennial banquet at the Genetti Convention Center, Wilkes-Barre, PA.

The highlight of the pilgrimage was the centennial Divine Liturgy concelebrated by Metropolitan Herman, members of the Holy Synod of Bishops, visiting hierarchs, and dozens of priests and deacons. Nearly the entire body of faithful received the Eucharist at the Liturgy in a visible sign of commitment to the unity Orthodox Christians find in Christ and a pledge to continue the work initiated by the monastery’s founders. A choir of more than 200 singers, representing parishes from across North America, sang under the direction of the Very Rev. Sergei Glagolev.

Countless pilgrims also participated in numerous other services throughout the pilgrimage weekend.

The centennial pilgrimage was a fitting tribute to the monastery’s visionary and holy founders, and an expression of intense gratitude to those - especially Metropolitan Herman, who has made the monastery his home for four of its ten decades - who have built upon the founders’ vision spiritually, as well as with wood, bricks, and mortar. In an era in which statisticians claim that the average life-span of the typical American religious “institution” is less than 90 years, the monastery’s ongoing growth stands as a witness to its past and serves as the very foundation upon which its next century of ministry as a center of spiritual refreshment is being built.
14th All-American Council Focuses on Mission, Clergy Formation, Orthodox Unity

Nearly 1200 hierarchs, clergy and lay delegates, observers, and guests gathered at the Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto, ON, Canada, July 17-22, 2005, for the 14th All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America.

In a series of plenary sessions, delegates considered five essential “pillars” of Church life - vision and identity as the Orthodox Church in America; relations with Orthodox and non-Orthodox; clergy formation and education; parish health; and evangelization - each of which was associated with the overall Council theme, “Our Church and the Future.”

"O ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA, PRAY TO GOD FOR US!" is sung by the clergy and faithful July 19, 2005 during an Akathistos Service (above left) to the North American Saints celebrated by Metropolitan Herman.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS make their way to the Divine Liturgy (above right) marking the opening of the 14th All-American Council at the Sheraton Toronto Centre hotel on July 17, 2005.

LOCAL COMMITTEE SECRETARY SOPHIA KOLAROFF assisted in numerous ways to help make the 14th All-American Council a success, including reading from Scripture on July 18, 2005 (middle left). Each day’s sessions began with either a priest or lay person reading from Scripture.

“BECOME WHAT YOU ARE,” the theme for the youth program during the Council was presented in ‘newspaper’ format (below left) by a member of the 10 to 12-year-old group during the last Plenary Session of the Council.
Delegates also approved a resolution to increase income for the Church’s administration and ministries through “fair share” funding provided by the OCA’s dioceses and their parishes.

In his opening address, Metropolitan Herman emphasized that the OCA’s future course begs the “responsible and right-ordered participation of the entire People of God in the Church’s life and work.”

Metropolitan Herman underscored the OCA’s unique position, as an autocephalous Church, to address its needs and future direction within the context of the All-American Council.

In addressing the funding of the Church, Metropolitan Herman challenged the Council delegates to embrace generosity “in sharing the blessings we have been given by God.” While recognizing that “every diocese, parish, and Church member must strive to help in the fulfillment and realization of our Church’s mission,” he lamented “those who are indifferent to the needs of our parishes, dioceses, and Church.”

In several plenary sessions, delegates explored the five “pillars” upon which the Council theme was built. Formal presentations were followed by small group workshops, during which delegates offered a wide range of ideas for strengthening the life of the Church. A summary team synthesized these ideas and offered reports at the beginning of each session.

A number of serious proposals surfaced in a final presentation offered by the summary team. While lack of sufficient funding surfaced as the main obstacle to accomplishing many of the Church’s goals, delegates did offer specific long- and short-range proposals in three broad areas.

**Mission.** The long-range goal of establishing 50 new missions and 50 revitalized parishes within the next five to ten years, and the establishment of a national evangelization program topped the list of proposals delegates felt could be reasonably implemented. Other proposals included the introduction of seminary courses on mission, the appointment of diocesan mission directors, and an increased visibility and profile for the annual Missions Appeal. It was also recommended that...

