

The Orthodox Church



OCA DEPARTMENTS

Equipping our parishes for ministry



■ RECEPTIONS

DIMITROV, Rev. Dimitre is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Herman from the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church. He is transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Kyrill of Pittsburgh and Western PA and attached to the Diocese of Western PA/ July 27, 2006.

DOSS, Deacon Brendan is canonically received into the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America by Metropolitan Herman from the Serbian Orthodox Church. He is transferred to the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the West and attached to the Diocese of the West/ August 7, 2006.

■ ORDINATIONS

BALMER, Deacon David was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South on behalf of Metropolitan Herman at St. Seraphim of Sarov Cathedral, Dallas, TX. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman/ November 27, 2005.

MELNYCHENKO, Bohdan was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest at Holy Trinity Church, St. Paul, MN. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ July 16, 2006.

MOTICHAK, Robert was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Kyrill of Pittsburgh and Western PA at Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Monongahela, PA. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Kyrill and attached to the Diocese of Western PA/ January 15, 2006.

NEUMANN, Deacon William John was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest at Holy Trinity Church, St. Paul, MN. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ July 16, 2006.

PARSELLS, Deacon John was ordained to the Holy Priesthood by Metropolitan Herman at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Manville, NJ. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman and attached to the Diocese of Washington and New York/ July 1, 2006.

ROBICHAU, B. Peter was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South at Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri and attached to the Diocese of the South/ June 25, 2006.

SOUCEK, John was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern PA on behalf of Metropolitan Herman at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman/ July 9, 2006.

UNGUREANU, Daniel was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate at St. Nicholas Mission, Montreal, QC, Canada. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate/ April 15, 2006.

WESNER, John was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest at Holy Ascension Church, Albion, MI. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ June 1, 2006.

YOUNG, Nicholas was ordained to the Holy Diaconate by Metropolitan Herman on behalf of Bishop Seraphim

of Ottawa and Canada at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Bishop Seraphim and attached to the Archdiocese of Canada/ May 28, 2006.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

BALMER, The Rev. David is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ November 27, 2005.

BASS, The V. Rev. William, who was priest-in-charge, is appointed rector of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr Church, Chesterton, IN. He is released from duties at Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, IL/ July 27, 2006.

BINGHAM, The Rev. John is released from duties at St. Herman of Alaska Church, Surrey, BC, Canada, and All Saints of North America Monastery, Dewdney, BC, and appointed priest-in-charge of St. Nikolai Bishop of Zhitsa Mission, Whitehorse, YT/ September 1, 2006.

BROWNE, The Rev. Raymond Martin is appointed acting rector of St. John the Baptist Church, Edwardsville, PA/ June 21, 2006.

BRUM, The V. Rev. David A. is appointed rector of SS. Peter and Paul Church, Phoenix, AZ/ August 1, 2006.

CHOLCHER, The Rev. Jonathan is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Mogadore, OH, and appointed acting rector of St. John the Baptist Church, Warren, OH/ August 1, 2006.

CURPENE, The Rev. Gabriel is released from duties at St. Stephen the Great Mission, Clearwater, FL/ January 1, 2006. He is assigned pastor of Holy Resurrection Church, Hayward, CA/ August 1, 2006.

DIEHL, The Rev. Andrew is released from duties at St. Mary Church, Coaldale, PA and from the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern PA; transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South; and attached to Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC/ July 16, 2006.

DIMITROV, The Rev. Dimitre is appointed acting rector of St. Mary Nativity Church, Masontown, PA/ August 1, 2006.

DUDAS, The Rev. Michael is released from duties at St. Ireney Chapel, Staten Island, NY and granted retirement/ July 1, 2006.

ERICKSON, The Rev. John H., who was attached, is appointed rector of Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. All other duties remain the same/ July 25, 2006.

FESTER, The V. Rev. Joseph is released from duties as assistant to the Chancellor; from St. Sergius Chapel, Oyster Bay Cove, NY; and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman. He is transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South, where he awaits assignment/ August 15, 2006.

FETSKO, The Rev. Paul is released from duties at All Saints Church, Olyphant, PA. He awaits assignment/ August 13, 2006.

FOLEY, The Rev. Christopher is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South; and appointed priest-in-charge of Holy Cross Mission, Greensboro, NC/ June 1, 2006.

GORI, The Rev. R. Anthony is released from duties at St. Mark of Ephesus Mission, Kingston, MA, and granted retirement/ August 31, 2006.

GRIGGS, The Rev. James is released from duties at St. Gregory of Nyssa Mission, Kingston, ON, Canada and attached to the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada/ August 31, 2006.

GUENTHER, The V. Rev. Daniel, who was Acting Rector, is appointed associate priest of Holy Resurrection Sobor, Saskatoon, SK, Canada/ August 15, 2006.

HALVORSEN, The Rev. J. Sergius is released from duties at SS. Peter and Paul Church, Meriden, CT and attached to Christ the Savior Church, Southbury, CT/ August 1, 2006.

HENRY, The Rev. Peter is released from duties at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; transferred to the omophorion of Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the West; and attached to the Diocese of the West, where he awaits assignment/ August 7, 2006.

HOLOWATCH, The Rev. Timothy is released from duties at St. Innocent Mission, Oneonta, NY/ July 30, 2006. He is attached to SS. Peter and Paul Church, Endicott, NY/ August 1, 2006.

HUTCHEON, The V. Rev. Cyprian is released from duties at the Sign of the Theotokos Church, Montreal, QC, Canada and appointed rector of Holy Resurrection Sobor, Saskatoon, SK, Canada/ August 15, 2006.

JACKSON, The Rev. Matthew is released from duties at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South; and appointed priest-in-charge of Christ the Saviour Mission, McComb, MS/ June 1, 2006.

KNAGIN, The Rev. Alexei is released from duties at Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Kodiak, AK. He is appointed priest-in-charge of St. Michael the Archangel Church, Cordova, AK, and will service St. Nicholas Church, Tatitlek, AK, and St. Nicholas Mission, Valdez, AK/ July 1, 2006.

LAZOR, The V. Rev. Paul is released from duties as rector of Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, but will remain attached there. All other duties remain the same/ July 25, 2006.

LOLLAR, Deacon Joshua is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest; attached to the Diocese of the Midwest; and attached to St. Elizabeth the New Martyr Mission, Chesterton, IN/ July 27, 2006.

[MAJOROS], Priestmonk Luke, in addition to duties at Communaute Monastique de St. Seraphim de Sarov, Rawdon, QC, Canada, is appointed priest-in-charge of St. Gregory of Nyssa Mission, Kingston, ON, Canada/ September 1, 2006.

MATUSIAK, Deacon Joseph J. is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; transferred to the omophorion of

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Our Cover

Your generous contribution to the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards helps the OCA's departments develop new resources to help your parish!



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In This Issue

VOLUME 42 ■ 9/10 ■ SEPT/OCT 2006

- 5 The price of silence
Silence is a gift in a culture of constant noise and distractions.
- 6 The Jesus Prayer
Metropolitan Anthony Bloom explains a prayer profoundly rooted in the spirit of the Gospel.
- 7 Christian leadership It's not just something "they" do.
- 8 Sticks and stones... Yes, words *can* sometimes hurt.
- 9 A matter of life, not death! In search of self-sacrificing love for others.
- 12 OCA News, Notes, Notices
 - OCA pension board adopts privacy policy.
 - Task force to review structure, staffing of central administration established.
 - Questions on financial accountability may be sent to info2@oca.org.
 - Metropolitan Herman attends RBO annual assembly.
 - TOC: A new look, a new direction.
 - Archpastoral letter on the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year.
 - FOCA holds 80th national convention.
 - SS. Cosmas and Damian Adult Home board meets.
 - Interview with Metropolitan Herman.
 - Christmas Stocking Project helps needy children in eastern Europe, Mexico.
 - Beanie Babies for needy kids.
- 17 FOS funds the ongoing work of the OCA departments
- 27 North America
 - St. Arseny Institute, U of Winnipeg, join forces.
 - Mt. Sinai Monastery comes to LA.
 - Celebrating 40 years of monastic witness at New Skete.
 - FOCA to play St. Nick to seminary families.
- 29 World briefs
 - Historic St. Petersburg cathedral suffers serious fire damage.
 - Chaplain receives award.



FEATURES

- 2 Official
- 4 Editorials
- 5 Wisdom
- 11 In Memoriam
- 23 Mission Possible
- 24 Defending the Faith
- 31 Communities

DEPARTMENTS

- 18 Stewardship
- 19 History & Archives
- 21 Liturgical Music
- 22 Evangelization
- 24 Chaplaincies
- 24 Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry
- 26 Christian Education
- 26 Chaplaincies

9/11 in New York City

On September 11, 2006, New York Disaster Interfaith Services [NYDIS] held a commemorative event at Saint Paul's Chapel in New York City, near the site of the Twin Towers (Ground Zero). In a simple, yet dignified, interfaith ceremony, those who died in the Twin Towers and under their rubble five years earlier were remembered with grief and love. Their suffering families and communities were embraced and upheld. New York City as a place of hope and mutual support was affirmed. And those who came to the support of New York City in its hour of need were remembered with gratitude.

At the heart of the event at Saint Paul's Chapel was recognition of the many organizations and agencies that collaborated to provide disaster relief in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. These organizations and agencies represented many religious communities. They have provided many millions of dollars of aid, and provided support personnel who worked in a variety of capacities with a suffering and wounded community. They continue to support NYDIS in the framework of the Unmet Needs Roundtable. Among the "unmet needs" are the sicknesses that have struck the recovery workers of 9/11 as a direct consequence of their heroic presence and actions at Ground Zero.

It was very meaningful to be present at Saint Paul's Chapel, together with priests of Orthodox parishes in New York City – Father David Kossey of Saint Mary's Church [Carpatho-Russian], who is actively involved in the work of NYDIS, and Father Christopher Calin of the Holy Virgin Mary Protection Cathedral [Orthodox Church in America]. Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, shared his reflections about 9/11 with the assembly, and offered prayers for those who died and for those who live and bear the consequences of the atrocity.

For all of us, I am certain, it was especially meaningful to see that International Orthodox Christian Charities [IOCC] was recognized along with the other agencies. Nicholas Chakos of the IOCC staff in Baltimore and Beverly Yanich, a member of the IOCC Board of Directors and Chair of the Program Committee, represented IOCC in the ceremony. The presence and contributions of IOCC in the aftermath of 9/11 gives witness to an imperative of the Orthodox faith – to give shelter to the homeless, to provide food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty, to visit those who are sick. IOCC acts on behalf of Orthodox Christians in America, putting our Orthodox faith and our Orthodox preaching into practice in times of crisis and need. ■

ROCORMP Reconciliation

For several years, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia [ROCORMP] and the Russian Orthodox Church [Moscow Patriarchate] have been engaged in a dialogue with the goal of reconciliation. This dialogue follows more than 80 years of an estrangement that was born as a consequence of the cruel realities of the Communist revolution in Russia, the Russian Civil War, and the flight of millions of Russian Orthodox people – bishops, clergy, and laity – to the Balkans, Western Europe, North and South America, and Australia. The persecution of religion – and especially of the Orthodox Church of Russia – during the communist decades distorted ecclesial life. The time of persecution also witnessed millions of martyrs giving their lives in faithfulness to Christ.

During the past months, both the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia have affirmed the path towards reconciliation. At the same time, it seems

some questions remain unresolved, and require further dialogue and consensus. The estrangement of more than 80 years is not easy to heal. There are voices within the ROCORMP that oppose the reconciliation. Others see the reconciliation as a unification within the one house of the Russian Orthodox Church. Yet others regard the reconciliation as the establishment of eucharistic communion between two parts of the Russian Orthodox Church that, though vastly different in size and scale, are in principle equal parts of one whole.

Orthodox Christians can only welcome reconciliation and healing, rejoicing that estrangement and separation can be overcome. In a sense, the reconciliation of the ROCORMP and the ROC [MP] represents the end of the Russian Civil War and the healing of the consequences of communist rule in Russia. Thus, the members of the Orthodox Church in America have accompanied the reconciliation process with sympathy and good will. Insofar as the estrangement has been within Russian Orthodoxy, it is clear that the estrangement must be overcome within the context of Russian Orthodoxy.

Nevertheless, there are other dimensions present – indeed quite obvious – in the real situation of ROCORMP, ROC [MP], and Orthodoxy in America. While the ROCORMP is present in many parts of the world, the core of its population is in North America. The Patriarchate of Moscow committed itself to the building up of Orthodoxy in North America as a self-governing Church by granting autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America in 1970. What are the ecclesial implications of a ROCORMP that is reconciled with the Moscow Patriarchate co-existing in North America with the Orthodox Church in America, which carries within it the vision of an autocephalous and united Orthodox Church in North America, as articulated by the Moscow Patriarchate in the Tomos of Autocephaly?

This question should not be seen in purely theoretical terms, or in terms of purely canonical argumentation and logic. It should be seen also in terms of the real pastoral situation.

The North American dioceses, parishes, and faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia will certainly remain in the United States and Canada. They will not "return" to Russia. Reconciliation with the Moscow Patriarchate will not change this fundamental reality. Thus, the pastoral and missionary challenges of the ROCORMP in America will be the same as the challenges faced by the Orthodox Church in America. In other words, the real pastoral and missionary situation is the same for the Orthodox Church in America and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (at least in America), and is very different for the Russian Orthodox Church [MP] in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and other independent states of the former Soviet Union.

No one knows how much time will be required for a common understanding and common mission to emerge between the Orthodox Church in America and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. One thing is certain: authentic Orthodox life includes a harmony between the pastoral and missionary challenges, on the one hand, and canonical structure, on the other hand. In fact, the terminology of "on the one hand" and "on the other hand" is deeply misleading. The pastoral and missionary task of the Orthodox Church must be at one with the canonical structure. This is why the question of canonical unity of all Orthodox in North America is a burning and urgent issue, even when the Churches and their members succeed in ignoring or marginalizing it.

Is it not the time for the Moscow Patriarchate, the Orthodox Church in America, and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, to affirm together the harmony and coherence of Orthodox canonical principles and Orthodox presence and mission in North America? Will the healing of the "schism" within Russian Orthodoxy be an end in itself? Or will it also lead in due course to the strengthening of the movement towards a united Orthodoxy in North America? ■

WISDOM

from the Fathers

Saint Basil the Great

Even if your soul should suffer somewhat from an offense, keep the sorrow within yourself. For it is said: "Within me my heart is troubled" [Psalm 142:4]; that is, the passion has not come out, but has been humbled like a wave that has broken up on the shore. Calm your raging heart. Let your passions be ashamed at the presence of reason in you, as playful children are ashamed before a man commanding respect.

Saint Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain

I shall indicate to you the most direct and simple method to acquire the habit of silence.... Reflect as often as you can on the pernicious results of indiscriminate babbling and on the salutary results of wise silence. When you come to taste the good fruit of silence, you will no longer need lessons about it.

Saint Symeon the New Theologian

If you are praised, be silent. If you are scolded, be silent. If you incur losses, be silent. If you receive profit, be silent. If you are satiated, be silent. If you are hungry, also be silent. And do not be afraid that there will be no fruit when all dies down; there will be! Not everything will die down. Energy will appear; and what energy!

