



**OFFICIAL MINUTES**

**OF THE**

**14<sup>TH</sup> All-AMERICAN COUNCIL**



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*The following are the approved minutes of the 14th All-American Council of The Orthodox Church in America, convened July 18-22, 2005 at the Toronto Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.*

*Also included are the principal addresses, reports and presentations delivered during the Council.*

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## Opening Homily

*Delivered by His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM, Bishop of Ottawa and the Archdiocese of Canada on Sunday, July 17, 2005, at the Divine Liturgy opening the 14th All-American Council.*

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

By the Grace of the All-Holy Spirit, once again the OCA is assembling together to listen to the guiding of the Holy Spirit, and to try to accomplish the Will of God in our life together in the Church.

Once again, we have assembled because we love our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ. And it is our desire to serve Him. This is now the 14th time our Church has assembled as an autocephalous Church, and the context in which we are assembling is different now, by far, from what it was when the first of these assemblies took place. Right now, we are living in times which could be described as "out of joint"; in times in which right has become wrong, and wrong has become right, black has become white, and white has become black.

Society's understanding of how to live life has been turned upside down. And we - we Orthodox Christians, The Orthodox Church in America, the local Orthodox Church in and for North America - we who are called to be yeast and salt in this territory have a huge responsibility. We have a huge responsibility because it is so difficult to persevere on the right path in the context of this distortion and this turmoil and the atmosphere of constant war. I don't think there has been a time without war during my life. There have always been wars since I was a child. I have this phantasy that when I was a child, during "the good old days of the British Empire," things were quieter. Probably I am deceived. But regardless, the times in which we live require a great deal from us, because everything around us works against us.

It is a time in which, like the Gospel of St. John describes, "Darkness is trying to overcome the light." It is difficult for us, very difficult for us, to maintain a sense of equilibrium and of where we are going in the midst of all of this - very difficult indeed. And if we are not careful, we will fall into some dangerous traps, traps mostly intellectual or of passion, which will divert us from our sense of direction. That is the environment that we find ourselves in this morning, with the Centurion and the Saviour and the healing of the Centurion's servant.

The Lord found in this Centurion, converting to Christ, more immediate faith than he found in the children of Israel - who had inherited the promise. And this was because people had become distracted from the right course. They had forgotten their sense of perspective, and what comes first in life. And as a result, they were floundering, as human beings always do. I am noted for saying that "human beings are very slow learners," and I have yet to be proven wrong, because I can't see how human society has progressed in any way in more than five thousand years. I recall talking to one of the best Egyptologists on this continent last year and asking him the question, "Is anything different over five thousand years?" He said, "No, it's worse." We are not learning anything, because we can't keep our eyes on what is our end, and what is our purpose in life. And that end and that purpose is only one - Jesus Christ: loving Him, knowing Him, and serving Him.

Regarding the heretics, whose failures and foibles we recalled in our hymns last night at Vespers to the Fathers of the First Six Ecumenical Councils: those Fathers kept a sense of direction, not because of their intellectual powers alone, but because their great intellects were informed and guided by the

love of Jesus Christ, and their hearts knew who Jesus Christ really is. The heretics, on the other hand, fell into intellectual traps, were afraid of the implications of the depth of God's love, and tried to rationalize around it to make the incarnation of God's love - Jesus Christ - more "acceptable" to humans somehow. They tried in their various ways to "box in" God's love, and that never works. The Fathers, who preserved for us the Orthodox Faith, did it because their hearts and their minds were together, and they knew the Lord; and they knew who the Lord is, and they knew who the Lord is not.

You and I, as salt and yeast on this continent, are not going to be winning people by intellectual games and arguments, because this society in which we live is far too clever for all of that. It is far too clever for the standard debates and arguments we have used in the past to help people find God. These days it comes down to the "brass tacks" of what kind of a life you and I live, because people are so cynical in North America now - they've "seen everything," or they think they have seen everything. "Big Red" still has some surprises, I think, but we ourselves are not responsible for the turmoil others are living in; we ourselves are responsible for keeping our hearts and our minds on Jesus Christ. We are responsible for living a life that is conformed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

And this life, conformed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is characterized by self-giving and self-emptying love and nothing else, actually, except self-giving, self-emptying, serving love, imitating the Master Himself, Jesus Christ - who said to the Apostles, you have to do as I am doing, when He washed their feet. We have to imitate Him. I myself still have to learn a prime lesson I was taught by a parishioner many years ago in Winnipeg, who said to me, "So you are greater than God, are you?" I wondered what he was getting at. "So I notice you never take a day off. God took a day off, don't you remember?" I am afraid I still don't quite catch his meaning, and this is more than twenty years ago. When I talk about "slow learning," I know what I am talking about.

People around us who are lost in all kinds of webs of deceit, pursuing the emptiness of trying to be comfortable in this world; people who are broken and damaged badly by the pain of life; people whose hearts are "dried up" - they are the ones who are looking to you and to me, Orthodox Christians, who profess to inherit the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth of Jesus Christ, looking to us to show them that Christ. And the only way we can show them that Christ is by how we truly love each other in conformity with the Gospel.

In my early days as a priest, I was really depressed - a lot and often - by how little I found the people reading the Scriptures, by how ignorant people in our Church were of the Scriptures. Now things are a bit better. I now hear of people reading, at least, the daily Scriptures. That's okay, and over twenty years and more of serving, I am happy to see that much. But, brothers and sisters, those Fathers who "saved our bacon" fifteen hundred years ago and more were people who read the Scriptures every day. They were "bathing in it." They knew the Bible by heart, not by memory, but by heart, because they read it so much. It's important for us to remember that if we are going to know who Jesus Christ is, then where we are going to find out who He really is, and how we are supposed to live - in those Scriptures.

I really took heart when I was a "green" seminarian and a "one-year-old" priest when I went to St. Tikhon's Monastery. I met for the first time the now departed Archimandrite Vasily of very blessed memory; and I heard through secondary sources that his kalenik, his cell attendant, had commented recently how nice it was that Archimandrite Vasily, who by this time was an old man, had his cell attendant reading the Bible to him every day. When they came to the end of the Apocalypse, Archimandrite Vasily said, "Oh, that was so nice, let's start again!"

That is exactly how we have to feel. There are people these days who do have that attitude toward the foundation of our life in Christ - the Holy Scriptures. You and I, brothers and sisters, have got to grow up in our life in Christ, in our love in Christ, because it is not in systems, it is not in techniques (although they help), it is not in them alone that we can put any trust. It is only in our heart, knowing who Jesus Christ is and testifying by our life to that Truth, Him who is the Truth - our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ - that we can truly grow up.

And that is what this coming week is all about: deepening our love for Jesus Christ, encouraging each other to persevere, no matter how difficult it is, in serving Jesus Christ, in being salt and yeast as the Saviour has called us to be, imitating our Saviour as He calls us in His love to do. He calls us to be life- and light-givers to those around us - in all humility, with no pride - but only with the love of Jesus Christ, whom, with all love, we here all glorify, together with His Father who is from everlasting, and His All-Holy, Good, and Life-Giving Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## Homily

*Delivered by His Grace, Bishop TIKHON, Bishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, on July 18, 2005, at the Divine Liturgy at the 14th All-American Council.*

The Healing on the Sabbath  
(Romans 12:4-5, 15-21; Matthew 12:9-13)

And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue: and behold there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Then saith he unto the man, "Stretch forth thine hand." And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. (Matthew 12:9-13)

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We live today in a world of disunity and division, where our only hope of healing and unity lies in our Lord, God, and Jesus Christ. In the Gospel reading appointed for today, we have witnessed this hope in the physical healing of the man whose hand was withered.

This healing would have perhaps gone unnoticed were it not for a small contention on the part of the people assembled in the synagogue. This contention arose concerning the question of the Sabbath and whether or not it was lawful for Christ to heal someone on the day of rest.

The accusation brought against the Lord by this question reveals once again the disunity and division in the human race. Those who questioned the Lord knew the Law very well - they knew the commandment given in the book of Exodus: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gate (Exodus 20:8-10). The division is revealed not in the fact that they knew the Law, but in the fact that they had forgotten, or chose to ignore, that the Law itself was an imperfect substitute for something greater. And because they failed to see this, they could only look at the Lord and judge Him based on whether or not He was following the Law as they understood it.

But Christ, in a passage immediately before the one read in today's Gospel, had already proclaimed that the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath day, and in another place, He had reminded the people that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So what is truly remarkable is that by healing the man's arm and returning it to wholeness, our Lord is not only working a miracle for this one person, but is also revealing to all that He has truly come not to destroy the Law but to fulfill it. He has come not to conform to the Sabbath, but to be the True Sabbath.

We sing of this in the Holy Orthodox Church on Great and Holy Saturday, when we proclaim that "this is that blessed Sabbath" on which Christ "rested in the flesh," descending into hell and bestowing resurrection (eternal rest) on all held captive there. This Sabbath rest is the fulfillment of



the Old Testament Sabbath rest, but also of our salvation - a salvation which Christ worked not by power and might, not by decree and argument, but by humility. In His humility, He reveals His glory, and by this glory, He manifests his victory over death and corruption, the sources of our disunity and division.

We, too, live in a world much like the divided and fragmented world of the Old Testament. As his Grace, Bishop Seraphim, reminded us yesterday, perhaps things are, in fact, worse today. In our world, it seems as if everything has been polarized, and as individual Orthodox Christians, or as the Church, we are constantly confronted with the choices of a fragmented world. We are asked:

- Are we traditional or progressive?
- Are we conservative or liberal?
- Are we biblical fundamentalists or biblical higher critics?
- Are we for technology or against it?