OVER 1100 HIERARCHS, CLERGY, AND FAITHFUL attended the Council in Toronto (above right) which proved to be the second largest All-American Council in history.
the Department of Evangelization develop specific long- and short-range goals before the fall 2005 session of the Holy Synod.

- **Education and formation.** With funding an ongoing obstacle for many wishing to pursue theological studies, delegates recommended that within five to ten years, full funding for seminarians studying for the priesthood be made available.

Delegates shared strong feelings for the development of skill-based educational resources and mentoring and internship programs, adding that within ten years such programs should be a normal part of clergy formation.

Delegates also offered two recommendations that could be implemented within the next three years: the creation of national “Orthodox Life” conferences, and the establishment of an ongoing pastoral education and care program directed by seasoned clergy. The revitalization of the summer internship program, currently “on hold,” was seen as an immediate priority.

- **Orthodox unity.** Four general recommendations emerged within the area of Orthodox unity. Delegates reaffirmed the role of the Orthodox Church in America as a leading voice for Orthodox unity. They also recommitted themselves to the prayerful support of Metropolitan Herman and the members of the Holy Synod in their efforts to promote unity.

The strengthening of inter-Orthodox collaboration, especially on the local level, was affirmed as a principle of action. Delegates also recommended that the bilateral commission between the Orthodox Church in America and the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America be reestablished.

In addition to plenary sessions and a variety of workshops, forums, and special events for children, teens, and young adults, delegates participated in daily Vespers, Matins, and the Divine Liturgy, the essential context in which the Council’s deliberations and sessions took place.
Monastic Convocation held at St. Tikhon’s Monastery

In conjunction with the celebration of the centennial of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, invited monastics to gather for a convocation to share the concerns and challenges faced by Orthodox monks and nuns in today’s culture.

Thirty representatives from several monasteries spent July 29-31, 2005, in liturgical prayer, interspersed with a series of talks and discussions.

The deputy abbot of Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, welcomed the monastics in the name of Metropolitan Herman and the Saint Tikhon’s brotherhood.

During the convocation, the monastics joyously welcomed the wonderworking Valaam Icon of the Mother of God, which was escorted by Metropolitan Herman; His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada; and the delegation from the Orthodox Church of Finland headed by His Eminence, Archbishop Leo of Karelia and All Finland.

NUNS VENERATE THE VALAAM ICON at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy (above right) at St. Tikhon’s Monastery and are presented with icon prints of the wonderworking Icon which was brought from the Valamo Monastery in Finland.

DURING THE MONASTIC CONVOCATION, His Eminence, Archbishop Leo (below right) spoke about the life of the Orthodox Church in Finland to the monastics gathered on July 30, 2005.

Fr. Eugene Vansuch Named FOS Executive Director

The Very Rev. Eugene Vansuch was named executive director of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards [FOS] by the Holy Synod of Bishops during its spring session in March 2005.

Father Vansuch, who succeeds the Very Rev. Joseph Fester, began his work as Executive Director on June 1, 2005. For many years, Father Vansuch served as rector of Saint Nicholas Church, Bethlehem, PA.

The Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards [FOS] funds the majority of the work done by the Church’s departments, boards, commissions, and committees. The support provided by members of the Fellowship through voluntary gifts is crucial to offset the costs of meetings, research, preparation, and distribution of materials produced by those serving the Church on a voluntary basis as members of the Church Ministries, acting as living examples of stewardship of time and talent and sharing their expertise with the entire People of God.

FOS’s membership includes clergy, laity, and parish communities that are committed to supporting the work to build-up The Orthodox Church in America.

The Very Rev. Eugene Vansuch
2005 Year in Review

Metropolitan Herman Presides at Celebration of the 35th Anniversary of the Glorification of St. Herman

Hundreds of pilgrims from across North America and beyond visited Sitka, Anchorage, Kodiak, and Spruce Island, AK, to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the glorification of Saint Herman, August 2-9, 2005.