Saint Seraphim of Sarov

From solitude and silence are born tender contrition, and meekness; the activity of this latter in the human heart may be compared to that quiet water of Siloe, which flows without noise or sound, as the Prophet Isaiah speaks of it: "the waters of Siloe that go softly" [Isaiah 8:6]. ■

That's the Spirit

Father Vladimir Berzonsky

Speak when your words are more desirable than silence; but love silence when it is better than words. — St. Gregory Nazianzen

The price of silence

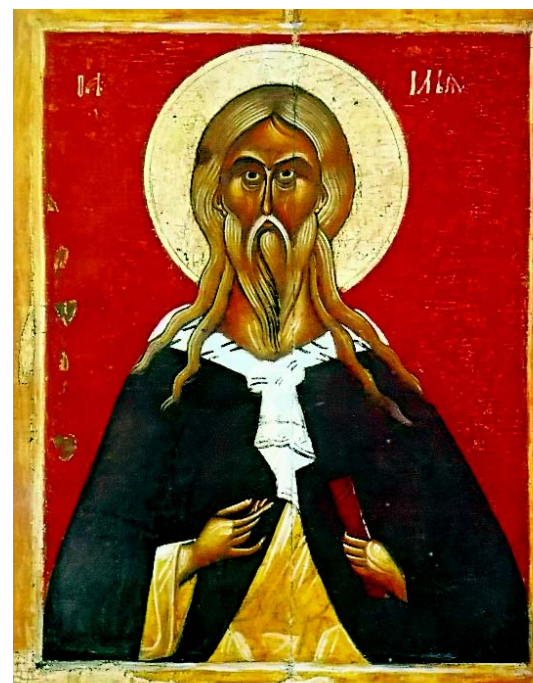
In a culture of constant noise and distractions, one must pay a price for the precious, golden gift of silence. We have made the glorious technological possibilities of electronic devices nothing more than noise-makers for so many who prefer the aura of stillness and quiet for the better use of their minds. Everywhere one goes in public, people are holding cell phones to their ears. In grocery stores, background music accompanies shoppers with periodic commercials advertising some special sale. Many cannot sit in a living room without the television set filling the room with sound. These sounds are worse than mere distractions. They train our youngsters and ourselves to live with cacophony and take for granted that's the way we must go on through our lives.

Teachers and educators are challenged with the problem of pupils who lack concentration. Thank the Lord they have discontinued the use of Ritalin to solve that syndrome, but the crisis persists.

American philosophy of education is based on the theory propounded by John Locke. He wrote that the mind at birth is like a clear mass ready to absorb information that enters through the five senses. The images, sounds, and feelings go in without much resistance and are assimilated by testing them against previous information. The new data is evaluated and either rejected or accepted to replace, modify, or affirm previous assumptions. Think of a clean blackboard. As one writes on its surface, it fills up with words. Mistakes are corrected by erasing the original words and replacing them with new information that changes the last data. Pretty soon, the blackboard is all smudged, so that it's nearly impossible to read anything clearly.

If that theory is correct, imagine what happens to a person born in these times, who in a few years is overloaded with information, most of it irrelevant, insignificant, and worthless in one's daily routine and life-style. How long must it take for a pre-school child to find out that little is to be learned from watching TV? Nevertheless, he or she will go on sitting before the screen, mesmerized by the constantly changing images and sounds. Even in the case of adults, sponsors of the programs recognize that the attention span of most moderns is less than 20 seconds; hence, the brevity of commercials.

Even our services are colored by the speed of our culture and the noises that drown out silence everywhere. If the rites are "too long" by American standards, the Church must change, not the attention spans of the worshippers. Bear in mind that by virtue of having been chrismated in the Orthodox Christian Church you are no longer a member of this world and society. You are one of those who belongs to the Kingdom of God.



Prophet Elijah was overwhelmed by wind, earthquake, and fire, but it was only with the stunning quiet that followed that the Lord spoke to him in the "sound of sheer silence."

Metropolitan Anthony Bloom

The Jesus Prayer

Those who have read *The Way of the Pilgrim* are familiar with the expression “The Jesus Prayer.” It refers to a short prayer, the words of which are: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner,” constantly repeated....

The prayer is profoundly rooted in the spirit of the Gospel, and it is not in vain that the great teachers of Orthodoxy have always insisted on the fact that the Jesus Prayer sums up the whole of the Gospel. This is why the Jesus Prayer can only be used in its fullest sense if the person who uses it belongs to the Gospel, is a member of the Church of Christ.

All the messages of the Gospel – and more than the messages, the *reality* of the Gospel – is contained in the name, in the Person of Jesus. If you take the first half of the prayer you will see how it expresses our faith in the Lord: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God.” At the heart we find the name of Jesus; it is the name before which every knee shall bow [Isaiah 45:3], and when we pronounce it we affirm the historical event of the incarnation. We affirm that God, the Word of God, co-eternal with the Father, became man, and that the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in our midst [Colossians 2:9] bodily in His Person.

To see in the man of Galilee, in the prophet of Israel, the incarnate Word of God, God become man, we must be guided by the Spirit, because it is the Spirit of God Who reveals to us both the incarnation and the lordship of Christ. We call Him *Christ*, and we affirm thereby that in Him were fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament. To affirm that Jesus is the Christ implies that the whole history of the Old Testament is ours, that we accept it as the truth of God. We call Him Son of God, because we know that the Messiah expected by the Jews, the man Who was called “Son of David” by Bartimaeus, is the incarnate Son of God. These words sum up all we know, all we believe about Jesus Christ, from the Old Testament to the New, and from the

experience of the Church through the ages. In these few words we make a complete and perfect profession of faith.

But it is not enough to make this profession of faith; it is not enough to believe. The devils also believe and tremble [James 2:19]. Faith is not sufficient to work salvation. It must lead to the right relationship with God; and so, having professed, in its integrity, sharply, and clearly, our faith in the Lordship and in the Person, in the historicity and in the divinity of Christ, we put ourselves face to face with Him, in the right state of mind: “Have mercy on me, a sinner.”

These words – “have mercy” – are used in all the Christian Churches and, in Orthodoxy, they are the response of the people to all the petitions suggested by the priest. Our modern translation “have mercy” is a limited and insufficient one. The Greek word which we find in the Gospel and in the early liturgies is *eleison*. *Eleison* is of the same root as *elaion*, which means “olive tree and the oil from it.” If we look up the Old and New Testament in search of the passages connected with this basic idea, we will find it described in a variety of parables and events which allow us to form a complete idea of the meaning of the word. We find the image of the olive tree in Genesis. After the flood Noah sends birds, one

after the other, to find out whether there is any dry land or not, and one of them, a dove – and it is significant that it is a dove – brings back a small twig of olive. This twig conveys to Noah and to all with him in the ark the news that the wrath of God has ceased, that God is now offering man a fresh opportunity. All those who are in the ark will be able to settle again on firm ground and make an attempt to live, and never more perhaps, if they can help it, undergo the wrath of God.

In the New Testament, in the parable of the good Samaritan, olive oil is poured to soothe and to heal. In the anointing of kings and priests in the Old Testament, it is again oil that is poured on the head as an image of the grace of God that comes down and flows on them [Psalm 133:2], giving them new power to fulfil what is beyond human capabilities. The king is to stand on the threshold, between the will of men and the will of God, and he is called to lead his people to the fulfilment of God’s will; the priest also stands on that threshold, to proclaim the will of God and to do even more: to act for God, to pronounce God’s decrees and to apply God’s decision.

The oil speaks first of all of the end of the wrath of God, of the peace which God offers to the people who have offended

Prayer to 30

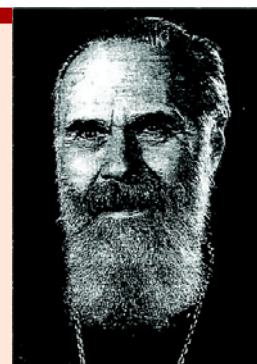
Metropolitan Anthony [Bloom] was born in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1914, but spent his early childhood in Russia and Persia. In 1923, he and his family settled in Paris, where he eventually received a doctorate in medicine.

In 1939, before leaving for the front as a surgeon in the French army, he secretly professed monastic vows. Four years later, he was tonsured with the name Anthony. During the Nazi occupation of France, he worked as a doctor and took part in the French Resistance. He practiced medicine until 1948, when he was ordained to the priesthood and assigned to serve as Orthodox chaplain of England’s Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius and, two years later, as vicar of the patriarchal cathedral in London. He was consecrated to the episcopacy in 1957 and subsequently named exarch of the Moscow Patriarchate in Western Europe. He was elevated to the rank of metropolitan in 1966.

He was released at his own request from the position of exarch in 1974, in order to devote himself to the pastoral needs of the Diocese of Sourozh, which embraced parishes in Great Britain and Ireland.

Metropolitan Anthony is widely known for his writings on prayer and the spiritual life, including *Living Prayer*, in which this essay was originally published; *Meditations on a Theme*; and *God and Man*.

On August 4, 2003, Metropolitan Anthony fell asleep in the Lord. ■



Father Sergius Halvorsen

Christian leadership

It's not just something "they" do!

"How is God calling me to be a Christian leader?" This is an important question, because doing the will of God requires effective leadership. Yet good leadership is often hard to find because it is difficult to be a Christian leader, and it is so much easier to simply point fingers and find fault in others, like the pharisee in Jesus' parable [Luke 18:10-14]. The pharisee's demonic message – "Look at the failing of others!" – stands in sharp contrast to the saving message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" [Matthew 4:17].

One of the most pressing challenges facing Orthodox Christianity in North America today is that we are not effective leaders; the solution to this dilemma begins with each of us. We must ask, "How have I failed to be a Christian leader?"

The hierarchical structure of the Church is not an excuse for sloth. To go through life with the unspoken mantra, "That's not *my* job because I'm not in charge," is to deny the efficacy of one's own baptism and chrismation. When the risen Lord said "Go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" [Matthew 28:19], He was not only speaking to bishops, priests, deacons, and monastics. He was speaking to *every* man, woman, and child. Read the Mission Statement of the Orthodox Church in America [www.oca.org/MVmission.asp?SID=1] and you will see that the "Great Commission" is central to our self-understanding. When Jesus Christ says "make disciples of all nations," He is talking to you and to me.

The only way to make disciples of all nations is for the entire People of God to lead others to salvation in Jesus Christ. This means that if the Orthodox Church on this continent is to fulfill its mission, *every* member of the Church must understand himself or herself as a Christian leader, as one commissioned by Christ to lead others to God. Because each one of us is utterly unique, possessing unique gifts and talents and responsibilities, no two people are called to be Christian leaders in the identical manner. Bishops are called to Christian leadership in their dioceses. Priests are called to Christian leadership in their parishes. Professionals, politicians, and tradespersons are called to Christian leadership among their colleagues and constituents. Parents are called to Christian leadership in their families, while children are called to Christian leadership in their schools and neighborhoods. No two people are called to the same kind of leadership, yet *we are all called to be Christian leaders*.

However, nothing will be gained if we imitate the false leadership exalted by this world. Woe to us if we simply exercise authority over others through insult, deception, and arrogance. If we do this, then we are not leaders at all, but mere tyrants seeking our own glory at the expense of others. Tyrants do not lead; they crush others through intimidation and brute force, as they follow the Machiavellian dictum that it is better to be feared than loved. Christians, on the other hand are called to lead others to salvation in Jesus Christ, not through fear or force, but precisely through love. In the same way that Christ opened the way of salvation to us through His voluntary and live-giving death on the Cross, we are called to lead others to salvation through Christ-like humility and self sacrifice. The only way to fulfill Christ's "Great Commis-



"Equipping the saints" Adult education programs, such as this class at an OCA mission parish, plant the seeds of Christian leadership.

sion" is for us to live – and lead – as Christ lives and leads.

On the day of Pentecost, God poured out His Holy Spirit on the disciples, who had recently been confused and demoralized by dissent, betrayal, and scandal, and He transforms them into grace-filled leaders who, by embracing the "Great Commission," changed the face of the earth forever. And this same God will transform us into apostolic Christian leaders today *if* we are willing to embrace the call to become Christian leaders, as revealed by Christ, through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving [Matthew 6].

Prayer affords an opportunity to open our ears to the Word of God. Prayer brings us into communion with God the Father, through Jesus Christ, by the grace of the Holy Spirit. It is through prayer that we come to know God's will, and by knowing His will for us – right here and now – God gives us true Christian *vision*.

Fasting offers an opportunity to "lay aside all earthly cares" while cultivating the unquenchable desire to be with Christ, to obey His commandments. Fasting purifies our flesh and focuses our desire upon the things of Heaven. It is through fasting that we begin to fervently desire the will of God, and allow God to transform our sinful passions into true Christian *zeal*.

InSites

Leadership from 7

Almsgiving gives us an opportunity to take up the Cross physically. To freely give our time, our talent, and treasures to others, in the name of Jesus Christ, is to demonstrate our commitment to the Gospel and our desire to live accordingly. It is our opportunity to “put our money where our mouth is.” Through almsgiving, God gives us authentic Christian *commitment*.

Each and every one of us is called to be a leader who leads others to salvation in a completely unique way. We cannot say, “Let someone else lead,” for God has created you and me to fulfill a unique mission that cannot be accomplished by anyone else. To abdicate our responsibility as Christian leaders is to deny God the opportunity to work miracles through us. And, if ever there was a time in which God desired to work a miracle in His People, it is today, *right here, right now, on this continent!* The challenges that each of us faces – in the parish, in the workplace, in the school, and in the family – are opportunities for us to repent and allow God to transform us into a faithful community that leads the world to salvation. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are the keys to true Christian leadership, to possessing divine vision, zeal, and commitment. It is not an easy path, but it is the *best* and *only* path, uniting all of us in communion with our Savior, Who promises to be with us “always, to the close of the age” [Matthew 28:20]. ■

Fr. Sergius *is attached to Christ the Savior Church, Southbury, CT.*

Mary Ann Bulko

Sticks and stones...

Yes, words *can* sometimes hurt!

Words are powerful. They enable us to communicate with one another. Words can instill peace and joy, or they can declare war.

As a child, I learned the phrase, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” As an adult, I see things a bit differently. Words *can* hurt others. But there are also words that can help us to express or understand God’s incomprehensible nature. Words provide a way for us to praise, worship, and bless the Lord. While words are essential for prayer, so is silence.

Words can evoke emotions in one’s heart as well as vivid imaginations in one’s mind. Words can motivate and words can hurt. Occasionally, while it might hold true that “a picture is worth a thousand words,” there are some specific words or phrases that create a truly defining image or truth and a message that is abundant in power, depth and meaning. “Forgive them.” “I’m sorry.” “He is risen!” “Repent!” “I believe.” “Love one another.” The list is endless.

It is in the Old Testament that we find the most beautifully written and poetic words inspired by God Himself through the Prophet David. The late Rev. Seraphim Nassar wrote the following in *Divine Prayers and Services*: “The Book of Psalms... is the most important of the Holy Scriptures among the Hebrews, an inexhaustible treasure of divine praise for all the ages.” It is said

that the Hebrews division of the Psalms into five parts was to correspond to the “five external senses of man and the five internal forces.” By reciting the psalms, these senses and forces would be pleased and sanctified by God. In his wisdom, David composed melodies to which the psalms could be sung, so that the words and music offered contentment to the soul and delight to the senses. The Church continues to use these words of wisdom from the Old Testament, and they can be offered as consolation, admonition, or a source of strength, prophesy, and encouragement. As Father Nassar writes, “In truth, the psalms are like a paradise of fruitful trees.” The words of the psalms delight and inspire. Recently, I recall reading how a small child once recited the 23rd Psalm for her Church school teacher, beginning with these words: “The Lord is my Shepherd, that’s all I want!”

Words can also be hurtful – gossip and slander, prejudice and bigotry, for example. The tongue is like a flame, and that which comes out of our mouths can defile and destroy both the speaker and the subject. One needs to practice discernment and care when speaking. Ironically, in today’s cultural climate of freedom and civil liberties, including the freedom of speech, some words are taboo and hinted at by using the first letter only of the word, so as not to offend. It’s a sad commentary that *so* many words or letters used today by *so* many persons are offensive and demeaning to humanity in general.

On the contrary, in ancient times it was forbidden for the Israelites to say the Divine Name or Yahweh because of its sacredness. Eventually the Hebrew word *Adonai* meaning Lord or *Elohim* which means God were used. Greek translators substituted the word *Kyrios* or Lord for the name of God.

Oddly, or perhaps because of the world’s fallen nature, even Christians today are hesitant to utter the name of Jesus Christ in public, or even in mixed company, but for a different reason. Could it be that we somehow think we might offend someone who is not a believer? If we are embarrassed or ashamed to say the name of Jesus, we in turn shall be a source of shame before Him.

It is not by accident that Christ Himself is called or named “The Word.” In the Gospel of Saint John we read, “In the beginning was The Word, and The Word was with God, and The Word was God” [John 1:1-2]. We know that the term – or rather, name – “The Word,” is far more than a form of speech. It is indeed the very action of God Himself. The Son or Word is begotten of the Father before all the ages. It is by this very Word or action that all creation came into being, including mankind. When we hear the phrase “actions speak louder than words,” it can almost define, perhaps in a rather colloquial way, the fact that Jesus Christ is God in action, defining and fulfilling His Word, for by Him and through Him all things were made.