The world wants us to choose just as the world repeatedly asked the Lord to choose: Are you for the Law or against it? Are you supporting the Temple or blaspheming it? Are you following the Sabbath or breaking it? But Christ did not choose one way as opposed to another. Rather, He revealed that He is the Way, and that if we truly desire to find the Way, we must follow Him.

Christ did not come out in favor of the Law or in opposition to it. Rather, He revealed Himself as the fulfillment of the Law and as the Way for us to attain that holiness and that virtue which will lead us to the likeness of Christ. He is truly that Rest into which we can enter by His grace.

As we gather here in Toronto for this 14th All-American Council, we know that we have choices to make, programs to implement, financial programs to debate, and so forth. But in the midst of all that, let us not allow ourselves to be caught up in the divisions and polarities that are the way of the world. Let us heed the words of the Apostle Paul: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God (Romans 12:1-2).

If we want to be transformed, there is only one thing to do, and that is to follow Christ, to strive to acquire His perfection, to be granted His humility, and to be filled with His love. This should be the work of each and every one of us, and this should be the work of our Council, whose theme is: "Our Church and the Future." Our future can only be one thing: our salvation in Christ and the road that we take to get there. In the same way, Tradition is not simply that which is handed down, but the living of that which is handed down.

If we want unity on all levels of Church life, then we must begin by finding healing for our own hearts. We can find this healing through repentance and through prayer, through humility, and through love, and above all, by remembering that it is the grace of God which protects and preserves us at all times. May that grace be granted to us by the mercy and love of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom is due all glory, honor, and worship, together with His Father who is from everlasting, and the All-Holy Spirit, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**MINUTES**  
**Monday, July 18, 2005**  
**Plenary Session I**

Pre-Council Registration as of the morning of Monday, July 18, 2005

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	264
Lay Delegates:	266
Observers: OCA:	290
Guests:	53
Youth:	240
Total Registered:	1129

1. Following the entrance of the hierarchs, the celebration of the Service of Prayer at the Opening of the Sacred Council and the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit,” His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, declared the 14th All-American Council open at 11:25 A.M.

2. The national anthems of Canada, the United States, and Mexico were sung.

3. His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, introduced His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM of Ottawa, host bishop and Episcopal Moderator of the Pre-Conciliar Commission, who offered words of welcome to the delegates, outlined the Pre-Conciliar Commission's work and offered words of thanks to those who worked so hard to organize this Council.

4. His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM, then presented nominations for the organization of the Council, as follows:

**Council Vice-Chairs**

Archpriest Gregory Safchuk, Clergy Vice-Chair  
Dr. Alice Woog, Lay Vice-Chair

**Resolutions Committee**

Dr. Paul Meyendorff, Chair  
Archpriest Peter Baktis  
Archpriest Daniel Kovalak  
V. Rev. David Mahaffey  
Priest Lawrence Margitich  
Igumen Joseph (Hoffman)  
Dr. John Barnett  
Mr. David Drillock  
Mr. Nicholas Ressetar

**Tellers**

Archpriest John Zdinak, Chair  
Archpriest John Adamcio  
Priest Daniel Degyansky  
Priest Timothy Hojnicky  
Mr. David Donlick  
Ms. Leda Dzwonczyk  
Mr. Harold Homyak  
Mr. Peter Junda  
Mr. John Mindala, Sr.  
Mr. Hennock Sook  
Mr. Alexie Vassiouchkine  
Mrs. Pauline Walker  
Mr. Coy Williamson

### **Credentials Committee**

Priest Steven Voytovich, Chair  
Priest John Chudik  
Mr. Theodore Csernica  
Mrs. Mary Jane Lucak  
Ms. Eleana Silk  
Mr. Gregory Sulich  
Mr. Frank Tkacz  
Mrs. Nadine Wood  
Mr. Jerry Wilson, Consultant

### **Council Secretariat**

Priest John Hopko, Chair  
Archpriest Andrew Morbey  
Archpriest Constantine White  
Archpriest Basil Zebrun  
Priest John Hainsworth  
Mrs. Cheryl Anna Andrew

### **Nominations**

Archpriest Michael Westerberg, Chair  
Archpriest Theodore Boback  
Archpriest Laurence Lazar  
Archpriest Michael Matsko  
Archpriest Dennis Rhodes  
Archpriest Michael Senyo  
Archpriest David Shewczyk  
Archimandrite Isidore (Brittain)  
Mr. Nicholas Lezinsky  
Dr. Faith Skordinski  
Mrs. Christine Zebrun

### **Press and Information**

Archpriest John Matusiak, Chair  
Archpriest John Dresko  
Archpriest George Gray  
Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky  
Priest Eric Tosi  
Mr. David Lucs  
Mr. John Mindala  
Mr. Martin Paluch

### **Parliamentary Procedure**

Archpriest David Brum, Chair  
Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky  
Priest John Mikita  
Priest Ian Pac-Urar  
Priest Alexander Rentel  
Mr. Michael Herzak  
Mr. Jonathan Russin

### **Summary Team**

Mrs. Valerie Zahirsky, Co-Chair  
Mr. David Wagschal, Co-Chair  
Archpriest Michael Dahulich  
Archpriest John Kowalczyk  
Archpriest Ken James Stavrevsky  
Priest Lawrence Margitich  
Priest Jacob Myers  
Priest Thomas Soroka  
Priest Timothy Ullman  
Mrs. Victoria Jones  
Mrs. Mary Ann Lopoukhine  
Mrs. Joan Skrobat

5. His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM, moved the acceptance of the nominations, seconded by Archpriest John Dresko. The motion was unanimously accepted.

6. His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM, reviewed the procedures on resolutions.
7. His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, called for a motion to adopt the Rules and the Council Agenda. Dr. Paul Meyendorff moved, seconded by George Ludko. Passed.
8. His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, reviewed the Procedures for nominations and elections to Church-wide positions.
9. His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, presented the list of the current holders of those positions, and their remaining terms of office.
10. Protopresbyter Robert S. Kondratick, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, welcomed special guests. His Grace, Bishop DIMITRIOS of Xanthos, Representative of His Eminence, Archbishop DIMITRIOS of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, and General Secretary of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), presented official greetings from His Eminence, Archbishop DIMITRIOS.
11. Priest Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, as follows:

**Registration at the Council:**

Bishops:	13
Retired Bishops:	2
Clergy Delegates:	196
Lay Delegates:	204
Observers:	264
Total:	679

**Attendance at Plenary Session I:**

Bishops:	13
Retired Bishops:	2
Clergy Delegates:	143
Lay Delegates:	167
Observers:	246
Guest Hierarchy:	1
Other Guests and Visitors:	18
Total:	590

12. Archpriest Gregory Safchuk, Clergy Vice-Chair of the Council, called on Archpriest David Brum, Chair of the Statute Committee, to present the report of the Statute Commission. No proposals for amendment to the Statute were presented.
13. Mr. Joseph Kormos, Project Team Facilitator, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the key issues to be discussed at the Council.
14. Archpriest Gregory Safchuk, Clergy Vice-Chair, introduced Protopresbyter Robert S. Kondratick, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, who in turn introduced His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN. His Beatitude presented his Address as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America.
15. Session I adjourned at 1:22 P.M. with the singing of "It Is Truly Meet..."

## **Plenary Session II**

### **July 18, 2005**

1. Lay Vice-Chair Dr. Alice Woog called Plenary Session II to order at 2:57 P.M. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.” Sophia Korloff of Saint George Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Toronto, Ontario, read from the Holy Scriptures.

2. The Secretary of the Holy Synod, His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM of Ottawa, had no report at this time.

3. Priest Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, as follows:

#### **Registration at the Council:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	264
Lay Delegates:	266
Observers: OCA:	290
Guests:	53
Youth:	240
Total Registered:	1129

#### **Attendance at Plenary Session II:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	0
Clergy Delegates:	234
Lay Delegates:	227
Observers:	139
Total Attendance:	613

4. Archpriest Michael Westerberg, Chair of the Nominating Committee, explained the procedure for the nomination of delegates to Church-wide positions and introduced the members of the Nominating Committee.

5. Dr. Alice Woog called on Mr. Joseph Kormos to introduce Archpriest Vladimir Berzonsky. Fr. Berzonsky reflected on the first Council study topic: Vision and Identity.

6. Fr. Berzonsky introduced Dr. Constantine Kallaur, who reviewed the historical path of the Orthodox Church in America leading to the reception of Autocephaly in 1970. He introduced Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak, Former Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, who recounted the events surrounding the granting of Autocephaly.

7. A panel comprised of His Grace, Bishop BENJAMIN, Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak, Archpriest Vladimir Berzonsky, Archpriest Sergei Glagolev, Archpriest Alexis Vinogradov, and Dr. Constantine Kallaur led a discussion on the Study Topic and entertained questions from the floor.

