

## 9<sup>th</sup> All-American Council in St. Louis, MO

August 20 thru 25, 1989

St. Louis is known as the Gateway to the West, which was for many early travelers, an adventure to the future. In 1989, the Ninth All-American Council personified that motto. The Orthodox Church in America convened its tri-annual Council at the Adams Mark Hotel just across from the Gateway Arch in downtown St. Louis. It was the first Council to be held west of Ohio, in the “true” Midwest. The Ninth All-American Council saw a change in the Council’s format to almost exclusive plenary sessions and devoting sessions to particular areas of Church life. It saw new features of extensive youth programs and lunch forums on diverse topics.

The theme of the Ninth Council was “THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA: REFLECTING ON THE PAST, PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.” In order to facilitate reflection on the past, a video called “An American Destiny,” outlining the history of Orthodoxy in America, was shown at one of the initial plenary sessions. Attempting to plan for the future was accomplished in the council’s various resolutions. The most important resolutions were perhaps those on mutual accountability and financial management. A resolution against the death penalty generated heated debate but was narrowly passed.

Additional new features of the Ninth Council included extensive youth activities and luncheon forums on diverse topics facilitated by the Department of Lay Ministries.

This council paid special tribute to Fr. Daniel Hubiak, retiring Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, who had served in the central administration for twenty-five years.

The Council itself was moved to August from July, so everyone could appreciate the warmth and humidity of St. Louis. Despite the heat, by all accounts the delegates and guests had a fruitful meeting and an enjoyable time in the Mound City. For those of you who were there in 1989, here are some fun facts and reminders of days of old: the President of the U.S. was a Bush and the most popular brew in St. Louis was a Busch. Gas prices averaged 97 cent/gallon and the Cold War was over. My how some things have changed!



The St. Louis Deanery, which was the local sponsor, was enthusiastic and excited to host the Council and put extra effort into showing everyone a great time. The Local Committee consisted of parishioners from all over the St. Louis Deanery which included the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Madison, IL; St. Michael's Orthodox Church in St. Louis, MO; Sts. Cyril and Methody Orthodox Church of Granite City, IL; St. Thomas Romanian Orthodox Church in St. Louis, MO; and St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Desloge, MO. Back in 1989, the St. Louis Deanery consisted of the St. Louis Orthodox Churches, Holy Trinity and St. Theodore of Tarsus Orthodox Churches in Kansas City, and the Protection of the Virgin Mary in Royalton, IL. These parishes participated with long distance help in the souvenir book and mailings.



The Local Clergy Chairman was Fr. Joseph Fester, Rector of Nativity of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Desloge, MO. Bob Butchko, of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Madison, IL was the Local Lay Chairman. Father Tim Sawchak, then a college student, was responsible for all the Council Signage. Father John Platko, of blessed memory, was responsible for the Council Ad Book and brought the western part of the state of Missouri into the program with that assignment. Although the seat of the Dean has since moved from St. Louis to Kansas City, the spirit of the churches and their parishioners hasn't changed. The motivation, commitment and dedication to providing a wonderful environment for deliberation and congregating for the glory of God was their motivation in 1989 and that spirit continues today for this upcoming 19<sup>th</sup> All American Council. Hope to see some old friends and make new friends.