And so when we have occasion to speak or to write words to one another or about one another, we should use care that they are good, proper, truthful, and respectful. We are all icons of God, made in His image. Whether we offer praise or admonition when necessary towards one another, the words we use and express should be words befitting that image. ■

Mary Ann Bulko *is a member of Holy Trinity Church, Randolph, NJ and a frequent contributor to The Orthodox Church.*

Father Stephen Kostoff

A matter of life, not death!

In search of self-sacrificing love for others

In the introduction to *Stages on Life's Way: Orthodox Thinking on Bioethics*, the Very Rev. John Breck's latest book, the author makes us aware of the complexity of bioethical issues, and even concedes that one could easily feel overwhelmed by them and by the prevailing tide – often driven by an insatiable desire for “profit” – that threatens to sweep aside any Christian moral and ethical objections.

In an early subsection titled “Culture of Death or Culture of Life?”, Father Breck outlines both the “bad news” and the “good news.” The term “culture of death,” by the way, was initially used by the late Pope John Paul II in his attempt to emphasize the unmistakable tendency of modern technological societies to legalize the destruction of life at its beginning and end through abortion and euthanasia, and in between, from capital punishment to the proliferation of violent crime and wars around the globe. After a dreary catalogue of the signs of the “culture of death” that cannot be denied, Father John offers a much-needed balance by reminding us of the “culture of life” that is still very much a part of our world.

I would like to focus on this by sharing a key passage from Father John's book that make the point very tellingly.

“Nonetheless, it is a culture of life, in which countless people offer gestures of self-sacrificing love to those they barely know – in hospitals, in schools, on the battlefield, in coastlands ravaged by tsunamis, or in the Twin Towers,” Father John writes. “I was in LaGuardia Airport when the lights went out in the 2003 breakdown of electric grids throughout the northeast and central parts of the country. The demonstrations of care and civility shown in that critical time matched those made by New Yorkers during the disaster of September 11.”

Father John goes on to observe, “Other such signs abound. Abused children are taken in by concerned relatives or are cared for by compassionate social workers. People who could be earning small fortunes in industry spend their time, with little financial reward, counseling those addicted to alcohol and other drugs, while nurturing their codependent family members. Nurses and other medical professionals tend to the needs of the sick and lonely, not so much for a paycheck as to render a real and precious service to those less fortunate than themselves. Charities flourish. Hospices abound. And Christian missionaries are rebuilding the spiritual infrastructure of places like Albania, are creating seminaries and medical clinics throughout Africa, and are otherwise living, as well as proclaiming, the Gospel of peace.”

Gestures such as these, writes Father John, “go a long way toward countering the culture of death. In each person who performs such gestures, they serve as irrefutable witness to the reality of the image of God in the inner depths both of themselves and of those to whom they minister.”

It is one thing to avoid participating in the culture of death

A loving gesture In an effort to put into action what Fr. John Breck calls the “culture of life,” the OCA Department of Christian Witness and Service is generating a list of all parishes whose facilities are

accessible. An appropriate logo will be included in the 2007 Sourcebook and Church Directory parish listings and on individual parish pages on the OCA web site. If your parish's facilities are accessible, please let the department know by writing to christianwitness@oca.org.



that surrounds us. That can be done through an interior resistance of the mind and heart, through the voting process, or through active protest. Yet, as Christians, are we contributing to the culture of life so eloquently outlined above?

Father John speaks of persons “who perform such gestures.” What gestures? According to Father John, gestures that express a “self-sacrificing love” for others. And here I believe he means “others” who are not the immediate and close persons around us, those outside the family circle or outside of our circle of close friends. In fact, one more “casualty” of our intensely busy lives could just be an inability to look beyond our own “inner circles.” Of course, it is based in love, but we would also have to acknowledge a kind of “biological necessity” that drives us toward caring for our families. It seems that it wasn't this that impressed Christ, Who said, “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the taxcollectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?” [Matthew 5:46-47].

Biblical language refers to the widow, the orphan, and the stranger in our midst. But in today's world, the circle of those in need has widened to a much greater extent: hospitals, hospices, charities, the sick and lonely, those caught in addictions, and so on. What I found most impressive in Father John's examples were those who are willing to take a smaller paycheck for the sake of assisting others! If we are not involved at some modest or humble level in building up a culture of life around us, then we certainly cannot judge the “unchurched,” the secularists, the atheists, and others with whom we may be at odds philosophically or otherwise.

We believe and confess that Life has prevailed over death itself: “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death.” This is a source of great joy and consolation. It is also the source of our responsibility to make a contribution to a culture of life, that “others” may share in our joy and consolation in Christ. ■

Fr. Steven is rector of Christ the Savior-Holy Spirit Church, Cincinnati, OH.

Official from 2

Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest; and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ July 17, 2006. He is attached to Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL. He remains director of the Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry/ July 20, 2006.

MEDIS, The Rev. Michael D. is released from duties at St. Gregory Palamas Church, Glen Gardner, NJ and from the Diocese of Washington and New York and transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest; and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ July 31, 2006. He is attached to Holy Trinity Church, Overland Park, KS/ August 1, 2006.

MELNYCHENKO, Deacon Bohdan is assigned to Holy Trinity Church, St. Paul, MN/ July 16, 2006.

MILETKOV, The Rev. Nikolay is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South; and appointed associate priest of St. John of the Ladder Mission, Greenville, SC/ June 1, 2006.

MOTICHAK, Deacon Robert is attached to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Monongahela, PA/ January 15, 2006.

NEUMANN, Deacon William John is released from duties at Three Hierarchs Chapel, St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman and transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest/ May 21, 2006. He is assigned to Holy Trinity Church, St. Paul, MN/ June 27, 2006.

NEUMANN, The Rev. William John is appointed second priest at Holy Trinity Church, St. Paul, MN/ July 16, 2006.

NICOLAI, The V. Rev. Martin is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Kwethluk, AK and appointed rector of St. Agaphia Church, Tuntutuliak, AK/ July 1, 2006.

OLEYNIK, The V. Rev. Joseph is released from duties as Dean of the Pittsburgh Deanery. He remains rector of St. John the Baptist Church, Canonsburg, PA/ August 28, 2006.

PAWLACK, The V. Rev. Peter is released from duties at St. John the Baptist Church, Warren, OH and as dean of the Cleveland Deanery and granted retirement/ July 31, 2006.

PARSELLS, The Rev. John is attached to SS. Peter and Paul Church, Manville, NJ/ July 1, 2006. He is released from this attachment and appointed acting rector of Christ the Savior Mission, Fenwick Island, DE/ August 1, 2006.

PEREZ, The Rev. Dimitri, who was associate priest, is appointed rector of Holy Apostles Mission, Portland, OR/ August 1, 2006.

ROBICHAU, Deacon B. Peter is assigned to Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC/ June 25, 2006.

RODRIGUEZ-SANCHEZ, The Rev. Jose Emmanuel is released from duties at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA and from the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman, and transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest/ July 28, 2006. He is assigned to SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Detroit, MI/ August 9, 2006.

ROZADILLA, The Rev. Nectarios, on a leave of ab-

sence, is released from duties at St. George Cathedral, Boston, MA and attached to Holy Trinity Mission, Folsom, CA/ July 26, 2006.

SAKELLAR, The Rev. Theodore, who was servicing Holy Trinity Mission, Folsom, CA, is appointed priest-in-charge. He is released from duties at St. George Cathedral, Boston, MA/ July 26, 2006.

SCHAPLOWSKY, The Rev. Michael is released from duties at St. Herman of Alaska Sobor, Edmonton, AB, Canada and attached to St. Athanasius Mission, Sherwood Park, AB, Canada/ July 1, 2006.

SEARFOORCE, The Rev. Matthew, who was acting rector, is appointed rector of St. John Chrysostom Church, Philadelphia, PA/ September 1, 2006.

SOUCEK, Deacon John is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA/ July 9, 2006.

STEFFARO, The V. Rev. John, in addition to duties at St. John the Baptist Church, Campbell, OH, is appointed dean of the Cleveland Deanery/ August 1, 2006.

TIMPKO, The V. Rev. Nicholas is released from duties at Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT and as chancellor of the Diocese of New England and granted retirement/ July 31, 2006.

UNGUREANU, Deacon Daniel is assigned to St. Nicholas Mission, Montreal, QC, Canada/ April 15, 2006.

VALLENS, Deacon Alexander is attached to Transfiguration Cathedral, Denver, CO/ August 1, 2006.

WESNER, Deacon John is assigned to Holy Ascension Church, Albion, MI/ June 1, 2006.

YORK, The V. Rev. George, in addition to duties at Intercession of the Holy Virgin Church, Carnegie, PA, is appointed temporary dean of the Pittsburgh Deanery/ August 28, 2006.

YOUNG, Deacon Nicholas is attached to Christ the Saviour Sobor, Toronto, ON, Canada/ May 28, 2006.

■ RETIREMENTS

DUDAS, The Rev. Michael is granted retirement. He is attached to Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, New York, NY/ July 1, 2006.

GORI, The Rev. R. Antony is granted retirement. He is attached to Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Chelsea, MA/ August 31, 2006.

PAWLACK, The V. Rev. Peter is granted retirement/ July 31, 2006. He is attached to St. John the Theologian Monastery, Hiram, OH/ August 1, 2006.

TIMPKO, The V. Rev. Nicholas is granted retirement. He is attached to Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT as pastor emeritus/ July 31, 2006.

■ LEAVES OF ABSENCE

CAMERLYNCK, Deacon Phillip, on a leave of absence, retains this status indefinitely. He remains attached to Holy Trinity Church, Overland Park, KS/ July 21, 2006.

■ RELEASED

[MORRIS], Archimandrite Joseph is released from duties at SS. Constantine and Helen Church, Indianapolis, IN and from the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and the Romanian Episcopate; transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; and granted a canonical release to the omophorion of Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America/ September 1, 2006.

STEBELSKYY, The V. Rev. Yaroslav is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Cohoes, NY; from

the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; and from the Diocese of Washington and New York, and granted a canonical release from the ranks of clergy of the Orthodox Church in America/ August 27, 2006.

■ DEATHS

BIERNACKI, The V. Rev. Raphael, rector of St. Nicholas Church, Burton, MI, died on August 23, 2006. *May his memory be eternal!*

KONSTANTINOW, The V. Rev. Dimitry, who was retired and attached to Chapel of Our Lady of Kazan, West Hyannisport, MA, died on August 14, 2006. *May his memory be eternal!*

POLANSKY, Protodeacon Nicholas, who was attached to Holy Trinity Church, East Meadow, NY, died on July 5, 2006. *May his memory be eternal!*

■ PARISHES

DIOCESE OF ALASKA/ Name change. The Orthodox Mission, Palmer, AK is given the name of St. Raphael of Brooklyn Mission/ February 1, 2006.

DIOCESE OF ALASKA/ Deanery Change. The Nativity of the Theotokos Church, Chenega Bay is transferred from the Kenai Deanery to the Anchorage Deanery/ August 14, 2006.

DIOCESE OF ALASKA/ Status changes. The following chapels are designated churches: SS. Constantine and Helen Chapel, Lime Village, St. Basil Chapel, Telida; St. Herman of Alaska Chapel, Atmarluaq; Presentation of the Theotokos Chapel, Nunapitchuk; Holy Resurrection Chapel, Aleknagik; Transfiguration of Our Lord Chapel, Egegik; St. John Chapel, Ekwok; St. Nicholas Chapel, False Pass; St. Nicholas Chapel, Iguigig; St. Michael the Archangel Chapel, Koliganek; SS. Sergius and Herman Chapel, Nanwalek [English Bay]; Transfiguration of Our Lord Chapel, Niniichik; Protection of the Theotokos Chapel, Akhiok; Ascension of Our Lord Chapel, Karluk; Nativity of the Theotokos Chapel, Port Lions; SS. Sergius and Herman Chapel, Spruce Island; Protection of the Theotokos Chapel, Aniak; St. Sergius Chapel, Chuathbaluk [Little Russian Mission]; St. Seraphim Chapel, Lower Kalskag; St. Vladimir Chapel, Ohaganmiut; Transfiguration of Our Lord Chapel, Pilot Station; SS. Peter and Paul Chapel, Pitka's Point; SS. Peter and Paul Chapel, Sleetmute; St. Herman Chapel, Stony River; St. Innocent Chapel, Adak; St. Alexander Nevsky Chapel, Akutan; and St. Nicholas Chapel, Atka/ August 14, 2006.

DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST/ New location. The Presentation of the Virgin Mary Monastery, Canton, OH, is relocated to Marshfield, MO. Mailing address: PO Box 644, Marshfield, MO 65706/ July 20, 2006.

DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST/ New status. St. Elizabeth the New Martyr Mission, Chesterton, IN has been granted parish status and is now known as St. Elizabeth the New Martyr Church/ July 23, 2006.

DIOCESE OF NEW ENGLAND/ Churches closed. St. Nicholas Church, Richmond, ME is closed/ August 11, 2006. The Chapel of Our Lady of Kazan, West Hyannisport, MA/ August 16, 2006.

DIOCESE OF THE SOUTH/ New Mission. Holy Cross Mission, Greensboro, NC; The Rev. Christopher Foley, priest-in-charge/ June 1, 2006.

DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK/ Deanery change. St. Martin Chapel, West Point, NY is transferred from the New York City Deanery to the New Jersey Deanery/ July 31, 2006. ■

InMemoriam

Editorial request: Please inform the TOC editorial office by phone [630/668-3071] or e-mail [jjm@oca.org] when a death occurs so announcements may be made on the OCA web site and in TOC in a timely manner.

The Very Rev. Dimitry Konstantinow

WEST HYANNISPORT, MA – The Very Rev. Dimitry Konstantinow, one of the oldest retired priests of the Orthodox Church in America, fell asleep in the Lord on Monday, August 14, 2006 at the age of 98.

He was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on March 21, 1908. In 1927, he received a degree from the Ushinsky Pedagogical Technicum in Leningrad, USSR, after which he pursued theological studies at a time when the communist regime had closed all theological schools in the Soviet Union. He also earned a graduate degree in journalism from the Leningrad Editing and Publishing Institute, and in 1933 he pursued post-graduate studies at the Leningrad Research Institute of Bibliology.

From 1933 until 1941, he worked as a researcher and teacher at secondary schools in Leningrad, during which he wrote a number of books. Until the beginning of the 1930s, he openly engaged in Church activities, but with the intensification of religious persecution, he continued his work underground until 1941.

During World War II, he served as an officer in the Soviet army. After his marriage in 1944, he was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood after leaving the Soviet Union and served in various parishes in Germany until 1949.

In 1950, he was received into the Orthodox Church in America [at the time known as the “Metropolia”] and served parishes in Buenos Aires, Argentina, until 1960. He was elevated to the rank of archpriest in 1955. While in Buenos Aires, he edited and published a newspaper, *Novoye Slovo*. In addition to his pastoral duties, he conducted research at the Institute for the Study of the USSR in Munich.

Father Dimitry arrived in the US in 1960 and became a naturalized citizen five years later. He served various parishes until 1972, when he was appointed rector of Our Lady of Kazan Chapel, West Hyannisport [Cape Cod], MA. While he retired from active ministry in 1984, he continued to serve the chapel.

Father Dimitry was prominent among the rather small number of scholars whose research dealt with the persecution of religion under communist regimes. His personal experiences a lay person, student of theology, and participant in underground religious groups in the USSR during some of the Orthodox Church in Russia’s darkest days gave him unique insights that proved to be invaluable in his research and writing. He wrote 10 books and over 400 articles on a wide variety of religious subjects. His most important work was *Gonimaya Tserkov [The Persecuted Church]*, published in 1967 in Russian and translated into German and English. His writings embraced topics that, given the time, were nothing less than remarkable, including the history of the Orthodox Church in Russia after World War II, accounts of religious resistance to and persecution by the communist regime, and a call to Orthodox youth to defend the Orthodox Church in the USSR. For many years he also was a contributor to New York’s daily Russian newspaper, *Novoye Russkoye Slovo*.