8. Mr. Joseph Kormos outlined the vision exercises of the workshop segment.

9. The Session adjourned at 5:12 P.M. with the singing of “It Is Truly Meet...”

## **Tuesday, July 19**

### **Plenary Session III**

1. Lay Vice-Chair Dr Alice Woog called Plenary Session III to order at 9:55 A.M. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.” Priest Timothy Hojnicky, Pastor of Holy Apostles Mission, Mechanicsburg, PA, read from the Holy Scripture.
2. Ms. Rehka Khote, General Manager of the Sheraton Centre Toronto, welcomed delegates.
3. Dr. Woog introduced Protopresbyter Robert S. Kondratich, who presented his Report as Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America.
4. Priest Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, as follows:

#### **Registration at the Council**

*(as of 3:00 P.M. 7/18. Additional registrations took place after the above this report. See 7/19)*

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	264
Lay Delegates:	266
Observers: OCA:	290
Guests:	53
Youth:	240
Total Registered:	1129

#### **Attendance at Plenary Session III:**

Hierarchs:	12
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	1
Clergy Delegates:	273
Lay Delegates:	242
Observers:	197
Total Attendance:	725

5. Dr. Woog called on Archpriest Chad Hatfield, Dean of St. Herman Seminary, to introduce Priest Jonathan Ivanoff. Fr. Ivanoff presented an analysis of Clergy Statistics in support of the second Council Study Topic: Clergy Formation and Development.
  6. A panel comprised of Fr. Hatfield, Fr. Ivanoff, Archpriest Michael Dahulich, Dean of St. Tikhon Seminary, and Professor John Erickson, Dean of St. Vladimir Seminary led discussion on the study topic and entertained questions from the floor.
  7. Archpriest Michael Westerberg reviewed the rules and procedures for nominating candidates to Church-wide positions. He identified those already nominated and asked for nominations from the floor for clergy and lay representatives to the Metropolitan Council, the Pension Board, and the Audit Committee.
- Paul Culton moved, Archpriest David Mahaffey seconded, to close nominations for Metropolitan Council Clergy Representatives. Passed.
- Archpriest John Voytilla moved, Peter Junda seconded, to close nominations for Metropolitan Council Lay Representatives. Passed.
- Deacon Michael Suvak moved, Peter Junda seconded, to close nominations for Clergy Representatives to the Pension Board. Passed. Dr. Paul Meyendorff moved, Fr. John Dresko seconded, to close nominations for Lay Representatives to the Pension Board. Passed.

Daniel Crosby moved, Priest Marcus Burch seconded, to close nominations for Clergy Representatives to the Audit Committee. Passed.

Chaplain John Steffero moved, Archpriest Ernesto Rios seconded, to close nominations for Lay Representatives to the Audit Committee. Passed.

8. The Session adjourned at 1:15 P.M. with the singing of “It Is Truly Meet...”.

## **Tuesday, July 19**

### **Plenary Session IV**

1. Clergy Vice-Chair Fr. Gregory Safchuk called Plenary Session IV to order at 2:43 P.M. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.” Kara Yakubik, from St. Mark's Church, Bethesda, MD, read from the Holy Scripture.

2. Dr. Alice Woog, Lay Vice-Chair, outlined the vision exercises for the workshop segment dealing with Clergy Formation.

3. Fr. Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, as follows:

#### **Registration at the Council:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	288
Lay Delegates:	272
Observers: OCA:	301
Guests:	57
Youth:	245
Total Registered:	1179

#### **Attendance at Plenary Session IV:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	0
Clergy Delegates:	236
Lay Delegates:	231
Observers:	149
Total Attendance:	629

4. Fr. Gregory Safchuk introduced the Co-Chairs of the Council Summary Team, Mrs. Valerie Zahirsky and Mr. David Wagschal, who updated the delegates concerning the work of the Team.

5. Fr. Gregory Safchuk introduced Archpriest William Evansky, who moderated the discussion of the third Council study topic: Parish Health.

6. Fr. Jonathan Ivanoff presented the results of an online survey of parish clergy concerning their parishes.

7. A panel comprised of Fr. Evansky, Archpriest Theodore Bobosh, Priest Thomas Soroka, Michelle Jannakos, Mary Ann Lopoukhine, and Archpriest Ian Mackinnon led discussion on the study topic and entertained questions from the floor.

8. A new documentary presentation entitled “Diocesan Spotlight” was premiered.

9. The Session adjourned at 5:25 P.M. with the singing of “It Is Truly Meet....”



## **Wednesday, July 20**

### **Plenary Session V**

1. Clergy Vice-Chair Fr. Gregory Safchuk called Plenary Session V to order at 9:58 A.M. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.” Reader Todd Elias Walker, from St. Mary's Cathedral, Minneapolis, MN, read from the Holy Scripture.
2. Bishop SERAPHIM announced the Holy Synod's approval of the minutes of the first three Plenary Sessions.
3. Fr. Robert Kondratick, Chancellor of The Orthodox Church in America, introduced members of the Department of Christian Education and thanked them for their work.
4. Fr. Robert Kondratick welcomed Fr. Christopher Metropoulos, Director of the Orthodox Christian Network (a ministry of the Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops). Fr. Metropoulos explained the work of OCN and encouraged OCA participation and support.
5. Fr. Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, as follows:

#### **Registration at the Council:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	288
Lay Delegates:	272
Observers: OCA:	302
Guests:	57
Youth:	245
Total Registered:	1180

#### **Attendance at Plenary Session V:**

Hierarchs:	12
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	0
Clergy Delegates:	248
Lay Delegates:	236
Observers:	160
Total Attendance:	656

6. Dr. Alice Woog, Lay Vice-Chair, introduced the Co-Chairs of the Council Summary Team, Mrs. Valerie Zahirsky and Mr. David Wagschal, who updated the delegates concerning the work of the Team.
7. Fr. Gregory Safchuk called on Archpriest Daniel Kovalak, Pastor of the Elevation of the Holy Cross Church in Williamsport, PA, to introduce the fourth Council study topic: Evangelization.
8. Fr. Kovalak introduced Priest Eric Tosi, Director of the Department of Evangelization and pastor of St Paul the Apostle Church, Las Vegas, NV, who offered an analysis of the mission and evangelization activities of The Orthodox Church in America.
9. Fr. Kovalak opened the floor for comments and reflections on mission, evangelization, and revitalization of older parishes.
10. The plenary segment of the Session adjourned at 11:42 A.M. with the singing of “It Is Truly Meet.” Participants then broke into small group workshops on Parish Health and Evangelization.

## **Thursday, July 21 Plenary Session VI**

1. Clergy Vice-Chair Fr. Gregory Safchuk called Plenary Session VI to order at 11:02 A.M. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.” Archpriest John Mack from Saint Nicholas Church, Auburn, NY, read from the Holy Scripture.
2. The Secretary of the Holy Synod, His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM of Ottawa, had no report.
3. Fr. Gregory Safchuk introduced the Co-Chairs of the Council Summary Team, Mrs. Valerie Zahirsky and Mr. David Wagschal, who updated the delegates concerning the work of the Team.
4. Fr. Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, as follows:

### **Registration at the Council:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	289
Lay Delegates:	273
Observers: OCA:	305
Guests:	58
Youth:	245
Total Registered:	1186

### **Attendance at Plenary Session VI:**

Hierarchs:	12
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	1
Clergy Delegates:	242
Lay Delegates:	242
Observers:	158
Total Attendance:	655

5. Fr. Gregory Safchuk introduced the candidates for clergy and lay representative positions on the Metropolitan Council, Pension Board, and Audit Committee.
6. The elections for Church-wide offices took place.
7. Fr. Gregory Safchuk called on David Wagschal, a member of the OCA Department of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, to introduce the fifth Council study topic: Orthodox Relations.
8. Mr. Wagschal introduced Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky, Assistant to the Chancellor for External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, who offered an analysis of Orthodox Relations.
9. A panel, comprised of His Eminence, Archbishop NATHANIEL of Detroit, His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM of Ottawa, His Grace, Bishop BASIL, Bishop of Wichita and Mid-America, Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, Archpriest Andrew Morbey, Archpriest Paul Yerger, Dr. Peter Bouteneff, and Dr. Richard Schneider, provided remarks on the study topic. His Grace, Bishop BASIL, presented his remarks via videotape.
10. Fr. Gregory Safchuk introduced the Most Rev. Jean-Louis Plouffe, Roman Catholic Bishop of Sault Ste-Marie and Past President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, a guest at this session.
11. The Session adjourned at 1:35 P.M. with the singing of “It Is Truly Meet...”

## **Thursday, July 21 Plenary Session VII**

Pending the arrival of the Holy Synod, Priest Sam Kedala from Holy Spirit Church, Wantage, NJ, read from the Holy Scripture. Questions carrying over from the previous Session regarding Orthodox Relations were entertained.

1. Clergy Vice-Chair Fr. Gregory Safchuk called Plenary Session VII to order at 2:52 P.M. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.”

2. Fr. Gregory Safchuk announced the results of the elections for Clergy and Lay Representative positions on the Metropolitan Council, the Pension Board, and the Audit Committee:

Clergy Representatives to the Metropolitan Council: Archpriest Theodore Boback (six-year term), Archpriest Constantine White (three-year term), Priest John Maxwell (alternate).

Lay Representatives to the Metropolitan Council: Professor John H. Erickson (six-year term), Dr. Faith Skordinski (three-year term), Ms. Eleana Silk (alternate).

Clergy Representatives to the Pension Board: Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky (six-year term), Archpriest John R. Steffaro (three-year term), Archpriest John Zdinak (alternate).

Lay Representatives to the Pension Board: Mr. David Drillock (six-year term), Mr. Gregory Shesko (three-year term), Mr. Nicholas Lezinsky (alternate).

Representatives to the Audit Committee: Archpriest Paul Suda, Mr. David Donlick, Mr. Frank Tkacz (alternate).

3. The Lay Vice-Chair, Dr. Alice Woog, thanked Fr. Michael Westerberg, Chair, and the Nominations Committee for their work.

4. Dr. Woog introduced Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky, who presented his Report as Treasurer of the Orthodox Church in America and, together with Archpriest Stavros Strikis, Comptroller of the Orthodox Church in America, entertained questions.