While the logistics of hosting such an event were formidable, His Grace, Bishop Nikolai of Sitka, Anchorage, and Alaska, his staff, and an army of volunteers offered the pilgrims a deeply moving spiritual experience and gracious hospitality.

Throughout the week-long pilgrimage, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and His Eminence, Archbishop Leo of Karelia and All Finland, presided at services in all three cities and at the Chapel of Saints Sergius and Herman of Valaam on Spruce Island, where Saint Herman spent much of his life. Archbishop Leo, accompanied by a delegation representing the autonomous Finnish Orthodox Church, brought the wonderworking Valaam Icon of the Mother of God to the pilgrimage. The icon originally was enshrined in the Valaam Monastery in northern Russia before it was moved to Finland after World War II. Saint Herman and his companions had lived at the Valaam Monastery before initiating their missionary labors in Alaska in 1794.

In addition to Bishop Nikolai, other hierarchs participating in the celebration included His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate; His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada; His Grace, Bishop Nikon of Boston and the Albanian Archdiocese; and His Grace, Bishop Benjamin of Berkeley. Many clergy also participated in the services.

The highlight of the pilgrimage was the voyage to Spruce Island. Early on the morning of August 8, pilgrims boarded boats for the brief cruise to the island, where the Divine Liturgy was celebrated by the hierarchs and numerous clergy.

BISHOP NIKOLAI PRESENTED AN ICON of Saint Herman to Archbishop Leo (left) at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on August 9, 2006 for the Feast of St. Herman of Alaska.

PILGRIMS SING HYMNS in honor of Saint Herman (below) as they approach the island’s Chapel of Saints Sergius and Herman of Valaam on August 8, 2006.
Wonderworking Sitka Icon visits “Lower 48”

With the blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops, the wonderworking Sitka Icon of the Mother of God visited more than five dozen parishes, monasteries, and communities throughout the “Lower 48” states between early September and mid-November 2005.

His Grace, Bishop Nikolai of Sitka, Anchorage, and Alaska initially presented the proposal for the cross-country pilgrimage to Metropolitan Herman and the members of the Holy Synod in 2004. In the summer of 2005, the icon visited numerous parishes and communities across Alaska in preparation for the pilgrimage.

Commissioned by Saint Innocent Veniaminov, North America’s first ruling bishop, the Sitka icon has been enshrined in Archangel Michael Cathedral, Sitka, AK, since the mid-1800s. Numerous miraculous healings have been ascribed to the intercession of the Mother of God as a result of prayers offered before the icon. The icon miraculously survived the fire that destroyed the cathedral in the mid-1960s and subsequently was enshrined in the rebuilt cathedral several years later.

While the icon had visited a number of parishes in the “Lower 48” during the past three decades, the pilgrimage marked the first time that it has been made available to the faithful in so many parishes coast-to-coast.

Accompanying the icon during the pilgrimage were clergy from Alaska, who in addition to concelebrating at services in the icon’s presence offered informative presentations of the life and needs of the Diocese of Alaska, the “mother diocese” of the Orthodox Church in America.

THOUSANDS OF FAITHFUL, including those at St. George Serbian Orthodox Church, North Canton, OH (above) on November 9, 2005, had the opportunity to pray before the Sitka Icon of the Mother of God during the pilgrimage to the “Lower 48”.

Original plans for the pilgrimage called for visits to sixty parishes in sixty days. At the conclusion of sixty-five days, the Icon had visited eighty-four communities.

“REJOICE, O MOTHER OF THE MOST HIGH GOD!” Altar servers (below left) at Holy Resurrection Greek Orthodox Church, Glen Cove, NY gaze upon the Sitka Icon during the visit on October 16, 2005.

The clergy accompanying the Icon spoke about life in the Alaskan Diocese and the legacy of St. Herman to the faithful gathered, like those in a packed St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Pittsburgh, PA on October 10, 2005 (below right).
Metropolitan Herman Speaks at Ceremony In Nation’s Capital Honoring Hurricane Katrina Victims

The National Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Washington, DC, was filled to capacity on Friday, September 16, 2005, as His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and dozens of other national religious leaders joined US President George Bush in remembering those who had lost their lives as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

Metropolitan Herman was called upon to address the importance of leadership in the face of crisis. He joined several other religious leaders, including Roman Catholic Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes of New Orleans and others representing faith communities in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Texas, in reflecting on the tragedy.