Funeral services were celebrated at the Russian Orthodox Church of the Epiphany, Roslindale, MA, with interment in Beech-

wood Cemetery, Centerville, MA.

May Father Dimitry’s memory be eternal! ■

The Very Rev. Raphael Biernacki

BURTON, MI – The Very Rev. Raphael Biernacki, 67, rector of Saint Nicholas Church here, fell asleep in the Lord at the Genesys Regional Medical Center, Flint, MI, on August 23, 2006.

Father Raphael had been diagnosed with cancer during the last week of July.

Born in Toledo, OH on June 8, 1939, he graduated from Saint Mary’s College and Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, MI, prior to his conversion to Orthodox Christianity. In 1972, he married the former Kathleen Loya in 1972.

Father Raphael served parishes in Maryland and Pennsylvania before his assignment as rector of Saint Nicholas Church, Burton, MI, in 1975. In 1995, he was named dean of Saint George Cathedral, Toledo, OH, after which he was assigned rector of Holy Trinity Church, New Salem, PA, in 2000. The following year he was assigned rector of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Burr Ridge, IL, until he again was assigned as rector of Burton’s Saint Nicholas Church in early 2005.

Father Raphael served in a variety of capacities on the diocesan and deanery levels. He was especially fond of his Polish ancestry, and for years he hosted a Toledo-based Polish radio program. He was highly involved in pan-Orthodox ministries in the Toledo and Flint areas and was well known for fostering relationships between parish communities and clergy of various traditions. Above all, he was known as a loving pastor, available and accessible to all to whom he ministered, in recognition of which he received numerous ecclesiastical awards.

In addition to his wife Kathleen, Father Raphael is survived by one son, Nicholas, and his wife Adrienne, Toledo, OH; two daughters, Stephanie Bishop and her husband Matthew, Seattle, WA, and Helene Biernacki, Chicago; a granddaughter, Shelbie.

Funeral services were held at Saint Nicholas Church, Burton, MI, August 24-25, with interment at Calvary Cemetery, Toledo, OH.

May Father Raphael’s memory be eternal. ■

Maria C. Cera-Villeda

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO – Maria C. Cera-Villeda, 83, the mother of His Grace, Bishop Alejo of Mexico City, auxiliary to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, fell asleep in the Lord on Saturday, August 12, 2006, after a brief illness.

A native of Mexico City, she was one of the first members of the Mexican Exarchate, which she supported from its inception in the 1970s to the day of her repose. She was widely respected among family and friends as an genuine example of the Orthodox Christian life-style.

In addition to Bishop Alejo, she is survived by her husband, Eusebio Pacheco, her other children, and numerous grandchildren.

May Maria’s memory be eternal! ■

OCA News Notes Notices



Pension board members [from left] Gregory Sheshko, David Drillock, Elizabeth Kondratick, Fr. Michael Westerberg, Bishop Nikon, Fr. John Steffaro, Fr. Dimitri Oselinsky, and Paul Culton.

OCA pension board adopts privacy policy

At their meeting at the Chancery in Syosset, NY September 11, 2006, members of the OCA Pension Board approved a privacy policy.

The text of the policy reads as follows.

“The Pension Board is charged with the administration of the Orthodox Church in America Pension Plan. In order to discharge our responsibilities, we must necessarily collect and maintain non-public personal information about our Plan participants, including information about their earnings, marital status, and sometimes about their health. We respect the concern that each of our participants has about their private information. This policy statement is issued to assure our participants that we are aware of their concerns and to inform our participants of the actions we take to protect their private and personal information.

“Collecting information. We collect information about our participants in order to assure that their retirement benefits are being properly accrued, funded, and paid. In order to do this, we require earnings history which is provided through the employer contribution reports and verified through the participant’s federal tax

records. For example, tax records are used to confirm the identification of components of earnings for those receiving housing allowances are taken into account to determine compensation considered in accruing retirement benefits from the Plan. We also require information regarding marital status and the designation of beneficiaries, such as information is needed to properly identify the Plan’s liability for benefit payments and to assure proper payment to beneficiaries where such benefits are provided by the Plan.

“Information supplied to the Pension Board is maintained separate from information files of the Orthodox Church in America and are not used for any other purpose. These records are not considered to be records of the Orthodox Church in America (the ‘OCA’) and are not shared with the OCA.

“Release of information. We provide access to the information given to us to professionals retained by the plan as required for proper administration. For example, our actuarial consultants are provided information about the ages of participants, their marital status, and their earnings in order to determine the liabilities of

the Plan. We provide information about individual participants when required to verify the accuracy of benefit calculations.

“Safekeeping of information. We maintain the records of the Pension Plan separate and apart from records of the OCA. Our computer systems are separate from those of the OCA. Paper records are kept under locked storage and are not available for public viewing.” ■

Task force to review structure, staffing of central administration established

In a letter dated September 7, 2006, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, directed the Very Rev. Paul Kucynda, secretary of the Orthodox Church in America, to “organize a Task Force to review the present organizational structure and staffing of the OCA Central Administration and to make recommendations to me for improvements in efficiency, effectiveness, and operational expenses in the organization, particularly as they relate to realistic anticipated income for 2006 and 2007.”

Metropolitan Herman further requested that “by November 1, 2006, the Task Force should provide me with an appropriate organizational chart, job descriptions, and related structural/staffing proposals to replace the one in use since 2001.

“With this letter, I also reaffirm that under my supervision, my previous directive for you to coordinate the implementation of best practices in the day to day operations of the OCA Central Administration, remains in effect,” the letter continues. “I request that the Best Practices Task Force prepare a progress report for the Meeting of the Lesser Synod of Bishops, scheduled for September 21, 2006.”

Metropolitan Herman continued by requesting “that a working draft of the best practices document, which is presently being reviewed by the members of the Metropolitan Council, be prepared in final draft for further action by the Metropolitan Council when it meets on September 28-29, 2006.

“Further, I reaffirm that the work that

began at my direction after the 2005 Fall Meeting of the Metropolitan Council and in response to the decision of the Council, as well as the selection of competent volunteers for this project from among the general membership of the Church, is to continue until a final text is acceptable to the Metropolitan Council," the letter concludes. "Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to all who have and are offering their talents and abilities in this important work as their gift of stewardship to Jesus Christ and His Holy Church."

Copies of the letter were sent to all members of the Holy Synod of Bishops and the Metropolitan Council. ■

Questions on financial accountability may be sent to info2@oca.org

Questions and comments concerning recent issues involving financial accountability now may be sent to info2@oca.org.

The debut of the new section on the Orthodox Church in America web site [www.oca.org] was announced by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, on August 22, 2006.

"The objective of this new feature will be to initiate and continue a dialogue between the faithful of the Church and

the central Church administration," Metropolitan Herman said. "All questions are welcome, and we will attempt to the best of our ability to provide answers in an open and timely manner."

Protodeacon Peter Danilchick will respond to questions and obtain answers from appropriate administration members.

A deacon of 31 years and a corporate executive with 33 years professional experience, Protodeacon Peter has served as a trustee of various Church institutions and organizations, including Saint Vladimir's Seminary. He is the author of "Best Practice Principles for Financial Accountability" proposed to the OCA Metropolitan Council and introduced on a working basis in the Church administration.

"It should be recognized that we are still in the midst of investigations and audits, and that not all can be revealed at this time," Metropolitan Herman concluded. "In fact, we should note that there very likely will be information that cannot be revealed in this venue in any event, due to legal and privacy concerns. But every attempt will be made to answer questions as completely – and honestly, in any case – as possible."

Questions may be submitted to info2@oca.org and/or by clicking the appropriate link on the OCA home page at www.oca.org. Posted answers may be read by clicking the "Questions and Answers" link on the OCA home page. ■

Metropolitan Herman attends RBO annual assembly

Metropolitan Herman received a traditional welcome with bread and salt at the annual assembly of the Russian Brotherhood Organization of America [RBO] in Akron, OH in August. Based in Philadelphia, RBO is one of the oldest fraternals of its kind.



A new look, a new direction

As our readers are well aware, what for over 40 years had been *The Orthodox Church* newspaper became *The Orthodox Church* magazine early in 2006. Reactions to *TOC*'s "new look" have been uniformly positive. And for this, we thank you!

Hand-in-hand with *TOC*'s "new look" comes a "new direction" with regard to contents. We have doubled the number of general and feature articles in the "In Sites" section. With this issue, a new column, highlighting the writings of the 20th and 21st centuries' most important authors – "Contemporary Christian Classics" – makes its debut. The valuable ministries offered by the OCA's departments and offices have been given far more prominence than in years past, while the number of photos and articles submitted for the "Communities" section has increased markedly in recent months.

There is one drawback to publishing *TOC* – "timing." Obviously, a publication that appears six times each year cannot report what happened yesterday, last week, or even last month in a timely manner. For example, in the July-August *TOC*, we published several articles about financial accountability, the audits, the investigation, and related matters. By the time the last of our readers received their copies, the news was already outdated. Frankly, there's simply no way around this, other than to publish a daily or weekly – hardly an option!

Hence, beginning with this issue, we will continue to publish news that is not time sensitive – reports on the Holy Synod, Metropolitan Council, boards and commissions, major events, etc. – while we will expand the number of general, inspirational, departmental, and feature articles. We invite our readers to visit regularly the OCA web site at www.oca.org for the "latest news," while turning to the pages of *TOC* for – literally – "everything else."

Finally, we sincerely thank the many faithful who have offered their time and talents by submitting articles that have appeared, and will continue to appear, in *TOC*; to our departments and offices for their valuable columns; and to our dioceses, deaneries, parishes, missions, and institutions for sharing their "good news." "We couldn't do it without you!!" ■

On the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year

September 1, 2006

Dearly beloved in Christ,

One of the things to which we aspire as Orthodox Christians is to be wise and faithful stewards. Surely we are familiar with the importance of properly managing our talents and treasures, of using the gifts with which we have been blessed to glorify God and to serve one another. Somewhat more elusive is the call to be stewards of our time. While we may be committed fully to offering our talents for the glory of God and the extension of His Kingdom, and while we may be thoroughly dedicated to setting aside the first and best of all we possess for this purpose, it is often the case that we are remiss in setting aside the time we need actually to accomplish these things.

The culture in which we live is obsessed with time. While we are offered “time-saving” devices and methods of every sort, we often find that our days are filled with rushing from one event and activity to another with little or no chance for reflection; that our children are “over scheduled;” that we wish we had 48 hours in a day just to meet the demands of daily life. Among today’s best-selling books are those dealing with “time management,” each promising to divulge the “secrets” of maintaining a “balance” in our hectic lives.

In the Church, it is not uncommon to hear even our most faithful members lament how they have little time to pray or attend services, much less to minister to others, to make a “time commitment” to the building up of the Body of Christ, or to engage in those things which, just decades ago, made the parish the center of personal and community life. All too often, it is the case that, in “prioritizing our time,” we relegate the spiritual life to the bottom of the list, or pursue it only if and when every other aspect of our lives is satisfied and fulfilled. Instead of setting aside the first portion of our time for things eternal, we pursue the material first, reserving the “extra time” so many seem never to have for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving – and all those things that bring and restore a *true* balance to our lives.

In his Great Kanon, Saint Andrew of Crete laments the many times we “squander” our time in laziness or in “rushing about in vain.” In so doing, he calls us to recognize not only the need wisely to order our time, but to repent when we fail to do so.

On the first day of September, we mark the beginning of the ecclesiastical year. The commemoration reminds us of the constant need to re-evaluate and recapture that which is central to our lives as Orthodox Christians, to restore balance in all we do, and in repentance to make an earnest attempt to set aside a portion – the “first portion” – of our time to acquire the peace of the Holy Spirit, without which our “rushing about” is indeed in vain and our lives as Christians is reduced to external formalities, “time permitting.”

May the beginning of this new ecclesiastical year mark a new beginning in our lives as individuals, as families, as parishes, as the Church in North America – a new beginning by which we set aside, before all else, the time we need to grow spiritually and to respond to the call to live as wise and faithful stewards, not only of our talents and treasures, but of the precious gift of time.

With love in the Risen Lord,

+ Herman
+ HERMAN

Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



Metropolitan Herman *presides at FOCA convention Divine Liturgy.*

FOCA holds 80th national convention

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, joined nearly 400 delegates, members, and guests at the 80th national convention of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America [FOCA] at the Kingston Plantation resort, North Myrtle Beach, NC August 31-September 4, 2006. The convention was sponsored by the New Jersey District, FOCA.

Elected to serve as the FOCA’s 38th national president was Mr. Michael Steffaro of South River, NJ. Also elected were Mrs. Polly Walker, Eden Prairie, MN, vice president; Mr. Michael Bowan, Chicago, IL, treasurer; and Mrs. Kathy Lazor, Vienna, OH, recording secretary.

Plenary session highlights included the establishment of a study committee to research a five-year drive to raise funds for married student housing at Saint Tikhon’s Seminary; continuation of support to the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards [FOS], with allocations earmarked for the OCA Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministries’ internship program; approval of the 2007 FOCA “Gifts of Love” fund-raiser to provide kits for military personnel; and the creation of an FOCA young adult department.

Liturgical services included the opening Service of Prayer, a Memorial, Vespers, and the Divine Liturgy, at which Metropolitan Herman presided.

In his banquet address, Metropolitan Herman thanked FOCA members for their commitment to serving the Church, their support for seminarians, and their aggressive goal to build married student housing at Saint Tikhon’s.

Other activities included a tour of Charleston, SC; a national golf tournament; receptions for “golden-agers” and young adults; junior activities and the “Fellowship Kidz” programs; the Friday evening seafood buffet; a genealogy workshop and young adult leadership training; and many other fellowship opportunities. ■ John Kruchok

Annual Christmas Stocking Project helps needy children in eastern Europe, Mexico

For the 13th consecutive year, the Orthodox Church in America's Office of Humanitarian Aid is conducting the Christmas Stocking Project to bring hope and special joy at Christmas to thousands of needy children in eastern Europe and Mexico.

"In 2005, we distributed 15,000 filled stockings or equivalent gifts in these areas and an additional 1,000 gifts to families victimized by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the US," said Mrs. Arlene Kallaur, project coordinator. "Thank you letters, some from the children themselves, and distribution reports were received, telling and showing the delight that the gifts brought the recipients."

Mrs. Kallaur added that a well-executed report from *Diakonia Agapes*, the social services agency of the Orthodox Church of Albania, describes the situation of the families to whom they bought and distributed the gifts with Christmas Stocking Project funds.

"The families of these children do not have the minimum standard of living," the report reads. "Their families cannot buy toys or sweets for Christmas and New Year. Many state institutions, orphanages, nursery schools, and development centers have the same limitations. The presents provided by the Orthodox Church in America helped us to give many the joy of the holiday season."

Church schools, FOCA chapters, and youth groups are again invited to raise funds for this year's project.

The Cerebral Palsy workers of Roosevelt, NY also stand ready to assemble and

stuff the stockings, as in past years, according to Mrs. Kallaur.

"The Cerebral Palsy Center, in forming a new type of program for their clients, has cut many of their other projects," Mrs. Kallaur added. "However, their administration has kept the OCA Christmas Stocking Project because it is one that the workers especially look forward to, one that is special to them."

"All donations, large and small, will be gratefully received through the end of the year," Mrs. Kallaur said.

Please send checks made payable to The Orthodox Church in America to the OCA Christmas Stocking Project, PO Box 675, Syosset, NY 11791. ■

Interview with Metropolitan Herman

Read the interview with Metropolitan Herman concerning current financial issues facing the Orthodox Church in America on the OCA web site at www.oca.org/Qfinance.asp?ID=252&SID=3.

SS. Cosmas and Damian Adult home board meets

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presided at the annual meeting of the board of Saints Cosmas and Damian Adult Home here on September 8, 2006. Approximately two dozen board members, corporate supporters, and staff members attended the meeting.

Board members discussed the continuation of the home's million-dollar renovation, operational developments, fund-raising, and personnel improvements. It was noted that a consultant, recently hired to evaluate operations, submitted a list of recommendations for improving the home's efficiency.

At the meeting, Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak announced that after five years of service, he would be resigning as the home's chief executive officer. Prof. David Drilllock, treasurer, also announced his resignation. Both agreed to remain on the board in a non-officer capacity.