5. Fr. Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, as follows:

### **Registration at the Council:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	289
Lay Delegates:	273
Observers: OCA:	305
Guests:	58
Youth:	245
Total Registered:	1186

### **Attendance at Plenary Session VII:**

Hierarchs:	11
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	1
Clergy Delegates:	246
Lay Delegates:	236
Observers:	171
Total Attendance:	665

6. Dr. Woog introduced Archpriest John Dresko, who presented and moved the Fair Share Resolution of the Orthodox Church in America. Fr. Michael Westerberg seconded the motion. Discussion on the motion followed, after which the chair called for a vote. Using voting cards, a first vote was taken. Results were inconclusive, because of a problem with verification of credentials. Therefore, a second vote was taken.

Affirmative votes, 237, Negative votes, 175. Passed.

7. The Session adjourned at 4:40 P.M. with the singing of “It Is Truly Meet...”

## **Friday, July 22**

### **Plenary Session VIII**

1. Clergy Vice-Chair Fr. Gregory Safchuk called Plenary Session VIII to order at 10:05 A.M. with the singing of “The Grace of the Holy Spirit.” Archpriest John R. Steffaro from St. John the Baptist Church, Campbell, OH, read from the Holy Scripture.
2. The Secretary of the Holy Synod, His Grace, Bishop SERAPHIM of Ottawa, announced that the Minutes of the Council, through to and including Plenary Session VI, have been approved by the Holy Synod. The Minutes of Plenary Sessions VII and VIII will be reviewed after the close of the Council.
3. Priest Michael Anderson, Youth Director of the Orthodox Church in America, and the Youth and Young Adult participants in the 14th All-American Council, gave their presentation to the Council.
4. Fr. Steven Voytovich, Chair of the Credentials Committee, thanked all the members of the Credentials Committee, and the seminarian interns who assisted it, and presented the Committee's final report, as follows:

#### **Registration at the Council:**

Hierarchs:	13
Guest & Retired Hierarchs:	3
Clergy Delegates:	289
Lay Delegates:	273
Observers: OCA:	305
Guests:	59
Youth:	245
Total Registered:	1187

#### **Attendance at Plenary Session VIII:**

Hierarchs:	11
Guests & Retired Hierarchs	3
Clergy Delegates	131
Lay Delegates	165
Observers	134
Total Attendance	442

5. Dr. Paul Meyendorff, Chair of the Resolutions Committee, presented the Committee's report.
6. Mr. Joseph Kormos, Project Team Facilitator, introduced the Co-Chairs of the Council Summary Team, Mrs. Valerie Zahirsky and Mr. David Wagschal, who presented the Summary Team Report, invited comments and responded to questions. Among those providing comments was His Eminence, Archbishop DIMITRI of Dallas and the South. Archpriest Dennis Rhodes moved, seconded by Dr. Paul Meyendorff, that the Summary Team Report be received as presented. Passed.
7. Fr. Robert S. Kondratick moved, seconded by Faith Skordinski, the adoption of a Resolution of Recognition and Thanks as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the hierarchs, clergy and laity - all delegates, observers and guests of the 14th All-American Council - express their love and gratitude to the Members of the Local Committee: Archpriest Dennis Pihach, Chairman; Dmitry Chernomorsky, Vice-Chairman; Alexis Troubetzkoy, Treasurer; and Sophia Koloroff, Secretary. Passed.

8. Fr. Robert S. Kondratick moved, seconded by Fr. Ernesto Rios, the adoption of a resolution:

WHEREAS the work of the 14th All-American Council, convened July 17-22, 2005, in the City of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, was most excellently facilitated by the efforts of Bishop SERAPHIM and the Local Committee, so that all participants were assured of all essential services and movement necessary for their deliberations,

WHEREAS the work of the 14th All-American Council, convened July 17-22, 2005, in the City of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, involved the steadfast labor of the delegates and observers in Plenary and Workshop Sessions and their efforts were given to the Summary Team for discernment and reporting to the 14th All-American Council participants,

BE IT RESOLVED that we thank the Summary Team - Mrs. Valerie Zahirsky, Co-Chair, Mr. David Wagschal, Co-Chair, V. Rev. Michael Dahulich, V. Rev. John Kowalczyk, V. Rev. Ken James Stavrevsky, Rev. Lawrence Margitich, Rev. Jacob Myers, Rev. Thomas Soroka, Rev. Timothy Ullman, Mrs. Victoria Jones, Mrs. Mary Ann Lopoukhine, and Mrs. Joan Skrobat - and offer our gratitude and appreciation for their diligent work in discussing our thoughts, discerning our desires and presenting the findings to the participants of the 14th All-American Council. Passed.

9. His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, gave his concluding remarks.

10. "Memory Eternal" was sung for Protopresbyter John Meyendorff on the 13th anniversary of his repose.

11. "Many Years" was sung for all the participants in the 14th All-American Council.

12. John Mindala, Sr., made a motion, seconded by Fr. Ernesto Rios, to adjourn the 14th American Council. Passed.

13. The Session adjourned at 12:10 P.M. with the celebration of a Service of Prayer and Thanksgiving. At this service those elected to Church-wide offices were installed to office by His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN.

## **Summary Team Report to the Holy Synod of Bishops**

The Summary Team was asked to be attentive to as many presentations and discussions as possible during the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council. This included sermons, plenaries, floor discussions and workshops, luncheon forums and personal conversations.

From these, and from the handwritten notes that participants submitted at workshops and forums, the Summary Team made lists of people's ideas, concerns, and aspirations, meetings each evening to go over the notes and their own observations from the day's deliberations. The team helped David Wagschal and Valerie Zahirsky to put together a daily summary for the Holy Synod and then for the Council participants.

The team's final and most significant task was to synthesize and "distill" the information gathered on Monday through Thursday, and to present as priorities, first to the Holy Synod and then to the body, the salient concerns and ideas that came forth from the Council proceedings. The result was the three priorities described below, which constantly and clearly emerged. Suggestions for meeting the goals of two of these priorities were divided into actions for the next 5-10 years, the next 3 years, and the next 3 months. The 5-10 years ideas represent the "big picture" or the "dream" goals, which while the 3-year goals are somewhat more immediate, and the 3-month goals are things that people hope to see implemented right away, so that momentum is not lost. They are as follows:

### **Priority One – MISSION**

The Preconciliar papers tell us that well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Metropolitan LEONTY referred to our Church simply as "the Mission." It became clear, in the Summary Team's work, that people still see our Church's identity as being centered on the missionary imperative. This cut across all groups and all ages.

- **5-10 year Goals:**

1. A concrete plan to create 50 new missions and 50 revitalized established parishes.
2. A conscious allocation of a larger part of our Church's resources (financial, human, educational) to the work of mission.

- **3 year Goals:**

1. Intentional mission outreach to various cultures in our society, particularly the Hispanic, Asian, and African American populations.
2. A national evangelization program for both clergy and laity, which would involve producing materials and programs to teach people how to evangelize effectively.
3. Modification of our seminaries' curricula to include greater, specific emphasis on mission and evangelization.
4. Establishment of active mission directors, either on the national or diocesan levels (or appointment of more such directors where a few are already working.)
5. Giving a "high profile" to, and putting special focus on, the annual Mission Appeal.
6. MISSION to be the theme of the next All-American Council.

- **3 month Goals:**

1. The Department of Mission to study ways of implementing the 3-year and 5-10 year goals.
2. The All-American Council presentation on evangelization, and the video on the dioceses of The Orthodox Church in America, be posted on the website of The Orthodox Church in America or made generally available in some other way.

## **Priority Two – EDUCATION and FORMATION**

It seemed, as the team’s work progressed over the week, that Church members see many of the problems and needs we face as being fundamentally issues of education and formation. People realize that we all – not just the clergy – must know and be able to articulate, explain, and sometimes defend our Orthodox faith. We also realize that the keep riches of Orthodoxy call us to keep learning throughout our lives. This learning is seen as being practical, experiential, and “lived rather than purely theoretical. It was noteworthy that the formation of our clergy, while not the sole focus of our educational efforts, is clearly seen as being central to the life of the Church.

The following goals emerged:

- **5-10 year Goals:**

1. That full financial support for an Orthodox seminary education should be provided to all young men studying for the priesthood.
2. Development of materials and programs that reflect technological and methodological advances. Person-to-person education, continuing education, and skill-based education are all seen as valuable complements to traditional seminary or church school training.
3. Establishment and support of programs for mentoring of younger clergy by experienced (perhaps including retired) clergy, and substantial clergy internship programs.

- **3 year Goals:**

1. Establishment of annual conferences for families and clergy that would have different “tracks” of study, and different activities, for various groups. These would include workshops, skills training, and study of specific issues as well as common prayer and worship. They might be modeled on, or possibly conducted in co-operation with, the Parish Life Conferences sponsored by the Antiochian Archdiocese.
2. Development of a program and program director of Ongoing Pastoral Education and Care. This encompasses two common concerns for continuing education and for the care and support of clergy.

- **3 month Goals**

1. Revitalization of the Summer Internship Program
2. The Department of Christian Education to continue developing materials, specifically those that will accomplish the goals listed above.



### **Priority THREE – UNITY**

A common theme in the notes received by the Summary Team, and in conversations, was that real progress in any area of the Church's life implies increased co-operation with other Orthodox Churches present on this continent. But this priority did not seem to fit into a time frame as naturally as the first two. So the goals are listed without regard to any period of time in which they might be accomplished.