International Orthodox Christian Charities [IOCC] continues to provide on-site assistance and ministry to flood victims across the South. Immediately after the hurricane, IOCC dispatched teams to the region to assess needs.

PRESIDENT BUSH GREET METROPOLITAN HERMAN prior to the prayer service (above right) on the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance, Friday, September 16, 2006 honoring those who were affected by Hurricane Katrina.

METROPOLITAN HERMAN JOINED REPRESENTATIVES of various faith traditions (middle right) from across the United States who participated in the prayer service and offered prayers (below) for the leaders of our nation that they may be given the strength necessary to help those affected by the hurricane.
Bishop Tikhon of South Canaan Installed as Ruling Hierarch of Eastern Pennsylvania Diocese

PROTOPRESBYTER ROBERT S. KONDRATICK, OCA chancellor, reads the act of installation (above right) for His Grace, Bishop Tikhon as ruling hierarch of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania on Saturday, October 29, 2005 at Saint Stephen Cathedral, Philadelphia, PA. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman presided at the installation along with His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa, Secretary of the Holy Synod of Bishops of The Orthodox Church in America.

BISHOP TIKHON BLESSES THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL from the cathedra (above right) for the first time as Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania.

Philadelphia’s Saint Stephen Cathedral was filled to capacity as His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presided at the Divine Liturgy during which His Grace, Bishop Tikhon [Mollard], was installed as the ruling hierarch of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania on October 29, 2005.

Bishop Tikhon was elected to the see at a special session of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America on May 27, 2005. Two days earlier, clergy and lay delegates to an assembly of the diocese nominated Bishop Tikhon to the see that Metropolitan Herman had filled for two decades before his election as the OCA’s Primate in July 2002.

Concelebrating with Metropolitan Herman at the installation Liturgy were His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada, and numerous clergy representing the diocese’s three deaneries. Metropolitan Herman had served as the diocese’s ruling bishop for two decades before his election as the OCA’s Primate in July 2002. During the Liturgy, Metropolitan Herman presented the archpastoral staff to Bishop Tikhon as a sign of his episcopal position and authority.

A native of Boston, Bishop Tikhon converted to Orthodox Christianity from Episcopalianism in 1989. After completing studies at Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, he entered Saint Tikhon’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, South Canaan, PA, from which he received a Master of Divinity degree in 1993.

Prior to his consecration to the episcopacy in 2004, Bishop Tikhon was senior lecturer in Old Testament at Saint Tikhon’s Seminary. He is credited with a number of publications. He also served as deputy abbot of Saint Tikhon’s Monastery prior to his election to the see of Philadelphia.
St. Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, DC, Marks 75th Anniversary

On the first weekend of December 2005, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presided at the celebration of the 75th anniversary of Saint Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, DC.

Established in 1930, the cathedral has served as the seat of the Primate of the Orthodox Church in America since 1980.

Following the celebration of the anniversary Divine Liturgy, a banquet was held at Saints Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Church hall, Potomac, MD.

In addition to numerous clergy and faithful, ambassadors and representatives from the Vatican, Greece, Russia, Georgia, Byelorussia, Finland, and elsewhere attended the celebration.

The current cathedral was built in 1962 on land purchased eleven years earlier on Massachusetts Avenue, atop Embassy Row and near the official residence of the US vice-president. Modeled after the famous Cathedral of Saint Demetrius in Vladimir, Russia, the cathedral initially was dedicated as the National War Memorial Shrine to commemorate soldiers who gave their lives in service to their country.

A bell tower was added to the cathedral complex in 1988. In commemoration of the 200th anniversary of Orthodox Christianity in North America in 1994, the interior of the cathedral was adorned with magnificent Byzantine-style frescoes.