Also present at the meeting and invited to join the corporation were the Very Revs. Christopher Calin, Joseph Lickwar, and Arkadi Mironko; Dr. Constantine Kallaur; and Mrs. Shirley Lickwar.

In its 29th year, Saints Cosmas and Damian Home has provided quality health and personal care services to over 2,000 residents. As an institution of the Orthodox Church in America licensed by the Department of Health of the State of New York, the home welcomes individuals for whom maintaining a household has become difficult, yet who wish to maintain their independence, dignity, and privacy.

For rates and further information, call 718/720-8800, or visit the home's web site at www.saintscosmasanddamian.org. ■

Beanie Babies for needy kids

Over 500 Beanie Babies – the gift of Mary Fox, Medina, OH – were delivered recently to the OCA Chancery, Syosset, NY, for distribution through the annual Christmas Stocking Project.

"Mary heard about the project from a friend, Jean Mehalik, a member of Archangel Michael Church, Broadview Heights, OH," said Mrs. Arlene Kallaur, pictured below with some of the popular stuffed animals. "The 'babies' were transported to Syosset by John and Kathy Mindala, also from Ohio. They'll reach their final destinations in December, along with the Christmas stockings we'll be distributing."

John Mindala



Spreading the word!

Fr. Alexey Karlgut [left] and faithful of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Endicott, NY, welcome Fr. Eugene Vansuch, FOS executive director, during a recent parish visitation.



Making a commitment!

Fr. Eugene [right] with faithful from Holy Trinity Church, Randolph, NJ, and their pastor, Fr. George Hasenecz, during a recent visit to explain the vital ministry being accomplished by the OCA's departments through free-will offerings to the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards.

During the past 26 years, FOS members have offered their time, talents, and treasures for the building up of the Church in North America.

*To schedule a **visitation to your parish or deanery**, contact **Father Eugene Vansuch**, FOS executive director, at **PO Box 675, Syosset, NY 11791**; by e-mail at **evansuch@oca.org**; or by phone at **516/922-0550**.*

FOS: 26 years of commitment to the Gospel!

In 1980, Metropolitan Theodosius gave his blessing for the establishment of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards as a means to encourage the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America to use their time, talents, and their treasures for the building up of the Church in North America.

The decision to form FOS came at a time in which mission, witness, and outreach were being explored in a new context. The OCA's various departments, commissions, and boards were deemed to be the most viable means of expressing the Church's essential ministry – the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in North America.

The establishment of the means by which to finance the mission of the Church was crucial at the time. In an effort to promote wise stewardship, as well as to ensure sufficient funding for the work of the Church, FOS was born.

The Very Rev. Sergei Glagolev was named the FOS's first executive director. Through his tireless efforts, FOS conducted numerous seminars across North America on the Christian understanding of stewardship and the needs of the Church. By 1982, gifts to FOS surpassed \$100,000.00 annually, thereby supplementing income generated by the annual parish assessments. This additional income made it possible for the OCA to fund new initiatives in the 1980s.

After Father Sergei's retirement in 1990, the Very Rev. Basil Summer was appointed FOS executive director. Under his guidance, FOS membership steadily increased, and by 1992, gifts to FOS funded over 30 percent of the growing number of outreach ministries and programs pursued by the OCA departments.

In 1995, one year after the Very Rev. Joseph Fester succeeded Father Basil as FOS executive director; delegates to the 11th All-American Council mandated that all OCA program ministries be funded by freewill gifts. By 1998, annual gifts to FOS had increased to \$300,000.00.

Today, total freewill gifts to FOS and other freewill giving efforts of the Church fund 70 percent of OCA's outreach ministries. The Very Rev. Eugene Vansuch, appointed FOS executive director in 2005, is pursuing the immediate goal of funding 100 percent of the Church's program ministries through freewill gifts to FOS and the Church in general. He has embarked on an ambitious program of parish visitations by which the work of FOS is made known.

"The FOS exists for but one purpose – to help the program ministries conducted by the Orthodox Church in America reach the world for Christ," says Father Eugene. "By God's grace, we have a Church filled with talented, dedicated clergy and laity who give of their time to preach, teach, and live the Gospel. But they also need our financial support to fulfill their work for the Lord. By making a gift to the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards you will become a co-worker in reaching out around the world to spread the Orthodox Faith.

"Making a gift to FOS involves more than just financial support," Father Eugene adds. "It is an act of faith and dedication, revealing one's love for Christ and the Church."

Putting your free-will gifts to the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards into action!



◆ **The Department of Christian Witness and Service** promotes the involvement of clergy and laity in caring for the needs of others according to the Gospel teachings and Holy Tradition. The department also organizes parish ministries conferences, publishes the popular *Resource Handbook*, and provides references and resource people for lay ministries.

◆ **The Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry** encourages the utilization of youth groups, camps, and organizations and develops resources designed to involve youth in the life and ministry of the Church, including the OCA youth web site. FOS also supports the development of pan-Orthodox ministries and Orthodox Christian Fellowships on campuses.

◆ **The Department of Evangelization** develops and promotes guidelines for the planting of missions and new communities in regions that previously had little or no Orthodox presence, and offers assistance in revitalizing established parishes.

◆ **The Department of Military Chaplaincies** supports the work of Orthodox military chaplains currently serving the needs of military personnel around the world.

◆ **The Department of History and Archives** maintains and preserves the documented history of Orthodox Christianity in North America dating back to the Alaskan mission in 1794.

◆ **The Office of Humanitarian Aid** assists orphans, the needy, and victims of tragedies and natural disasters, and organizes special appeals and ministries, such as the Christmas Stocking Project. The Adoption Referral Service offers adoption referrals that have helped over 60 families to adopt children.

◆ **The Department of Liturgical Music and Translations** produces resources and workshop materials on liturgical singing, coordinates the weekly postings of music, text, and audio file resources available on the OCA web site, and hosts a bi-weekly liturgical music chat room.

◆ **The Department of Christian Education's** main focus is the support of Church school teachers, clergy, families, and others engaged in faith formation for every age level through web-based study units, workshops, curriculum and resource training, and the production of educational resources for parishes.

◆ **The Department of Pastoral Life and Ministry** assists clergy through seminars and retreats; develops resources to equip clergy in addressing issues involving their own ministries and family concerns; and offers aid to clergy widows and widowed clergy.

Your invitation to join FOS

Since 1980, the **Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards** has been open to all members and friends of the Orthodox Church in America. Annual commitments to the Fellowship are **voluntary**. All FOS support **directly benefits the outreach ministries of the Church**. All commitments, whether one-time annual, quarterly, or monthly gifts, are gratefully accepted. The **suggested commitment levels** are:

Steward Benefactor	\$1,000.00 +
Steward Principal	\$ 500.00 +
Steward Patron	\$ 250.00 +
Steward Donor	\$ 100.00 +
Steward Supporter	under \$ 100.00
Student Supporter	\$ 25.00 +

Any time during the year you may adjust your Fellowship commitments to reflect your personal circumstances.

Parishes also are encouraged to join FOS at the following levels:

Level 1	\$1,000.00 or 1% of parish income
Level 2	\$2,000.00 or 2% of parish income
Level 3	\$3,000.00 or 3% of parish income

Make your donation today, using the convenient envelope in this issue of *The Orthodox Church*, or on-line on the OCA web site at **www.oca.org!**

18	Stewardship
19	History & Archives
21	Liturgical Music
22	Evangelization
24	Youth & Young Adult Ministry
26	Christian Ed, Chaplaincies

Year-end gifts make sense

Making the most of your financial stewardship

Father John Dresko

As we move into the last quarter of 2006, it is time for donors to look at year-end strategies to maximize their Christian giving potential, benefits to their parishes and the Church, and the tax advantages of a gift.

Every Orthodox steward maintains a generous and regular gift-giving pattern in support of the local community. But some forethought and creativity can allow one to offer generous support to the parish, the Orthodox Church in America, and selected charities at a fraction of the gift amount. As always, consult with your tax and/or legal advisor for the specific benefits you may reap with a year-end gift.

If you make your gift before December 31, you will not only have the joy of supporting your parish, the OCA, or a charitable organization, but you may enjoy a tax deduction as well. The following are popular ways to make a gift.

Cash. The easiest way to give is to write a check or charge your credit card. Your gift is fully tax deductible up to a maximum of 50 percent of your adjusted gross income; the amount of savings depends on your tax bracket.

For example, if you're in the 34% tax bracket, a \$1,000.00 donation will save you \$340.00 in taxes if you itemize deductions. That makes the effective cost of that \$1,000.00 gift only \$660.00!

Stocks are a wonderful way to make a donation. There are two ways to use stocks to fund a gift.

♦ An outright donation of *appreciated stock*. These are stocks that are worth more than the price paid to purchase them. When you donate these stocks outright, you avoid the capital gains tax on the appreciation and you receive a tax deduc-

tion based on the increased value of the stock instead of the cost basis – of up to 30% of your gross adjusted income.

♦ Many investors want to sell off stocks that have lost value at year-end to offset capital gains in other areas. If you wish to make a gift using *depreciated stock*, you must sell the stock yourself and make the cash gift to the Church. This allows you to take a capital loss on your taxes and the deduction for the charitable gift of cash.

Real estate. With real estate, you can deduct the value of your gift up to 30

of related-use property – for example, the purchase of a chalice set for your parish – is usually deductible at up to 30 percent of your adjusted gross income. For a gift unrelated to the organization's function, the percentage is limited to cost basis.

Insurance policies. To qualify as a charitable gift, the recipient must become the owner and beneficiary or the irrevocable beneficiary of the policy. If the policy is paid up, the deduction is usually the cost basis or the replacement value of the policy, whichever is less.

With all charitable gifts, it is important to remember that while the tax code limits charitable deductions to a percentage of adjusted gross income, you may be able to carry over any "excess" deduction that can't be used in the initial tax year.

The Orthodox Church in America offers many possibilities for charitable gifts. The Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards, the OCA's annual giving ministry, invites individuals to offer at least \$100.00 or more per year. Donations may be earmarked for specific departments, OCA programs, and endowments. And there are numerous

Orthodox charities that would be happy to receive a charitable year-end gift: International Orthodox Christian Charities, Orthodox Christian Mission Center, the seminaries of the Church, Project Mexico, and others. Please consider making a year-end gift to help the mission of the Church and the preaching of the Gospel.

For more information on making a charitable year-end gift, stewardship, giving or estate planning, or organizing a workshop on stewardship or planned giving for your parish, please contact the OCA Office of Development and Planned Giving at 516/922-0550, ext. 150, or jdresko@oca.org. ■



Fr. John Dresko is available to offer workshops and presentations on stewardship, financial planning, and related issues. In July, with the blessing of Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the West, he was invited by members of the OCA's western-most mission in Kona, HI to deliver a series of talks.

percent of your adjusted gross income. If you donate real estate held long term, you generally receive a deduction based on the increased value of the property and pay no capital gains tax. Many parishes and charitable organizations are not equipped to receive gifts of real estate, or have actual policies of not receiving such gifts, and the transaction can be more complex than a gift of cash or stocks, so consult with the intended recipient before beginning the process of making a real estate gift.

Tangible personal property. If you give personal property, your deduction is based on the relationship of the gift to the recipient's exempt function. A gift

History & Archives

A shared vision

Marking the anniversaries of the Albanian, Bulgarian dioceses' entrance into the OCA

this vision, the Albanian and Bulgarian dioceses sought entrance into the Orthodox Church in America in the years immediately following the granting of autocephaly. They followed the trailblazing footsteps of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate, headed by Bishop Valerian [Trifa], which had embraced this vision of unity in 1960, a full decade before the granting of autocephaly.

The Albanian and Bulgarian dioceses trace their roots in America to the unified Orthodox presence of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. While Albanians began to arrive in America in the 1880s, the formal establishment in Boston of the first Albanian parish followed the ordination of the Rev. Theophan [Fan] Noli by Archbishop Platon [Rozhdestvensky] of North America in 1908. Upon his return to Boston, Father Theophan served the first Divine Liturgy ever celebrated anywhere in the Albanian language, using his own translation. He proceeded to establish other parishes in other cities in which Albanians had settled.

In 1919, delegates to the Second All-American *Sobor* formally proposed his el-

evation to the episcopacy to oversee the growing number of Albanian parishes and missions. However, due to the turmoil in Russia after the 1917 Revolution, the canonical episcopal election of Father Theophan by Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow and the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church could not occur.

With the outbreak of the Balkan Wars and the emergence of an independent Albania, Father Theophan became increasingly active in Albanian issues and represented the fledgling nation in the League of Nations. In 1923, he was consecrated to the episcopacy and elected Primate of the Orthodox Church in Albania. He also served as a member of the Albanian Parliament and, briefly, in 1924, as Prime Minister. But political changes forced him to flee Albania, and he returned to the US permanently in 1932. From that time until his death in 1965, he headed the Albanian Archdiocese in America, which was then within the jurisdiction of the autocephalous Church of Albania.

While Metropolitan Theophan tirelessly sought to broaden Albanian culture and

History to 20



Metropolitan Theophan

Alexis Liberovsky

2006 marks the 35th anniversary of the Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese of America's reception into the Orthodox Church in America in October 1971 and the 30th anniversary of the reception of the Bulgarian Diocese, headed then as now by His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill [Yonchev], in December 1976.

The Orthodox Church in America understood the granting of its autocephaly in 1970 as a renewed mandate to foster unity among all Orthodox Christians in North America. In fact, the First All-American Council of the newly established autocephalous Church, convened in October 1970, formally accepted the gift of autocephaly, officially changed the name of the Church to the "Orthodox Church in America," and issued a farsighted appeal for unity to all Orthodox Christians in North America. This appeal expressed a clear vision for a strong, united Orthodox witness and an end to the scandalous jurisdictional divisions that had plagued North American Orthodoxy for decades. Sharing



Bishop Stephen signs agreement on behalf of the Albanian Archdiocese in the presence of Fr. Arthur Liolin, archdiocesan chancellor; Metropolitan Ireney; and Fr. Joseph Pishtey, OCA chancellor, in 1971.

History and Archives

History from 19

A shared vision

nurture his people in Orthodox Christian spirituality, he was a firm proponent of the use of English as a liturgical language and an ardent advocate of Orthodox unity.

After his death, Metropolitan Theophan was succeeded by the Rev. Stephen Lasko, who was consecrated to the episcopacy in Albania in 1965. Within a few years, Orthodox Christianity, and all expressions of religious faith in Albania, had been virtually obliterated by the country's militantly atheistic communist regime. This, coupled with the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America, which the Albanian Archdiocese recognized as the fulfillment of the ecclesial vision of Metropolitan Theophan, compelled the archdiocese to petition the Holy Synod for acceptance. This was accomplished on October 14, 1971, days before the opening of the Second All-American Council.

Bishop Stephen led the Archdiocese until his death in 1975. From 1979 until his retirement in 1984, Bishop Mark [Forsberg] headed the archdiocese. During periods in which the archdiocese was without a ruling hierarch, the OCA's Primates or other hierarchs temporarily administered the archdiocese.

In October 2003, Bishop Nikon [Liolin], a son of the archdiocese, was elected ruling hierarch. The permanence of his episcopal oversight has rejuvenated the archdiocese. Since 2005, Bishop Nikon also has headed the Diocese of New England.

Meanwhile, the first Bulgarian Orthodox parish in America was founded in Madison, IL, in 1907. As Bulgarian immigration increased, additional parishes were established, although many Bulgarians attended other Slavic Orthodox churches.

In 1922, the Church of Bulgaria began to organize Church life for their expatriate faithful in America, but it was only in 1938 that a diocese was established and a bishop was appointed. With the appearance of a communist regime in Bulgaria, the relationship between North America's Bulgarian Diocese and the Church in Bulgaria deteriorated, to a breaking point in 1948.

In the 1950s, Metropolitan Andrei [Pet-



1976 Bishop Kyrill with Archbishop Valerian [above] and Archbishop Kiprian [right] at signing of agreement on behalf of the Bulgarian Diocese.

kov] petitioned to be received, along with his diocese, into the Metropolia, as the Orthodox Church in America was known at the time, but his petition was not approved. Hence, in 1963, Metropolitan Andrei decided to regularize his status with the Bulgarian Patriarchate. Some of his clergy and faithful objected, due to the Church's ties to the Bulgarian state. Consequently, a division occurred, and a group of clergy and parishes, led by Father Kyrill Yonchev, sought refuge within the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia [ROCOR].