1. A reaffirmation of The Orthodox Church in America's role as a leading voice for Orthodox unity in North America.
2. A call to faithful of The Orthodox Church in America to prayerful recommitment to the goal of Orthodox unity.
3. Development of inter-Orthodox collaboration as a principle of action in all we do as a Church.
4. A strong effort to restart the Bilateral Commission with the Antiochian Orthodox Church in America, looking toward a "Multilateral Commission" in the future.

The clear desire for real efforts at unity was heartening. His Beatitude Metropolitan HERMAN certainly was giving voice to the feelings of Council participants when he quoted Patriarch IGNATIUS of Antioch at the Council banquet by saying that "we should follow Christ into the future as one Church."

Respectfully submitted,

David Wagschal and Valerie Zahirsky

## Address of the Primate

*His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, Archbishop of Washington and New York, Metropolitan of All-America and Canada, delivered the Address of the Primate to the 14th All-American Council Toronto, Ontario, Monday, July 18, 2005*

Your Eminences, Your Graces, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, Monastics, Beloved Faithful, Honorable Representatives of other Churches and of the Ecumenical Community, Distinguished Guests, Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

I am pleased to welcome all of you to Toronto as the Orthodox Church in America gathers for the 14th All-American Council. For the second time in the history of our Church, we have assembled in the Archdiocese of Canada. The archdiocese encompasses the entire Dominion of Canada, a nation rich in history, tradition, and culture. Canada is a large country, spread across the expansive plains, mountains, and prairies of North America. It is a land of vast breadth that is blessed with great agricultural, marine, and other natural resources. We have gathered in Canada's largest city, Toronto, located within the country's largest metropolitan area. Most of you have already had some experience of Toronto's cosmopolitan character and ethnic diversity. People representing over 100 ethnic groups have made their homes here, bringing with them their languages, cultures, and traditions, evident at almost every turn. These varied peoples and ethnic groups, with their unique characteristics, add to the rich fabric of Canadian society.

It is fitting that we have gathered in this country and city for, in a sense, the diversity of both Canada and Toronto reflects the diverse nature of the Orthodox Church in America. We are a Church comprised of peoples from all over the world, made up of many ethnic groups with their own languages and traditions, their unique histories and cultures, and their own personal experience of Christ and the Gospel of salvation. From this diversity, we have been formed out of many peoples into the one Body of Christ in North America. Gathered from many nations, we are "no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone" [Ephesians 2:19-20].

**The All-American Council in the life of the Church.** We have gathered here as the Orthodox Church in America, the local territorial Church on this continent, the Body of Christ in this time and place. The All-American Council is a clear expression of what in Russian is called sobornost. Sometimes translated as "conciliarity," sobornost may be understood as the responsible and right-ordered participation of the entire People of God in the Church's life and work. This shared involvement in the Church's life – by hierarchs, clergy, and laity alike – means that every Orthodox Christian, having received the Holy Spirit, may properly express concern for the Church, discuss the Church's challenges and needs, and suggest insights and answers to the challenges faced by the Church, as long as this is in keeping with the Church's Faith and Tradition. However, such participation and involvement in the life of the Church is not based on some form of "democracy" which would make clergy and laity co-administrators of the Church, for the responsibility to assure that we remain in agreement with Orthodox Faith and Tradition remains the role and responsibility of the bishops.

In reflecting on the role of the All-American Council in the life of the Church, the ever-memorable Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann wrote, “The [All-American Council] is thus the expression of the common concern for the Church of all her members and the expression also of her hierarchal structure, and this is what sobornost and sobornal mean in Orthodoxy. It is a cooperation, in which each member of the Church is given full possibility to express his views, to enrich others with his experience, to teach and to be taught, to give and to receive. The hierarchy can profit immensely from this cooperation with the laity, just as the laity can be enlightened on the various dimensions of the Church’s life. But all this does not mean ‘egalitarianism,’ a transformation of hierarchy into laity and vice-versa. It is a sad fact, a tragedy indeed, that under the influence of secularism and legalism, the whole emphasis in our understanding of the [Council] activities has shifted to ‘decisions’ and ‘motions’ which are being considered as the main task of the [Council], whereas its real value is in the wonderful opportunity to clarify the mind of the Church by a common discussion, by sharing the concern for the Church, by deepening the unity of all members of the Church.”

The All-American Council is a sacred moment, a blessed opportunity for the Orthodox Church in America to manifest itself as a communion of faith, of hope, and of love; as such, it can be seen as a true blessing for our Church and the icon and model of who we are and what we are called to be. Gathered in council, the hierarchs of our Church, entrusted with the apostolic ministry of guiding and shepherding the flock, surrounded by those who have been called to serve as ordained ministers and the faithful in Christ, are the One Body that shares the One Bread and One Cup.

We gather every three years to reflect on the life and mission of the Church in North America. As we gather for the 14th All-American Council, we do so with common hopes and concerns, and with a sense of common purpose. We reflect upon our shared vocation and mission: to proclaim the Gospel and live the Orthodox Faith as the Church in North America at the beginning of the 21st century. As we gather in Toronto, we recognize the richness of the experiences represented here, in the lives of all who are present. We recall the words of the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Church in Corinth: “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all” [1 Corinthians 12:4-6].

The experience of the Orthodox Church in America and its vision of Church life, as expressed through the All-American Council, are unique among the world’s local Orthodox Churches. We have an understanding of the Church which is not a narrow understanding. This broader, more involved, and more engaged understanding of the Church is reflected in the All-American Council. Convened every three years, the All-American Council is a microcosm of the diversity and unity of the Orthodox Church in America and of its unique role within the larger community of Orthodox Churches throughout the world. As I stated in my first words to the Church, immediately after my election as Primate, “The Council is, indeed, an icon of the Church. The Church’s bishops, together with the clergy and laity, are gathered around Christ. This is seen with special clarity and in its highest expression when we gather for the celebration of the Eucharist. It is also seen in the deliberations and decisions of the Council. It is evident that the Church is neither the hierarchy alone, nor the clergy alone, nor the laity alone. Rather, the Church is the Body of Christ, composed of bishops and clergy and laity acting together.”

Three years ago, we gathered in Orlando, Florida, for the 13th All-American Council. Our last Council was unique in that it not only represented the gathering of the Church from across North America, but it also prayerfully expressed its gratitude to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, as he retired from active archpastoral service after serving as Primate of the Orthodox Church in

America for 25 years. We remain grateful to Metropolitan Theodosius who, in retirement, continues to serve the Church as his health allows. As preparations were made for the election of Metropolitan Theodosius' successor, and as that process actually took place, our Church showed that it is, indeed, mature, stable, and capable of directing its own life.

Upon the retirement of Metropolitan Theodosius, I was elected to the office of Primate, and accepted the awesome responsibility given to me, looking for hope and support in the lives and examples of archpastoral service in the long line of those ever-memorable servants of God who carried the burdens of this office before me. In my first words spoken as Metropolitan of All America and Canada, I admitted the overwhelming sense of humility with which I accepted my election as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America. Throughout these past three years, I have come to know that to be the first among the bishops of our Church means to be the servant of all. I have also come to know that to be the servant of all I must depend in all things on Christ's presence in our midst and on Christ's ongoing ministry in and through His Church.

**Our historical and spiritual roots.** My first official act as Metropolitan of All America and Canada was to travel on pilgrimage to Alaska, to the mother diocese of our Church, in order to walk the ground hallowed by the lives and apostolic labors of Saint Herman of Alaska, Saint Innocent, Saint Juvenal, Saint Jacob of Alaska, Saint Peter the Aleut, and the missionaries who first traveled from Karelia in the north of the Russian Empire to Alaska to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and indicate to the peoples of Alaska the way into the Kingdom of Heaven.

During my pilgrimage to Alaska, I visited Spruce Island, that small island in the Gulf of Alaska sanctified by the life and labors of Saint Herman, the first saint to be glorified by the Orthodox Church in America. I prayed before his relics, now enshrined in Holy Resurrection Cathedral in Kodiak, and asked his heavenly intercession on behalf of the bishops, priests, deacons, monastics, and faithful of our Church, as well as for all Orthodox Christians in North America. This trip to Alaska was, in a sense, a pilgrimage to our spiritual and historical roots, to the place where the Cross of Christ was first planted in North America, and where the Gospel of Jesus Christ was first proclaimed by Orthodox Christian missionaries to native North Americans over 200 years ago.

This year, as we mark the 35th anniversary of the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America by the Russian Orthodox Church, we also celebrate the 35th anniversary of the glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska. And so, as we gather in Council, it is appropriate that our thoughts turn to Alaska, to Saint Herman, and to those missionaries and the peoples who first received the Gospel from them. The native peoples of Alaska who first received the Gospel were not – and are not – a single, homogenous people. Rather, they are several peoples, each with its own culture and language and understanding and appreciation of life. Nonetheless, the Gospel of Christ and the Orthodox Faith have formed them into the one Body of Christ in Alaska. This is what we are called to be throughout this continent. Whatever our diocese or parish, whatever our ethnic or linguistic heritage, we are called to form one people, one body, one Church.

**The life of our Church today.** Over 200 years ago, a small group of missionary monks began to evangelize the native peoples of Alaska. This inaugurated the Orthodox Church's apostolic labors in North America. Because of our Church's missionary heritage and evangelistic legacy, we remain committed to the mission of evangelization. Today, we are a diverse community of native peoples and immigrants, of those born to Orthodox families and those converted to the Orthodox faith. Though we are a diverse community, we are united in one faith and one vision, and we are eager to share Christ's love and the depth and riches of the Orthodox Faith with the many communities that

exist in North America. We are committed to the preaching of the Gospel and to the growth of the Church.

During these past three years, I have had the opportunity to visit many of our Church's dioceses, parishes, monasteries, seminaries, and Church institutions. In visiting communities of the faithful throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico, I have been touched by their highly visible witness to the Orthodox Faith. Our clergy and our faithful are zealous in their love for Christ and His Church. I have been touched by the tenacity and dedication of those members of our older parish communities who, due to the reality of demographic trends, often struggle to maintain the rich and historic traditions of parish life and community, particularly in inner-city areas. I have also visited many new, younger parish and mission communities. I am grateful for those clergy and faithful, many of whom are converts to the Orthodox Faith, who enthusiastically look for the ways and means to share the Orthodox Faith in the face of the multi-religious context, as well as the anti-religious sentiments, of contemporary North American society.

As I travel, I often hear our clergy and laity alike express concern for the growth of the Orthodox Church in America. These concerns are voiced primarily because of the limitations placed on our smaller communities in the areas of human and financial resources. We are acutely aware of a decline in the number of financially supporting members of the Orthodox Church in America. At the same time, we know that new missions continue to be established, while some of our older, established parishes also continue to grow and welcome new members. Clearly, the Lord has blessed us and established His Holy Church here in North America to reach out and proclaim the Good News of salvation to all who live on this continent. As the local Church in North America, we are able to provide resources for those communities willing to evangelize in order to bring others into the one flock of Christ. It is my hope that everyone at this Council will recommit himself or herself to the work of evangelization and will continue to support and encourage those who dedicate their time and energies to the important work begun by Saint Herman of Alaska and those who accompanied him to this continent.

Clearly, one of the most difficult challenges faced by the parishes and dioceses of the Orthodox Church is found in the area of finances. Small communities often find it difficult to support full-time priests; yet, without the services of a full-time priest, the community finds itself struggling to grow. At the same time, many of our older parishes have memberships that are advanced in age, living on limited incomes. Despite their desire to be generous, they also must face the reality of paying for increasingly costly health care. This is true as well on a Church-wide level. The work of the Orthodox Church in America – the services provided to dioceses, parishes, clergy, and faithful by its various departments – is increasingly constrained by financial realities. It is crucial for us, as members of parish communities, as members of dioceses, and as the Orthodox Church in America, to exercise stewardship in a manner rooted in the Gospel, taking into consideration the Lord's call to "give as a gift that which we have been given as a gift."

From its earliest days in Alaska, our Church's mission has been one of evangelization, outreach, and the engagement of and interaction with society at large. This remains true in the present day. I am increasingly edified by the social commitment of so many of our parish communities and by their outreach to the wider community and to society as a whole. Works of charity – opening soup kitchens or pantries, distributing clothing, caring for the elderly, and other forms of social ministry – are effective and faithful ways by which the clergy and laity of our Church are reaching out to serve Christ in our neighbors. Such Church programs and other forms of outreach are in the tradition of

our Church from its first days, when Saint Herman and his monastic companions preached the Gospel by word and by deed.

Proclaiming the Gospel in the modern world. Saint Herman and his monastic companions traveled to Alaska during a different period of history, in a different age. However, they made use of everything available to them to preach the Gospel and serve God's people. Their missionary outreach took place within the context of their time and with whatever means were at their disposal. Saint Innocent traveled the Pacific coast by boat and bidarka and communicated through letters that often took months to arrive at their destinations. Since then, the Church has used new means of transportation and communication for the same purpose and mission: to make known the fullness of the Christian Faith found in the Orthodox Church. I am pleased to note that our Church continues to develop the methods to reach out to the world around us, providing instruction to Orthodox Christians throughout North America, preaching the Gospel to those who are seeking the true faith, and touching the lives of the unchurched.

Our Church, through its seminaries and publishers, is the leader in the work of offering English-language Orthodox Scripture studies, theological works, spiritual writings and instruction, religious education resources, Church history texts, etc. This is one important means of making known the "Good News" of the Orthodox Faith. Our Church newspaper, *The Orthodox Church*, also provides the clergy and faithful of our Church and a large number of other subscribers with comprehensive coverage of the life and mission of the Orthodox Church in America and its dioceses, parishes, and institutions, as well as coverage of significant events in the life of the Orthodox Church throughout the world. It also provides articles and reflections concerning the issues faced by Orthodox Christians in contemporary society.

We live in the electronic age, a period in history which depends largely upon electronic media as the principal means to disseminate news and information. While the Truth we proclaim is ageless, the manner in which we proclaim it continues to develop with the times in which we live. Our Church's web site – [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org) – has developed into an invaluable tool for promoting the Orthodox Faith. In addition to reporting on the life of the Church, and providing a directory of clergy, parishes, and other contact information, the web site is an invaluable source of educational materials, including the daily Scripture readings, information on feasts and iconography, and musical resources. Through our website, we are able to communicate to our clergy, our faithful, and others the various special and ongoing activities in the life of the Church. Our Church newspaper and web site are to be seen as appropriate and effective tools given to the Church for the work of proclaiming the Gospel in our own time and place.

I am increasingly convinced that the electronic media are a source of many blessings for the work of the Church. At the same time, I am concerned that one of the most troubling influences upon the lives of our clergy, and thus upon their service to the Church, and upon all the members of the Church, are those same electronic media, most especially the internet. I would like to suggest that the various "clergy discussion lists" be used more responsibly by all the members of our Church. There are those who will state that the use of such lists is helpful, providing mutual support among the clergy and faithful. However, from what I have been able to observe, most exchanges that take place are neither constructive nor helpful and, in some cases, are even detrimental and harmful to those who participate in them. It is regrettable that something that can serve as a useful tool for building up the Church all too often works against it, most often against the clergy themselves and, just as often, against the hierarchy of the Church. Those who have used the internet as a means to discourage and disparage, both clergy and laity alike, would do well to recall the words of Saint Paul

to the Philippians: “Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things” [Philippians 4:7-9].

**The local community and clergy.** The mission of preaching the Gospel and teaching the Orthodox Faith takes place, first and foremost, within the local parish community. It is in our parishes and missions that the faithful most directly take part in the life of the Church, participate in the divine services, hear the Gospel, are nourished with the Holy Mysteries, receive spiritual guidance, are instructed in the Orthodox Faith, live the liturgical cycle of fasts and feasts, and share in the Church’s community life.

Regrettably, however, there are those who do not see beyond their experience of Church life within the parish. Members of parish communities must be invited to an awareness of being part of more than the local community. Writing almost 50 years ago, Prof. Serge Verhovskoy noted, “The parish must have a consciousness of being an organic part of the Church, to be the Church as it exists in a given locality. A truly Orthodox community will never oppose its diocese or the rest of the Church. It will freely and gladly accept the authority of the Church and Orthodox tradition in its entirety.... A truly Orthodox parish will not be pervaded by the spirit of indifference and selfishness, but will wholeheartedly participate in the life of the Church and support it.” These words, written almost five decades ago, remain just as applicable today. The presence at this Council of so many clergy and lay delegates from our Church’s parish and mission communities provides the opportunity to share the good news of what our Church is accomplishing on so many different levels and to provide your faithful flocks and fellow parishioners with a greater vision of the Church in America and the mission to which we have all been called.

Because the Gospel is proclaimed and the life of the Church is experienced first and foremost on the local parish or mission level, it is the parish priest who is on the front line of the Church’s evangelizing and missionary activity. This is just as true within our long-established parishes as it is within our new, fledgling mission communities. And we are pleased to note that the clergy of our Church are well-prepared for the important, essential task of serving Christ’s faithful people within the local parish and mission communities.

Our Church is blessed with three seminaries, schools of theological education and priestly and pastoral formation. Saint Tikhon’s Orthodox Theological Seminary and Saint Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary provide theological education and formation for those who will serve the Church as clergy and through other forms of ministry. Saint Herman Orthodox Theological Seminary has been entrusted with providing theological education and pastoral formation for those called to serve in the Diocese of Alaska. While experience has shown that there are exceptions to the established requirements for ordination to the priesthood, we are committed to seeing that established procedures must be followed concerning the theological education required of those who are to be ordained to the diaconate and priesthood. The established norm for the theological education and pastoral formation of candidates for ordination in the Orthodox Church in America is attendance at an Orthodox theological seminary. To dispense with this requirement, except in extremely rare situations, is to deprive not only those who are called to serve the Church but, more importantly, those whom they will serve.

We cannot adequately express our gratitude to our priests and deacons – and to their wives and families – for their commitment to Christ and their zeal for the work of proclaiming the Good News of salvation. God alone knows the sacrifices so many of them have made. Yet these sacrifices are

made willingly and in a spirit of trust in God and a desire for building up the Orthodox Church in America. I call upon the faithful of our Church to encourage, support, and love our clergy, just as they are called to encourage, support, and love those they have been called to serve. Our imperfect expressions of gratitude can never adequately convey our deep appreciation for our clergy and their families and all they do in service to Christ and His Church. The Lord Himself, as light and joy and faithful companion, is the recompense of the dedication and commitment to the life and mission of the Church on the part of our clergy and their families.

Esteemed clergy, dearly beloved servants of Christ: I exhort you to love one another as brothers and coworkers in the Lord's vineyard. Do not allow the spirit of competition and disagreement or the tendency to criticize and demean to enter your lives and your relationships with one another. Challenge one another to greater accomplishments for the sake of the Gospel. Forgive one another, and bear one another's burdens. Do not allow yourselves to be discouraged or distracted from the work to which the Lord has called you. Continue to serve faithfully so that, when you are called from this life, you may hear the voice of the Lord saying to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant.... Enter into the joy of your Lord" [Matthew 25:21].