In 1964, Father Kyrill was consecrated to the episcopacy, and he and the Bulgarian Diocese of Toledo, OH, existed within ROCOR under the special spiritual tutelage of Archbishop Averky [Taushev] of Syracuse and Holy Trinity Monastery, Bishop Kyrill's spiritual mentor. After Archbishop Averky's death in 1976, the diocese faced circumstances that led Bishop Kyrill and his diocese to petition the Holy Synod for acceptance into the Orthodox Church in America. On December 20, 1976, Bishop Kyrill and the Bulgarian Diocese of Toledo, then consisting of nine parishes, were accepted by the Holy Synod. Since 1978, Bishop – now Archbishop – Kyrill, in addition to heading the Bulgarian Diocese, also has shepherded the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania.

The Orthodox Church in America's Albanian, Bulgarian, and Romanian dioceses perform a unique and complex ministry in meeting the particular spiritual needs of their flocks, which might otherwise not be satisfactorily met. They have sought to maintain meaningful



ties with the Churches in their former homelands, even when this has been difficult. While firmly and sometimes silently supporting the Church persecuted by communist regimes abroad, they sometimes were subjected to unpleasant repercussions. Since the fall of central and eastern Europe's totalitarian regimes, they have rejoined in the revival of the Churches abroad and developed close ties and cooperation with them, forging a special connection between the Orthodox Church in America and its respective sister auto-cephalous Churches. In recent years, the dioceses also have provided special pastoral care to the rapidly growing number of recent immigrants from Bulgaria, Albania, and Romania.

At the same time, the dioceses fully share the Orthodox Church in America's vision of autocephaly and Church unity, and they participate actively in the Church's missionary efforts, departments, offices, and in other ministries. The Bulgarian Diocese, for example, has grown from nine to 19 parishes since joining the Orthodox Church in America.

Finally, the very existence of the "ethnic" dioceses reflects a significant component of the future organizational structure of a unified Orthodox Church on this continent, proposed a century ago by Saint Tikhon during his tenure as Archbishop of North America [1898-1907]. Therefore, this year's anniversaries are truly a cause for celebration and thanksgiving by all of the Church's faithful. ■

Alexis Liberovsky is the archivist of the Orthodox Church in America.

First national PSALM conference attracts 170

One hundred seventy individuals from 21 states, as well as from Canada, the UK, Portugal, Puerto Rico, and Japan gathered at Saint George Antiochian Orthodox Church, Cicero, IL August 2-5, 2006 for the first national conference sponsored by PSALM, a pan-Orthodox organization that promotes networking, education, and resource sharing among Orthodox Christian musicians.

In addition to choir directors and members, chanters, and readers, the list of participants included His Eminence, Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest, 20 priests, and four monastics representing 12 different jurisdictions.

"The decision to hold the conference sessions at Saint George Church rather than at a hotel, provided some logistical challenges," said Valerie Yova, PSALM president. "However, the presence of the parish's miraculous icon of the Mother of God, which wept for four years in the 1990s, seemed to have its impact upon the attendees and the proceedings."

Speakers and panelists included some of the most respected Orthodox musicians in the English-speaking world, including Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, Archiman-

drite Efrem [Lash], the Very Rev. Sergei Glagolev, the Revs. John Finley and Andrei Papkov, Mark Bailey, David Drillock, Chris Holwey, Vicki Pappas, Nikola Resanovic, Nicholas Schidlovsky, Jessica Suchy-Pilalis, and Tikey Zes, to name a few.

Anchored by the theme, "Sing Praises With Understanding," the presentations and panel discussions focused on various aspects of "understanding" necessary in an effective music ministry, from the communication between musicians and clergy, to understanding the form and function of the services, to understanding how the Word is most appropriately wed to the music.

Among the conference highlights was a concert performed by the Chicago-based Saint Romanos Cappella, under the direction of Dr. Peter Jermihov. The concert featured music by living Orthodox composers, many of whom were in the audience. At the conclusion of the concert, PSALM offered a tribute to its honorary chairman, the Very Rev. Sergei Glagolev, a renowned and prolific composer of liturgical music. PSALM board member David Drillock, spoke of Father Sergei's signifi-

Nov/Dec liturgical music chatroom topics announced

The November/December 2006 schedule of topical discussions available on the OCA's **liturgical music chat room** was announced recently by **Prof. David Drillock**, chairman of the Department of Liturgical Music and Translations and chat room moderator.

The **Tuesday evening** chat room provides a **forum for choir directors, singers, and others** interested in liturgical music to discuss liturgical hymnology, repertoire selection, liturgical chants, Church rubrics, vocal techniques, the choir and congregational singing, music and liturgy, and related issues.

On **November 9**, **Mark Bailey** will be the presenter. **Georgian Music** will be the topic of a presentation by **John Graham** on **November 21**, while **Dr. Joseph McLellan** will review the **Structure of Vespers** during the **December 5** session. Finally, **Fr. Sergei Glagolev** will discuss **Effective Music Leadership** on **December 19**.

All sessions begin at **8:30 p.m. EST**.

Enter the chat room at www.oca.org/MDchat.asp?SID=13. ■

A 136-voice choir under the direction of Mark Bailey of St. Vladimir's Seminary sang the responses at the Divine Liturgy celebrated on the final day of PSALM's first national liturgical music conference.

David Lucas



cant contribution to the growth of Orthodox liturgical music in the English language, after which Ms. Yova presented him with an icon of Orthodox hymnographers.

"While other attempts have been made in the past to bring together Orthodox musicians from all jurisdictions, this may be the first event that included such wide representation and such an impressive collection of experts from all traditions," Ms. Yova noted.

Videos of all lectures and discussions will be available soon from www.orthodoxpsalm.org. ■

Evangelization

"Grow forth..."

Church growth is about faith, not numbers!

Father John Parker

"Grand opening." When we see such an advertisement for a store, we think of low prices and bargains. More likely than not, we don't think about the flip side.

When retailers advertise for these and other special events, their eyes are almost solely on the bottom line: "Let's get the most people we can in here to maximize sales." Every person through the door represents a certain percent chance of a sale and, therefore, a certain percentage of today's income. The math is fairly simple: A product people want plus the people who want it equal growth (profit, then ordering more, then selling more).

This plan works great for capitalism, but it is a disastrous scheme and a horrible "model" for Christianity. The Christian faith is not a "commodity," though there is a ruthless effort from within, of all places, to make it so. Models and methods for "explosive Church growth" and "true community" are as overstocked as every American diet craze. Here today, gone tomorrow. Self-professed experts, who have little, if any, connection to the ancient Church, offer their solutions to propel your church into the 21st century, for a nice price.

Everything is marketed, packaged, and niched and for sale. A now-dated example is *The Prayer of Jabez*, a "prayer" never prayed by Christians, which was all the rage packaged as a book and fiercely marketed with options such as the *Jabez Study Bible*, *Jabez Journal*, *Jabez for Women*, the Jabez prayer whawl [yes, really!], Jabez pencils, notebooks, bracelets, small group studies, videos, etc. Where is Jabez now?

Nearly every facet of "American Christianity" takes this approach. The "radical" new concept. The book. The study guide. The video. The tie-in Bibles, notebooks, bumper stickers, Bible covers, key chains, and DVDs for men, women, children, teens, and special interest groups. The list has no end. And it is all exported.

And then, like the so-called Rapture – also not a part of bona fide Christian teaching from the beginning– *Whoosh!* It's gone, making room for the next one.

Nor, in the history of Christianity, is the faith about getting massive numbers of people through the doors to make a simple "faith commitment." Yes, it is true that "thousands" were added to their number in single instances, as recorded, for example, in the Acts of the Apostles. The Orthodox Churches can tell us the names of many of them who went on to be burned, tortured, beheaded, and put to death for their faith. They are our family members. But trust me, in the first three centuries, few, if any, "became a Christian" because of peer pressure or because it fit in with their particular "social scene." Christianity was a life-or-death decision; the martyrs chose temporal death for eternal life.

More than numbers. Church growth always includes increased numbers. But it also is coupled with a deep, significant spiritual struggle and change. The teachings of the Church expressed in the writings of the New Testament call for a casting off of "the old man" and the putting on of Christ. No more lying, cheating, stealing, fornication, apathy, greed. No more lust, idolatry, personal interpretations of sacred teachings, gluttony, divorce. This is not moralism, by any means. This *metanoia* – repentance or change of mind – is not so much about certain behaviors (though outwardly that is the case). It is rather conformity to the likeness of God in Jesus Christ. This was the same call in the first century, the fourth century, the 14th century, and still is today.

But what happened when the faith became fashionable (read "legal")? Until the fourth century, Christianity was illegal. But with the Edict of Milan, Emperor Constantine called for an end to the persecution against Christians, and here is what happened: Entrance into the Church became more difficult. Much more difficult.

Conversions that seemed to have hap-

pened in a moment in the Acts of the Apostles now were lengthened to three years. Why so long? So people could learn the teachings of the Church and begin to rearrange their lives and "life-styles" to conform to Christ and His commandments. This helped to establish bona fide Church growth in an age when many had all the comforts of the day. They practiced and showed the members of the Church their living commitment to lay down their lives – at least figuratively, if not literally, like their martyr forbears – by serving those in every kind of need, and in so doing, radiating the holy light of Jesus Christ from the inside of their existence outward.

And what about today? If the early Christians took growth not only as a long-term process, but one that had to be proven by a visible, concrete, regular, and often significant life change, why do we treat it as if it is something that can be bought in a video package and completed in a 40-day or 15-session course? The divorce rate among self-professed Christians already speaks volumes about our commitment to this radical life of faith.

On the whole, while there may be more warm bodies in the sanctuary on Sunday morning (or whenever people have services these days), we must ask ourselves, "Am I presently and at all times laying down my life for the love of God and neighbor?"

If the answer is "no" – and mostly this is the answer – then it is time to repent, again, to start anew, and to lay down my life now. Otherwise, I'm just filling a pew in the church. A warm statistic. But the Lord does not call for quantities and sums of people (though very specifically, according to Ezekiel, He desires the death of no one, but that all should turn and live).

He also had some hard words related to lukewarm faith [see Revelation 3:15ff]. Rather, He calls us each to repentance and return; He calls for broken hearts and changed lives. So, Church growth, ultimately, is about holy lives. We are not made holy in a flash or a moment. The ever-present image of the vine and the gardener comes to mind.

An acorn does not magically spring from a speck to a great oak overnight. Rather, the soil must be cultivated and fertilized. The seed must be planted. It must

Evangelization to 30

Mission possible!

Growing SC mission witnesses to community in countless ways!

Wayne Nagy

MT. PLEASANT, SC – Holy Ascension Mission is a dynamic mission community, located just a few miles across the Cooper River from Charleston. It was planted in 2000, when the fledgling group received the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South, to organize officially. Fifteen Orthodox faithful got together and began holding services with the Very Rev. John Breck in the chapel of a funeral home, then later in the community room of a local retirement home.

In late spring 2003, this small but growing group was joined by our current priest-in-charge, the Rev. John Parker, and his family. With their arrival, Holy Ascension Mission continued to establish itself, and by Great Lent 2004, we moved to our present location in a storefront. The rented, 20 x 40 foot space, serves as a church and as a parish bookstore, Ascension Books. The mission's growth is truly a marvel and a testimony to God's glory. This was helped greatly by our reception of an OCA Church planting grant, a diocesan grant, the dedication of the mission's members, and the overwhelming goodwill of the area residents.

Our connections to the community have spread so that more people are being moved to "come and see." About a year ago, Father John wrote a guest column in Charleston's *Post & Courier*, and he has since been invited to write quite a few articles for their weekly "Faith & Values" section. Several people have visited our mission – and eventually converted – after reading these articles. Others have come to know us by chancing upon our bookstore, stopping by our table at a summer market, or by meeting one of our members at some outside activity. One new inquirer accepted a job transfer to Charleston only after first making sure there was an OCA community in the area!

Today, attendance at the Divine Liturgy averages 45 souls – 77 at Pascha! Scarcely a week goes by when there isn't at least one visitor, either from a Protestant tradition, or from no religious background. In fact, I first stumbled through the front door a year and a half ago after a long spiritual search and after finding a tiny ad in the Yellow Pages. Since then, one other adult and I have been baptized in the neighborhood lake, and 15 have been chrismated! There is still a very palpable and contagious sense of determination to grow, to spread Christ's teaching, and to do His work in our community. There also exists a very deep and encompassing bond of love and



A neighborhood lake is used by Fr. John Parker to perform adult baptisms at Charleston's Holy Ascension Mission.

kinship here.

The obvious next step is to build an actual church – a process that began a few years ago. A recent graduate from Penn's School of Architecture with a strong interest in Byzantine architecture moved to South Carolina to design our church, and in so doing, became a member of the parish. Seeing the beauty of our design, the developers of this community donated the land to us. With God's help, we were able to raise the building funds from within the parish, from our Orthodox brothers and sisters outside the area, and from an astonishing number of non-Orthodox friends who are caught up in our excitement. After our building plans were approved by local agencies in record time, the bulldozers began clearing the lot in May 2006!

The main thing that strikes me about our community in Christ is how much work everyone does. At any given moment, there are people working on the financial or other details of the construction, ordering books and icons for the bookstore, running errands to the bank, cleaning the church, arranging liturgical music, watering plants, helping others in the community, collecting clothing for an orphanage, visiting the hospitalized, cooking food for a fund raising event or for our weekly coffee hour, working on our web site, and any number of things that get done. It literally was only a few weeks after I first visited that I too was swept up into the active life of the mission.

Happily, despite all the "doing" that gets done, our mission's faithful still find just as valuable the time to simply "be" together. The Sunday coffee hour often lasts longer than the Liturgy!

When I first came to Holy Ascension, I was desperately seeking a new life on many levels, especially the spiritual. I quickly came to witness the faithful's faith in action and grew into their life – a life in Christ. There is so much more that could be told about this mission, but at the moment I can only say, "Praise God for putting this mission where He did." And "thanks" – not only to the OCA Department of Evangelization, but to every member of the Orthodox Church in America who has given so generously to the annual Mission Appeal for helping to make our mission possible! ■

Kuwait 9.11.2006

A “ministry of presence”

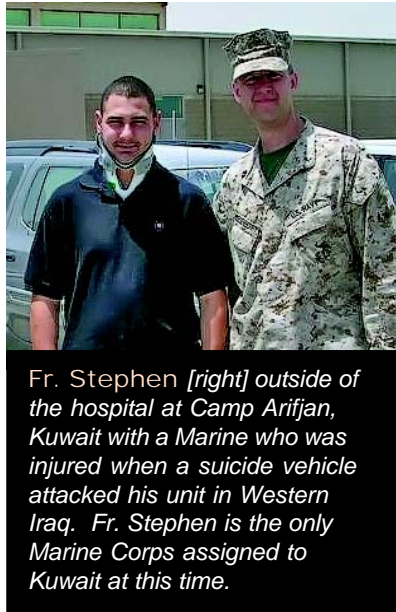
Chaplain Stephen Duesenberry

Kuwait. September 11, 2006. 2:30 in the morning. My phone rings, bringing me out of a deep sleep. I already know what the call is about; it's a ritual I've become far too accustomed to. “Good morning, Chaplain. I'm sorry to bother you, sir. We have an aircraft inbound; it's 25 minutes out, with two ‘angels’ on board.” I dress quickly in my desert cammies and make it to the flight-line, with five minutes to spare.

Nearly every day for the past five months, I've been answering the call to receive our nation's war dead, our fallen “angels” – US military personnel, Defense Department civilians, and coalition troops. They arrive here, at the military side of Kuwait Airport, where the Army Theatre Mortuary Evacuation Point is located.