**Youth.** As we gather in Toronto, we are joined by a large number of youth and young adults. Everyone present at the 13th All-American Council rejoiced in the enthusiasm exhibited by our youth and young adults at that gathering. Their presence with us at this Council should serve as a reminder of our commitment, not only to the life of the Church here and now, but also to its future. Just as we have been blessed by the faith, vision, and commitment of those who have gone before us, it is our responsibility to guide the youth and young adults of our Church into the future, so that following in our footsteps and blessed by our vision and commitment to Christ and His Church, they may one day assume the mantle of leadership, ministry, outreach, and missionary activity, thus continuing in the tradition of Saint Herman and the first missionaries who arrived in North America over 200 years ago.

**Finances.** I have already briefly mentioned that the Orthodox Church in America faces financial challenges at every level of Church life. While the Church operates well within its approved budget, the difficulty being faced is primarily due to a notable decrease in free-will giving to the Church. The reasons for this can be attributed to the current state of world affairs, the international economy, and our own domestic economy. This decrease of offerings is true, not only on every level of the Orthodox Church in America, but for all Orthodox Churches in North America, as well as for other religious and not-for-profit organizations. While we face this challenge and seek to remedy the decrease in income, we must do everything within our power to maintain the many services our Church and its departments offer to our dioceses, parishes, and institutions, and to the population at large. It is within the arena of Church finances that the challenge to fund the work of the Church directly encounters the call to responsible Christian stewardship.

Christians are called to generosity. We are called to be generous in sharing the blessings we have been given by God and to give of ourselves, our time and talents, and our financial resources for the sake of building up the Body of Christ. Every diocese, parish, and Church member must strive to help in the fulfillment and realization of our Church's mission. Regrettably, there are those who are indifferent to the needs of our parishes, dioceses, and Church. This indifference often develops first on the parish level when clergy and faithful, while often of good will, fail to rise to the occasion and respond to the Church's ever-growing needs. Instead of denying the reality of the increasing cost of living and acting as the Church, we should rejoice that our needs are increasing, as this clearly shows that the Church's mission is also growing and expanding. And this should lead us to the generous



stewardship to which the Lord calls us. Our discussion later this week of the Fair Share initiative as a means of not only adequately, but generously, supporting the Church will reveal how well we desire to respond to Christ's call to share in His mission of salvation. It also will provide yet another opportunity for us to respond generously to God, Who has been so generous to us.

**Inter-Orthodox relations.** As Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, one of my principal obligations is to maintain and promote our relationships with our sister Churches throughout the world. As part of this responsibility of assuring our presence and participation within the communion of Orthodox Churches, and in fulfillment of my duty to give expression to and to nurture our relationships with our sister Churches, I have made official visits to the Ecumenical Patriarch, to the Church of Russia, the Church of Georgia, the Church of Poland, the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia, the autonomous Church of Ukraine, and the autonomous Church of Finland. Such visits further strengthen the ties of faith that unite the Orthodox Church in America with its sister Churches.

I have visited these Churches with the full knowledge that there are those within our own Church who do not understand the purpose of such visits, nor their value for the life of our Church. Indeed, it seems that this unfounded criticism of such visits and other forms of exchange with sister Churches, which are the prerogative of the Primate, arises even among clergy, some of whom express criticism in ways that not only demean the office of the Primate and my own leadership abilities, but also the authority of the Holy Synod, in whose name the trips are made, and the place of the Orthodox Church in America in relationship to the other local autocephalous Churches. In accepting autocephaly, the Orthodox Church in America also accepted the responsibility of nurturing unity among the Churches, both here in North America and abroad.

• **The Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas.** The Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in Americas [SCOBA] remains a unique means of working for Orthodox unity, even though relationships among some of the SCOBA hierarchs remain less positive than might be hoped. As a result of what may be seen as weakened relationships, the work of SCOBA may seem to be losing ground. However, despite SCOBA's present challenges, I believe it is important for us to remain involved in its work, always looking ahead for future possibilities and greater cooperation. It is in settings such as SCOBA that our autocephaly can be observed as benefitting not only our own life and mission, but also the future unity of the Church in America. The benefits of our participation in SCOBA are most apparent in the work of the SCOBA commissions. International Orthodox Christian Charities, the Orthodox Christian Mission Center, and the Orthodox Christian Fellowship are well known and respected agencies that benefit not only SCOBA but also the Orthodox Church in America and all those whom they serve. The various SCOBA commissions also make valuable contributions to Orthodox cooperation and common mission. The work of these agencies and commissions alone makes our participation in SCOBA a worthwhile endeavor.

I am pleased to offer a sincere welcome to His Grace, Bishop Dimitrios of Xanthos, the general secretary of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas. His Grace's heartfelt commitment and dedication to the work of SCOBA is deeply appreciated by all the SCOBA hierarchs. Our prayer is that the Lord will grant him strength in the work that has been entrusted to him.

• **The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia.** As we work to foster our relationships with our sister Orthodox Churches around the world and in North America, among our concerns and interests

are the ongoing developments in the relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia [ROCOR]. The discussions concerning the reconciliation of ROCOR with the Russian Orthodox Church, long desired by all of us, are moving forward in a process without an apparent or, at least, an acknowledged time frame. Nonetheless, we continue to monitor all developments in this matter. We also continue to promote our own relationship with ROCOR, primarily through my personal contact with His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, and through other personal contacts with members of his administration. Several of our hierarchs also are involved, most often in informal and personal ways, in promoting harmonious relationships with other ROCOR hierarchs and clergy. This eventual reconciliation will clearly affect the Orthodox Church in America, as most of ROCOR's parishes and the offices of its First Hierarch and Council of Bishops are located in North America. It is my hope that the eventual reunion will enhance the work of Orthodox unity in North America, rather than create further fragmentation.

• **Ecumenical Relations.** The Orthodox Church in America continues to bear witness to the fullness of the Gospel through its presence at various ecumenical events and by its participation in ecumenical dialogue. We are grateful that the Orthodox Church in America can be the well-reasoned voice that needs to be heard within the various inter-Christian forums, most especially by those ecclesial bodies that, by nature, are traditional in their orientation and value the example that the Orthodox Church can give. As the result of a movement to create a new ecumenical organization comprising a wide spectrum of American Christian bodies, Christian Churches Together (CCT) recently formed. Among the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches that have joined CCT are the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, the Armenian Church, and the Syrian Orthodox Church. Other members include the Roman Catholic Church, Protestant churches (both liberal and conservative), African-American churches, and ethnic churches (such as Korean Presbyterian). With the support of the Holy Synod of Bishops, the Orthodox Church in America has taken its place among CCT's founding members. I am well aware of and concerned about the tensions which exist as a result of our Church's participation in such ecumenical organizations. However, I am more concerned that our Church fulfills its mission, as it is our responsibility to reach out to others and to witness to the Orthodox Faith and our vision and experience of the fullness of the Gospel of Christ. Indeed, in the Tomos of Autocephaly, granted to our Church 35 years ago, we were called upon to "maintain direct relations with all other churches and confessions, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike." Our participation in CCT and in similar organizations is yet another way by which we can better fulfill the responsibility of proclaiming the Gospel on this continent and maintaining and nurturing relationships with "all other churches and confessions, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike."

**Our Church and the future.** As we gather this week, we are invited to reflect on the theme of this 14th All-American Council, "Our Church and the Future." In considering our present challenges and the future of the Orthodox Church in America, I am pleased to note that I am hopeful, confident, and optimistic. However, this hope and optimism are somewhat guarded. My hopefulness is tempered by the many difficult and painful realities faced by the members of our Church – clergy and faithful alike – not specifically as members of the Church, but as members of modern society who are naturally affected by the cynicism, mistrust, paranoia, and suspicion that plague every area and level of contemporary life, including the Church. This, of course, is nothing new to the Church, for throughout its history, the Church has faced its opponents, even from within. However, a lack of unity and shared vision stifles, restrains, and limits the many possibilities for positive work and growth which lie before us.

I will again recall words written by Prof. Serge Verhovskoy almost a half-century ago: “Unity and order are badly needed in our Church. Every layman, priest, and bishop, every parish and diocese, must have a clear consciousness that they are living members of the whole Orthodox Church in America, and they must do their best to make Orthodoxy on this continent united, spiritually strong, and influential.” Unity. Order. Oneness of mind and heart. Respect for the responsibility which, by virtue of Baptism and Chrismation, each person – clergy and laity alike – has in the life of the Church. Parish communities whose lives are rooted in the Gospel. An understanding of our history and an acceptance of the mandate we received to evangelize the peoples of this continent. Continued growth. This is my hope for the future. And it is a hope that is being realized – and will be realized – with God’s help and through our willingness to cooperate with Him in the work of salvation.

As we look to the future, I think we all too often spend an inordinate and inappropriate amount of time and energy debating among ourselves the nature of our autocephaly, lamenting that there are those who do not recognize it, and looking for bold efforts to achieve recognition. What is most important for us, however, is that we remain true to who we are and what we are called to be as the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America. This means that we are called to live our life as the local autocephalous Church. We are called to take full advantage of and make full use of that which is unique to us – from our missionary heritage, to the legacy of sanctity handed on to us by the saints who have lived and worked out their salvation on this continent, beginning with Saint Herman himself, to the unique multi-ethnic character of our parish communities, to our commitment to missionary work within the diverse society in which we live.