Part of my mission as a chaplain in Kuwait is to meet the planes arriving from Iraq with our fallen soldiers. Working with Marine Corps Gunny (Navy chaplains serve with Marines), we orchestrate the dignified transfer of remains from the aircraft to the mortuary – a very solemn and dignified process. It is, in fact, a ceremony that very few ever witness, done not for personal glory or attention, but out of tribute and homage to those who have died on the field of battle. The honor guard enters the aircraft and stands at the ready, while all others form up in ranks outside the aircraft. After the Gunny calls everyone to “attention,” the flag-draped metal transfer cases are slowly moved from the aircraft to the mortuary vehicle as “present arms” is called out and a slow salute is executed by those standing in ranks. The process is repeated for each transfer case – slow, deliberate, and reverent.

The bodies are then taken to the mortuary evacuation point. The doors are locked; the transfer cases are opened. Personal effects found on each deceased soldier's person are documented and placed into a pouch and tied around the wrist of the deceased – a difficult task for young soldiers working in mortuary affairs, who are trained to distance themselves from the horror and sadness they encounter. Invariably, the personal effects include the things that meant the most to the deceased: photos of children



Fr. Stephen [right] outside of the hospital at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait with a Marine who was injured when a suicide vehicle attacked his unit in Western Iraq. Fr. Stephen is the only Marine Corps assigned to Kuwait at this time.

Chaplaincies to 29

defending the faith

Do you now believe? Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.
– John 16:31-33

Spiritual self-defense

Father David Subu

This fall, we are introducing our new theme – “Defending the Faith.” But did you know that the Faith really does not need to be defended? Truth remains Truth, whether or not anyone agrees with it or believes it. So, what or who needs to be defended? *You do. I do. We do.* Everyone's faith, at one time or another, will come under attack by those forces in the world today that not only do not want you to have faith or even a clue as to what Truth is. Those forces range from the downright sinister powers of the devil to peer pressure, fear, doubt, and temptation – all of which can erode your confidence in your faith in the existence of God and His plan for your – and our – salvation.

So how can you best defend yourself and your faith from that which can tear it down? I knew a young man who had fallen away from his faith when he was a teen. He stayed away for many years, but began to return to the Church toward the end of his college years. This led him to visit a monastery, where he decided to take the plunge and go to confession for the first time in his life. He told the young [and perhaps a bit inexperienced] priestmonk that he was a college student. Before he could explain that some of the things he had learned in fact prompted him to return to the Church, the priestmonk exclaimed with great certainty, “Ah! Education kills faith!” Naturally, the young man was confused and put off by the priestmonk's response, and at the Liturgy the next morning he decided not to approach the chalice, having lost confidence. Thankfully, he kept an open mind, overcame the priestmonk's odd observation, and eventually was restored to communion by the grace of God.

Youth to 30

food for thought...

- 1 Do I really know how to present my faith, or to explain what it means to be an Orthodox Christian? In what am I lacking? Where am I confused?
- 2 Do I know how to respond to the main criticisms of Christian belief? Do I know someone who does, or of other resources to help me learn more about my faith?
- 3 Have I ever been intellectually dishonest or lazy, unwilling to evaluate my ideas rather than expanding my knowledge and understanding? What happened as a result? What benefits would I discover if I expanded my knowledge of the Orthodox Christian faith?

Youth, Young Adult & Campus Ministry

A blessed time of sharing OCA summer youth intern shares experiences

There's an old song that extols the beauty of Paris in the summer. Anyone who's visited the French capital can confirm that it is indeed breathtaking at that time of the year.

But it wasn't breathtaking enough for Stephan Sollogoub, a student at Saint Vladimir's Seminary, to return to his native France this summer. Instead, he was selected to receive one of three summer internships offered by the Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry and funded by a generous \$9,000.00 grant provided by the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America [FOCA], and spent the summer teaching a lot – and learning even more – at several OCA camps.

"My first camp was on an island off of Vancouver, British Columbia," Stephan said. "There, I served as a counselor and the leader of a liturgical music workshop."

A member of the seminary choir, Stephan was in his element "teaching the campers about why and how we sing in church and preparing them to sing the closing camp Liturgy."

Despite his musical talent, Stephan initially felt a bit unsure of himself as he shared the finer points of liturgical singing.

"At first, I had doubts about my capabilities, but I quickly realized that my seminary education had indeed prepared me to teach the campers," Stephan continued. "I not only used what I had learned to teach the campers how to sing, but I also experienced the joy of dealing with the campers and staff members on a daily basis, in a variety of situations and experiences."

During his week at Saint John the Forerunner camp in Indiana, Stephane found himself learning as much from the staff and campers as he had attempted to teach them.

"The faithful at the parish that sponsors the camp had converted en masse from evangelical Protestantism," Stephan noted. "They came from a completely different background, but what they taught me was beyond words: a different way to approach Orthodoxy!"

"This blessed time of sharing helped me to see more clearly what is essential in our lives: communion with God experienced through communion with one another," Stephan added. "By the end of the summer, I was convinced that my experience as an intern had opened my eyes in many respects, and that it definitely will make an impact on my ministry for years to come."

Two others interns – Olga Beletchkova and Becky Machnee – shared similar experiences.

"I would like to thank the OCA youth department and the FOCA for allowing me to go through such a mind-broadening experience and for helping me to use so many things I learned in my seminary studies," Stephan commented. "I wish every seminarian had the same opportunity!" ■



SVS seminarian Stephan Sollogoub teaches campers the finer points of liturgical singing during his "blessed time of sharing" as an OCA summer youth intern.



Campus chaplains hold conference

The Very Rev. John Reeves and the Rev. John Schroedel, campus chaplains at Penn State University and the University of Chicago respectively, were among 20 participants at a conference sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Fellowship [OCF] at the Antiochian Village Conference Center, Ligonier, PA recently.

"The conference served as a great blessing, networking our chaplains for the first time, to help them shepherd our flock on college campuses," said the Rev. George Pyle, national OCF chaplain. "We are setting the course to continue and expand this conference to work toward OCF's goal of not leaving one student behind."

OCF is the official campus ministry program of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas. For more information on OCF, log on to www.ocf.net or call toll-free 800/919-1623. ■

Christian Education

"Can you use it in a sentence?"

More words our students should know

Valerie Zahirsky

In the last few issues, we've looked at words that appear frequently in our prayers and liturgical services. Sometimes older students, even though they have seen and heard these words for years, are unsure as to what exactly they mean.

Here is another set of words that our students should know.

✓ **Entreat, supplicate, petition.** *Entreat* means "to beg or implore." *Supplicate* means "to make a humble request. During the Divine Liturgy the priest addresses God, saying: "We ask Thee and pray Thee and supplicate Thee...." And a *petition* is "a request made to someone with more authority than the one who is asking."

Obviously, *entreat*, *supplicate*, and *petition* are related to each other. We use all three words during our services to express the ways we ask God for His mercy and guidance in our lives.

What the three words have in common

is the *kind* of asking they describe. It is not casual. These words don't reflect the tone in which we might ask a neighbor to lend us a cup of sugar or ask a passerby to tell us the time. Rather, these words reflect our position as creatures who are completely dependent on the kindness and mercy of the heavenly King Who created us.

It's important for our students to understand that these words remind us that we are not to approach God in an offhand, careless, or casual manner. Rather, we approach Him with confidence, because Our Lord encouraged us to do precisely this when He said, "Ask, and you shall receive." Above all, our God *wants* us to come to Him. He is "merciful and the lover of mankind."

✓ **Ineffable.** This word refers to someone (or something) that is impossible to describe in words. We call God "ineffable" because His majesty and glory are far beyond anything we could put into words or even begin to comprehend.

In the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest re-

fers to God as "ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, ever-existing and eternally the same." All of these words remind us of God's immeasurable glory. Yet the next words of the prayer tell us that this same God, though surrounded by angels, accepts the Liturgy we creatures offer Him.

✓ **Manifold.** This word provides a stronger way of saying "many." Someone has said that it means "many many's." When we speak of the "manifold blessings" God grants us, we emphasize that they are so numerous that we could never begin to count or name them.

✓ **New Jerusalem.** The glossary of the *Orthodox Study Bible* gives a helpful definition of this term. It tells us that the New Jerusalem will be the center of God's Kingdom, which will be established after the Second Coming of Christ and the Last Judgment. This heavenly Jerusalem will take the place of the old, earthly Jerusalem. Saint Paul contrasts the two when he writes of the "Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage [but that] the Jerusalem above is free" [Galatians 4: 25-26].

Revelation 21:1-21 also describes the New Jerusalem, which descends "out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." We read further that the city's "gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there)."

✓ **Zion.** Once again, the *Orthodox Study Bible* tells us that *Zion* sometimes refers to a physical place, an area of Jerusalem sometimes called the "City of David." For example, in 2 Samuel 5: 7, we read how "David captured the fortress of Zion, the city of David." Of course, David established Jerusalem as his capital, and brought the Ark of the Covenant into the city.

But the word also is used figuratively to refer to the Kingdom of God. So, in Hebrews 12:22 we read, "But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God." The teaching of the Church is that this "new Jerusalem" is the place established for us under the new covenant initiated by Jesus Christ.

An awareness of the richness of our Church's language is a gift we can – and should – give our students. The more they understand the Church's words, the better the chances are that they will enter adult life as faithful, wise worshippers. ■

RESOURCES

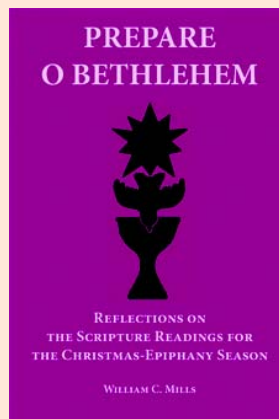
Just what you've been looking for!

✗ New books ideal for group, personal Bible study

There was a time when few Orthodox Christian resources were available for individual and group Bible study. Two new volumes by **Fr. William C. Mills**, rector of the Nativity of the Holy Virgin Church, Charolotte, NC and adjunct professor of religious studies at Queens University, help fill what for years had been a definite gap.

Baptize All Nations: Reflections on the Gospel of Matthew for the Pentecost Season, includes commentaries on the Gospel lessons read on the Sundays following Pentecost through the beginning of the Lenten Triodion. With the Nativity season just around the corner, ***Prepare O Bethlehem: Reflections on the Scripture Readings for the Christmas-Epiphany Season*** is second to none for personal and group preparation for the celebration of the Incarnation.

Order from the **Orthodox Research Institute**, 20 Silver Ln., Rollinsford, NH 03869, or on-line at www.orthodoxresearchinstitute.org. ■



NorthAmerica

St. Arseny Institute, U of Winnipeg, join forces

A giant leap forward for Orthodox Christian theological education in Canada

The University of Winnipeg's Faculty of Theology officially acknowledged an educational agreement with Saint Arseny Institute, Winnipeg, MB, Canada.

His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada; university president Lloyd Axworthy; and the Rev. Dr. James Christie, dean of the university's Faculty of Theology, participated at an official ceremony during which documents welcoming the institute as a member of the Winnipeg Theological Cooperative were signed. The cooperative includes several other local theological schools and programs and offers a lively variety of graduate courses and educational opportunities for adults.

"People are very excited across Canada," said Spencer Estabrooks, institute director. "Bishop Seraphim has made it clear to us, as we already were well aware, that to have come this far in three years of existence, with all the doors opening for us on a continual basis, is not our doing, since it is virtually impossible humanly speaking. Rather, the intercessions of our pa-

tron, Saint Arseny, are unmistakably evident in all that has transpired."

Currently, four dozen students are taking courses at the institute, a dozen of whom are preparing for ordination to the Holy Diaconate.

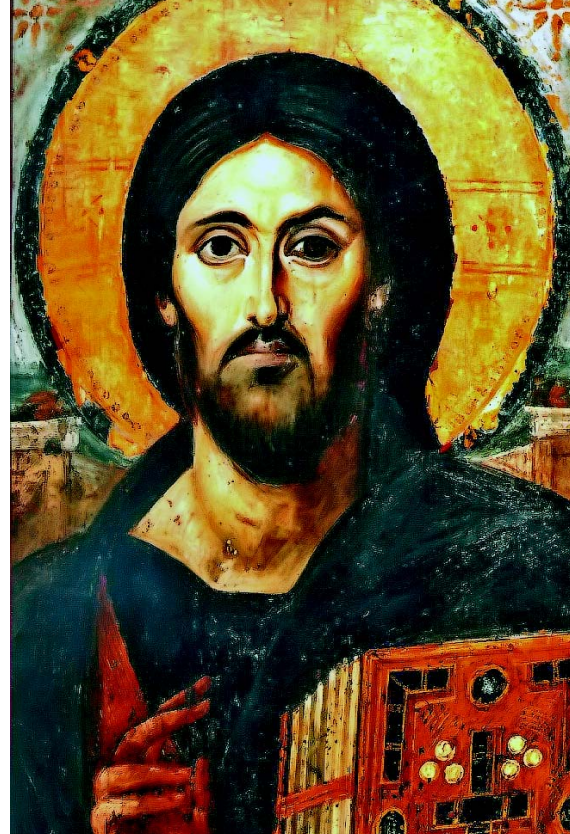
"We have had an increased number of enquiries as news of our relationship with the university has spread," Mr. Estabrooks added. "This is especially so given the new possibility to receive credit toward Bachelor of Theology and Master of Divinity degrees accredited by the Association of Theological Schools."

A significant feature of the new relationship with the university, the institute's library will be catalogued, housed, and circulated by the university library.

In addition to providing theological courses, the institute publishes an on-line academic periodical, the *Canadian Journal of Orthodox Christianity*, that may be accessed at www.cjoc.ca.

For more information on the institute, log on to www.saintarseny.ca. ■

Making it official Bishop Seraphim with [from left] the Rev. Dr. James Christie, Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, and Spencer Estabrooks sign agreement between St. Arseny Institute and the University of Winnipeg.



"Holy image" One of the oldest icons of Christ in the Mt. Sinai collection dates back to the 6th or 7th century.

Mt. Sinai Monastery comes to LA

This winter, it will be possible to visit Mount Sinai's famed Saint Catherine Monastery without leaving home!

A ground breaking exhibition, "Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons From Sinai," is slated to open at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles on November 14, 2006. The exhibition will make the monastery's rare icons, manuscripts, and liturgical objects available to the public, in many cases for the first time.

Saint Catherine's has been in continuous use since it was founded by the Byzantine emperor Justinian in the sixth century. Thanks to its isolated location, the monastery held out during the iconoclastic controversies of the eighth and ninth centuries, during which the use of icons was forbidden. Thus, its collection contains rare pre-iconoclastic icons, including a sixth-century icon of Saint Peter and one of the oldest extant icons of Jesus Christ.

The exhibition, which runs through March 2007, also will feature a film on the monastery's Paschal services.

For more information, visit the Getty web site at www.getty.edu/museum. ■

NorthAmerica

Celebrating 40 years of monastic witness at New Skete

With the gift of perfect weather, the communities of New Skete, Cambridge, NY, celebrated the 40th anniversary of their founding August 11-12, 2006.

The celebration opened with Great Vespers on Friday evening, followed by a slide presentation highlighting the growth of the men's monastic community, the community of nuns dedicated to Our Lady of the Sign, and the married community at Emmaus House.

The following morning, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman presided at the Divine Liturgy. Concelebrating were the Priestmonk Marc of New Skete; the Very Revs. Igor Burdikoff, Robert Arida, and Alexis Vinogradov; and the Revs. Michael Roshak and Vladimir Aleandro, old and new friends of the communities.

Throughout the day, various activities



Metropolitan Herman *blesses a new garden between New Skete's two churches during the community's 40th anniversary celebration.*

were offered, including a talk by Father Alexis, titled "Alexander Schmemmann and New Skete: Road to Orthodoxy," and a panel discussion on the roots of New Skete's typikon in the usages of Jerusalem and Constantinople, presented by Father Robert Arida and Dr. Roberta Ervine from St. Nersess Armenian Seminary. Youth enjoyed a talk on monastic life, while every-

one enjoyed exhibits of the nuns' iconography and vestment making.

Perhaps the true significance of the celebration was best captured in these remarks offered in Father Alexis' address: "It is precisely in the willingness by these communities to persevere in that warfare, to remain [on the way of the Cross] in prayerful and loving work together in the face of encounter with the old Adam, that today we can see here the face of the New Adam present and flourishing, though wounded, no doubt, for the battle fought and won. 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible' With these words, Our Lord reminds us what ultimately has made – and continues to make – the experiment on this mountain a success." ■

Spirit from 5

The price of silence

You are mandated to discover the implications of what this means and apply it to your life.

If there is any hope of your ever hearing that "still, small voice" heard by the prophet Elijah on Mt. Horeb [I Kings 19:12], you must learn to love silence and spend time enjoying it. Pay attention to the directive of Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, when He is teaching us the way we should pray: "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" [Matthew 6:6]. ■

FOCA to play St. Nick to seminary families

Delegates to the 80th national Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America convention held Labor Day weekend voted to play Saint Nicholas by fulfilling "Christmas wish lists" submitted by married seminarian families this year.

"The project began five years ago when 10 parishes from the FOCA's New Jersey district and deanery filled the wishes of 24 married student families with over three dozen children at Saint Tikhon's and Saint Vladimir's seminaries," said newly elected FOCA president, Michael Steffaro of South River, NJ. "The decision to 'go national' with the project will provide greater assistance to married students as chapters and parishes across the country will participate."

Participating chapters, parishes, and individuals are asked to contact Allison Steffaro, project coordinator, by October 15, at which time they will be given a family's

wish list to fill. Gifts are sent to a central location in early December and distributed before Nativity recess.

For further information how you can brighten a seminary family's holiday, call 732/698-1952 or send an e-mail to michaelsteffaro@comcast.net. ■

St. Nicholas *distributes gifts to married students at St. Tikhon's Seminary last year.*



Chaplaincies from 24

Kuwait 9.11.2006

and spouses, letters from home, religious items, military mementos, and the like. As the chaplain here, I provide a ministry of presence to the mortuary affairs personnel as they process the remains.

As an Orthodox priest, it is my faith tradition to offer prayers of intercession for the dead. I gather the names of the departed and pray for them by name, asking that God's mercy and peace will be with their families, who anxiously await their return. For me, there is no option to distance myself from the sadness; each soldier is an individual, created in the image and likeness of God. It is my faith, my family, and the prayers of others that enable me to continue on, day after day.

After the paperwork is completed and personal effects verified, the bodies are iced for preservation and the transfer cases are locked and sealed. A new flag is secured each case, and the remains are held in refrigeration trailers until the first available flight out. Our fallen soldiers leave here the same way they arrived, with honor, dignity and respect. After a brief stop in Germany, they go on to Dover, where they are prepared for burial.

There are some memories that will always be with, like the time the wife of a Marine helicopter pilot, herself also a Marine, escorted her husband's body home, or the time the brother of a Navy corpsman, killed when an IED exploded, flew here from Iraq to accompany his brother's body back to their waiting mother. What words of consolation can one offer a wife whose husband has been taken from her, or a brother who has lost his best friend?

As the fifth anniversary of September 11 is upon us, we are reminded once again that we are a nation at war. Here in Kuwait, I am reminded of this every day. In the course of writing this short reflection, yet another of our fallen just arrived from Iraq. Over 30 of us lined up outside a C-130 airplane to receive yet another of America's war dead to send home to a grieving family. Please remember in your prayers our men and women serving in Iraq, as well as my ministry here.

In closing, I wish to share the quote hanging outside the mortuary here: "Think not only upon their passing, remember the glory of their spirit." ■

WorldBriefs

RUSSIA

Historic St. Petersburg cathedral suffers serious fire damage

Fire ravaged a 19th century landmark cathedral in St. Petersburg on Friday, August 25, 2006, causing the church's massive central dome to collapse.

A second, smaller dome, one of four that also graced the Greek revival style Holy Trinity Cathedral, also sustained damage.

First reported during the city's evening rush hour, the fire engulfed the wooden scaffolding that surrounded the central dome. Firefighters aided by helicopters managed to contain the blaze in about three hours, averting further destruction.

Erected in 1835, the cathedral's 80-meter-high central wooden dome was Europe's second largest.

Closed during the Soviet period, during which it was used as a storehouse, the cathedral was returned to the Orthodox Church in 1990. It had undergone extensive interior and exterior renovations.

Many of the cathedral's precious liturgical artifacts were rescued by clergy and emergency workers before the dome collapsed.

In a subsequent release from the *RIA Novosti* news agency dated August 31, it was reported that the head of the St. Peters-

burg emergencies department, Leonid Belyayev, reported "with 80% certainty" that the fire broke out as a result of negligence on the part of welders engaged in

the dome's restoration. He said that investigators found a gas canister that exploded during the fire, and another two canisters were removed from the cathedral proper.

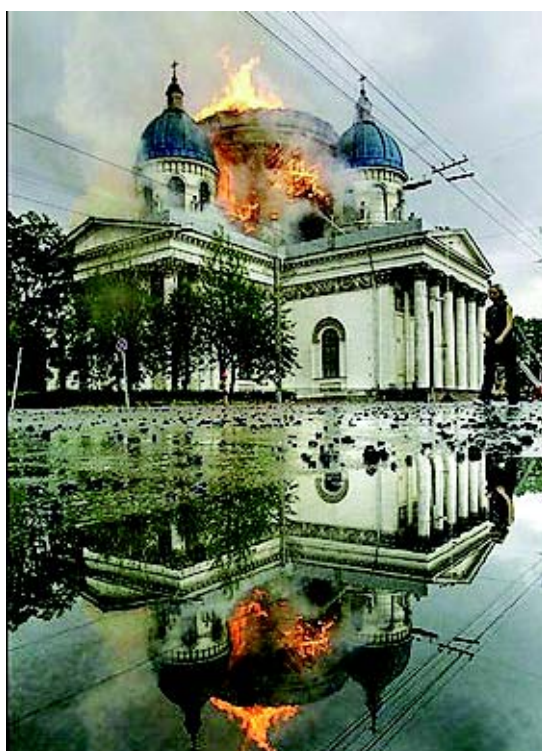
One of the cathedral's priests, however, suggested that the fire was set deliberately, perhaps by some extremist groups. He told *RIA Novosti* reporters that a parishioner had taken pictures of the fire that revealed separate

blazes throughout the church.

Meanwhile, the head of a local museum protection watchdog group said that 50 million rubles [about \$1.9 million] has been earmarked for restoration efforts. One week after the fire, experts continued to assess the damage. Restoration could begin as early as October.

It was also reported that fire officials began inspecting other historical buildings under restoration in the city.

"Initial results show that there are violations in all the buildings," Belyayev reported. "Such incidents can easily occur again." ■



Flames engulf the central dome of St. Petersburg's Holy Trinity Cathedral.

Prayer from 6

The Jesus Prayer

against him; further it speaks of God healing us in order that we should be able to live and become what we are called to be; and as He knows that we are not capable with our own strength of fulfilling either His will or the laws of our own created nature, He pours His grace abundantly on us [Romans 5:20]. He gives us power to do what we could not otherwise do....

If we turn back to the words of the Jesus Prayer – “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner” – we see that the first words express with exactness and integrity the Gospel faith in Christ, the historical incarnation of the Word of God; and the end of the prayer expresses all the complex rich relationships of love that exist between God and His creatures.

The Jesus Prayer is known to innumerable Orthodox, either as a rule of prayer or in addition to it, as a form of devotion, a short focal point that can be used at any moment, whatever the situation.... More than any other prayer, the Jesus Prayer aims at bringing us to stand in God’s presence with no other thought but the miracle of our standing there and God with us, because in the use of the Jesus Prayer, there is nothing and no one except God and us. The use of the prayer is dual, it is an act of worship as is every prayer, and on the ascetical level, it is a focus that allows us to keep our attention still in the presence of God.

It is a very companionable prayer, a friendly one, always at hand, and very individual in spite of its monotonous repetitions. Whether in joy or in sorrow, it is, when it has become habitual, a quickening of the soul, a response to any call of God. The words of Saint Symeon the New Theologian apply to all its possible effects on us: “Do not worry about what will come next; you will discover it when it comes.” ■

Youth from 24

Spiritual self-defense

This story reminds me of the great tension that exists in our world today. Indeed, if we go to college and blindly accept everything we are told – especially if it is blatantly anti-Christian – then “education” *can* kill faith. But being educated is a necessary element if we are to defend the faith. We need to know *what* we believe and, more importantly, *why* we believe it. Most people, even the college educated, succumb to the powerful temptation of *intellectual laziness and dishonesty*. What this means is that people, at some point in their lives, decide to believe in what they want to believe in without really thinking it through and without testing it against the evidence that challenges it. This includes people of faith as well as atheists. When those beliefs are challenged, people can become very upset. Why? Because they don’t really know how to defend their beliefs. How can they know for sure that their beliefs are true if they don’t have an informed foundation to support those beliefs?

It shouldn’t surprise you that you hear these things coming from the Church? The world tries very hard to paint traditional Christians as people who hold on to outmoded and outdated beliefs, who are unwilling to come face to face with modern realities. But history shows us otherwise. Our faith is full of great defenders who were willing to intelligently, rationally, and honestly defend

Chaplain receives award

Chaplain, Colonel John W. Stefero, recently was awarded the Legion of Merit for his work as the Command Chaplain of Air Education and Training Command [AETC] at Randolph Air Force Base, San Antonio, TX, from 2003-2006.



During this period, Father Stefero provided executive oversight of 350 chaplain service personnel at 14 wings, two groups, and one squadron and served as the principal advisor to the AETC commander on spiritual care and ethical leadership. He was cited for garnering \$2 million in commander’s funds to upgrade or construct seven new airman ministry centers, and overseeing the \$1 million refurbishing of the memorial chapel on San Antonio’s Lackland AFB, where Orthodox services are conducted weekly. He also flawlessly routed over \$500,000.00 in chapel donations for Hurricane Katrina victims at Keesler AFB in Mississippi.

Father Stefero was instrumental in establishing a two-week, \$68,000.00 extension of the basic chaplain course, along with the first combat trauma chaplain assistant course for those preparing to deploy into Iraq and Afghanistan. He also volunteered and led lenten and Paschal services for Orthodox personnel in Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates in 2005.

Father Stefero has been reassigned to the Air Force Chief of Chaplains Office on Bolling AFB, Washington, DC, where he now serves as the Chief of the Plans and Programs Division. ■

the Faith they had received. They were willing to suffer for it at the hands of those who did not wish to believe and could not successfully debate with them, but had to resort to violence against the faithful instead. The Lord knew we would experience such troubles, which is precisely why He promised us that He would send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, to help us and lead us into the knowledge of all Truth. Part of His gift to us is the ability to use our minds to search and understand Truth. The first step of defending the faith is becoming educated about it. A faulty education *might* kill our faith, but *no* education *certainly will!* ■

Evangelization from 22

“Grow forth...”

be watered and cared for. New growth must be checked for disease and pruned. This takes time; it is painful. But it is the *only* way. In fact, it is “The Way,” and has been from the beginning.

The “real” bottom line. If we truly desire to be Christian and involved in the growth of the holy Church, best we return to the writings and ways of those who paved the way. We must avoid at all costs the winds and tides of contemporary schemes and models. Then, hopefully, in the end, we each might be welcomed into the fullness of the Kingdom of God with the words, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.” ■

Fr. John Parker is priest-in-charge of Holy Ascension Church, Mt. Pleasant, SC.

Fr. Oleksa's June DC lectures first in video series on Alaska

WASHINGTON, DC – Despite June's record heat, a bit of Alaska made its way to the nation's capital in June as Fr. Michael Oleksa delivered a series of talks on the Alaskan Saints as part of a project to produce several professional broadcast quality documentaries.

Fr. Michael's lectures were taped by Jim Karabin, a professional videographer and consultant to the OCA Office of Communications.

Fr. Michael, whose visit was hosted by the National American Indian Museum and the National Museum of Natural History, spoke at ten parishes in the Washington Deanery and at the meeting of the DC clergy association. He was also invited by the Smithsonian Institute to offer a public lecture on Alaska's Russian heritage, which was filmed by Voice of America. He highlighted the activities of the early Russian traders and Orthodox missionaries to Alaska.

With the blessing to proceed with the recording project from Metropolitan Herman and Bishop Nikolai of Sitka, Anchorage, and Alaska, the series is being produced by Katherine Vitko and Alexandra Safchuk under the auspices of the OCA Department of History and Archives. The series will begin with the evangelization of Alaska and the work of St. Herman. ■

Fr. Michael Oleksa and his wife Xenia were given the rare opportunity to peruse the Smithsonian's "attics" with museum curator, Dr. Stephen Loring. The Oleksas discovered several artifacts previously feared to have disappeared.



Communities

Send photos and news to TOC Communities, One Wheaton Center 912, Wheaton, IL 60187 or to info@oca.org.

Restoration continues at historic Canadian church

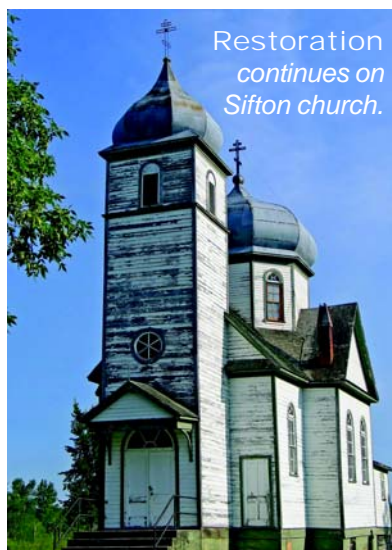
SIFTON, MB, CANADA – With the help of Manitoba Heritage, the Kaplan Foundation of New York, and the Archdiocese of Canada, the second phase of the restoration of historic Holy Resurrection Church here was recently completed.

Built in 1926, the church was erected one mile from the

site of a monastery founded by Archbishop Arseny [Chagovtsev], which existed for over 50 years.

Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada is personally overseeing restoration of the church.

In mid-August, the region's faithful gathered at the church for its annual pilgrimage in remembrance of the pioneers who planted the faith across Canada's prairies. ■



PA scout helps feed homeless, receives St. George Award

AMBRIDGE, PA – Helping her parish youth group's "Feed the Homeless" ministry, Samantha Exler assisted in the preparation of 150 lunches for distribution to the needy in a Pittsburgh neighborhood as one of several projects she undertook to earn the St. George Orthodox scouting award.

Samantha pursued other award requirements under the guidance of her pastor, Fr. William Evansky of Holy Ghost Church.

Samantha is the daughter of Paula and Jim Exler. ■



Samantha Exler receives scouting award from Fr. William Evansky.

Communities

Wisconsin's oldest parish celebrates 100th anniversary

HURON, WI – Over 300 area faithful gathered at St. John the Baptist Church here in June to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the parish's establishment.

Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest presided at the anniversary Liturgy, at which Fr. Thaddeus Wojcik, rector, and Frs. Vladimir Lecko and Steven Voytovich, concelebrated.

A festive banquet followed, at which the balalaika orchestra from St. Mary Cathedral, Minneapolis, MN, performed.

The Chippewa County Historical Society recently designated the church as an historic site. A new plaque placed on the church reads: "St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church is the oldest Orthodox church in the state of Wisconsin. Shortly after their arrival from eastern Europe in 1901, the Carpatho-Russian community settled in this area and began holding church services in their homes. They built the church building in 1906 following the Byzantine style of architecture and included a dome with an Orthodox cross placed on top." ■

– Steve Telisak

Archbishop Job presides at the Divine Liturgy marking the 100th anniversary of historic St. John the Baptist Church.



At the annual 9/11 memorial at Holy Spirit Church, Wantage, NJ, Fr. Samuel Kedala, rector, welcomed members of the Minisink Hose Company, Unionville, NY, who joined parishioners and friends in remembering those who lost their lives in the terrorist attacks.

Parishes remember 9/11 victims

Memorials were celebrated in OCA parishes across North America on Sunday and Monday, September 10-11, in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

At the OCA representation Church of St. Catherine, Moscow, Archimandrite Zacchaeus, dean, and the clergy prayed for the victims of the 9/11 attacks on the US and for those who perished in the Beslan, Madrid, London, and Sharm-el Sheikh attacks. Among those in attendance were the US, Serbian, Greek, and Egyptian ambassadors; the First Deputy of the Council of the Russian Federation, Alexander P. Torshin, and representatives of the State Duma and other embassies. ■

In Moscow, Archimandrite Zacchaeus, US Ambassador William Burns, and Russian Federation First Deputy Alexander P. Torshin, ring memorial bell at St. Catherine Church in remembrance of terrorism victims.