The legacy of the Orthodox Church in America was summed up in the mission statement promulgated by the Holy Synod in 1990: “The Mission of the Orthodox Church in America, the local autocephalous Orthodox Church, is to be faithful in fulfilling the commandment of Christ to ‘Go into all the world and 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 [things that He has] commanded,’ so that all people may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: To preach, in accordance with God’s will, the fullness of the Gospel of the Kingdom to the peoples of North America and to invite them to become members of the Orthodox Church. To utilize for her mission the various languages of the peoples of this continent. To be the Body of Christ in North America and to be faithful to the tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church. To witness to the truth, and by God’s grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit, to reveal Christ’s way of sanctification and eternal salvation to all.”

**Conclusion.** I wish to refer again to the Apostle’s first letter to the Corinthians. Saint Paul reminds us, “...the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit.... But one and the same Spirit works all these things....”

We have been given different roles within the Church, the One Body of Christ. Those who are called to serve as bishops accept their place within the life of the Church and function accordingly. So do the clergy. So do the lay faithful. But, ultimately, it is all the same work, the same mission, the same proclamation of the same Gospel, all guided by the same Spirit. Lamentably, we all too often encounter a sense of disaffection – one group against another. This must not be, and it cannot be! Bishops must love the flocks entrusted to them. They must care for their clergy and the families of the clergy. They must lovingly instruct and guide the faithful given to their care. Clergy are to honor those who have been set over them as fathers and guides, to serve the Church with love, to

guide the faithful by word and example. And the faithful of the Church are to exercise their baptismal vocation by proclaiming the Gospel and reaching out in love to those around them.

As we look ahead to the future of our Church, and its mission and role among the other Orthodox Churches, we gratefully note that the Orthodox Church in America is in a unique, privileged position, a position unlike that of any of the other Orthodox Churches with a presence in North America. We have marked 35 years as an autocephalous Church, 35 years of new experiences and continued growth. Although, in comparison to the histories of Orthodox Churches in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, the Orthodox Church in America is relatively young, we are also a Church of great enthusiasm and energy. We are a Church that, despite its youth, has been greatly blessed by the lives, labors, and holy examples of many saints. And this fact should encourage us spiritually and call us to a greater appreciation of our identity and a stronger affirmation of who we are and who we are called to be. We are autocephalous, yet we are also well-experienced in living in relationship with the many jurisdictions also present in North America. We know what it means to live in diversity, in circumstances without precedent, and we possess the creativity to address situations that can often be very complicated. We bring to this our commitment to good Church order and our reputation for adhering to the Orthodox Church's ecclesiological and canonical principles. This is a gift we must share – and which we must share with boldness.

There are many among us who remain preoccupied with the recognition or non-recognition of our autocephaly – that great gift granted us 35 years ago. In speaking of the granting of autocephaly at the First All-American Council at Saint Tikhon's Monastery October 20-22, 1970, Metropolitan Iriney of blessed memory, the first Primate of the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America, noted: "This is an act of freedom and creativity, an act of faith and trust, a sign that the Church of God 'never grows older, but forever younger,' and that new channels of life can flow through her ancient arteries. This is an act which blesses the young Orthodoxy in America, calling it to grow to the measure of grace bestowed upon it, and to bring its fruit also to the one treasury of Universal Orthodoxy. Undoubtedly, years shall pass before the waves of small human passions and misunderstandings raised by it finally subside. But we, witnesses of this act, can even now – with the eyes of faith, hope, and love – foresee the magnitude and joy of one Holy Orthodox Church in America, inheritor of all the gifts, all the riches, all the traditions of Universal Orthodoxy, glorifying God with one mouth and one heart. May this be! May this be!"

As we gather this week in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide and enlighten us, I wish to express my profound gratitude to the members of the Holy Synod and the episcopate of our Church. As I exercise the ministry of primacy with which they entrusted me three years ago, I am increasingly aware of and ever more grateful for the archpastoral ministry each of them exercises within his own diocese.

Since my election as Primate, the Orthodox Church in America has witnessed several changes in the episcopate. In March 2005, His Eminence, Archbishop Peter, of New York and New Jersey, retired after more than 20 years of service as ruling hierarch of that diocese. At that time, the Holy Synod determined that the former Diocese of Washington and the former Diocese of New York and New Jersey be formed into one diocese, of which I am now the ruling bishop. The Holy Synod made this decision, always keeping in mind the best interests of the Church and its faithful. The process of structuring the administration of the new Diocese of Washington and New York is presently under way. Also, since the last All-American Council, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, was elected Bishop of Boston and ruling hierarch of the Albanian Archdiocese.

In the past three years, our Church has been blessed with the election and consecration of four new bishops. His Grace, Bishop Irineu of Dearborn Heights, serves as an auxiliary bishop for the Romanian Episcopate. His Grace, Bishop Tikhon, who had been elected and consecrated Bishop of South Canaan, has been elected Bishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania. His Grace, Bishop Benjamin, was elected and consecrated to serve as Bishop of Berkeley and auxiliary to Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the West. His Grace, Bishop Alejo of Mexico City, the most recently consecrated of our hierarchs, serves as my auxiliary and assists His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri, in his capacity as Exarch of Mexico. May Our Lord Jesus Christ, the One True Shepherd, grant all our hierarchs continued strength and health in caring for the flocks the Lord has given them.

I also wish to express my special gratitude to His Grace, Bishop Seraphim, our host bishop and chairman of the Preconciliar Commission, as well as to everyone who has dedicated much time and effort to plan and prepare for this Council. May the Lord bless them for their willingness to serve the Church by assuming the added responsibilities required in preparing for the Council.

Although I continue to reside at Saint Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, Pennsylvania, I am present at the Chancery office in Syosset, New York, on a regular basis. I am pleased to note that the Chancery office continues to run efficiently under the attentive direction of the chancellor, Protopresbyter Robert Kondratich. I am kept constantly informed of the work of the Chancery through reports and daily consultation. The Chancery staff labors faithfully to support the Church's life and mission in many ways and on many levels. The work of the Chancery affects all areas and aspects of Church life, assisting the work of the Holy Synod, the Metropolitan, diocesan bishops, dioceses, parishes, monasteries, seminaries, and the work of the All-American Council, as well as clergy, both active and retired, clergy families, and clergy widows. I am profoundly grateful to Father Kondratich, who has served as chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America for 16 years, as well as to everyone who works at the Chancery office and serves the Church with professional and churchly diligence and dedication. Working on behalf of our Church, and thus being made subject to unfair and often unkind critiques and criticism, can be a heavy burden. However, each individual who works for the Church on the Church-wide level does so with integrity, with dignity, and with a spirit of commitment to Christ and His Church. I assure each of them of my personal gratitude and my continued prayers and support.

As we begin this All-American Council, the 14th of the Orthodox Church in America, I wish to thank all of you for your presence here and your commitment to the life and future of our Church. Through the prayers of Saint Herman of Alaska and all the saints who have labored on this continent, may the work we accomplish this week be for the glory of God and the building up of the Body of Christ in America.

I wish to close by exhorting you with the words addressed by the Apostle Paul to the Church in Ephesus. May these words be lived and made manifest each day of this week and throughout the days and years to come: "I... beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all" [Ephesians 4:1-6].

**+HERMAN**  
Archbishop of Washington and New York  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

## Report of the Chancellor

*Protopresbyter Robert S. Kondratich delivered the Report of the Chancellor to the 14th All-American Council at Plenary Session III, July 18, 2005.*

*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with gratitude in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him [Colossians 3:12-17].*

Recalling the Apostle Paul's words of admonition and encouragement to the Colossians, with an awareness of my own weaknesses and need for forgiveness, and with the hope that everything we do be done for the sake of Christ and His Church, it is once again my honor to come before you as chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America to present this report on the life and work of our Church and the work of the Chancery since we last met in Orlando, Florida, for the 13th All-American Council.

Preparatory documents were distributed in the weeks leading up to this Council. These will assist us as we reflect on our theme – “Our Church and the Future.” We have identified five “pillars” which will support and inform our common reflection during the Council:

1. Our vision and identity as the Orthodox Church in America.
2. Our relations with others, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox.
3. Clergy formation and development.
4. Parish health.
5. Evangelization in North America.

As we consider the Council's overall theme and draw upon discussions built on these five pillars, it will become clear that serious thinking about the future of our Church requires honest reflection on our past, our history, and our roots. And we cannot look to the future of the Church without a sense of our current life and mission. It is within the context of this past/present/future dynamic that I offer my report as chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America.

**Recalling our past.** This year has provided us with a number of opportunities to consider our history in North America. We have received many blessings in the course of our history. And we are also challenged by it.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, the members of the Holy Synod, and the entire episcopate of our Church gathered in South Canaan with thousands of clergy and faithful to mark this significant milestone in the life and history of the Orthodox Church in America. The monastery was founded in 1905 by Archbishop Tikhon, who was later elected Patriarch of Moscow and became a grace-bearing confessor of the Faith. As archpastor in America, he recognized the important role that the monastic life could play in the life of the very young Church. He established

the monastery in the heart of Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains so that the blessings of ascetic prayer and witness would be easily accessible to the greatest concentration of Orthodox believers at that time. For 100 years, the monastic brotherhood has faithfully maintained the cycle of divine services, implored the Lord to bestow His blessings upon the Church in America, provided a spiritual haven and place of comfort for generations of Orthodox Christians, and borne faithful witness to the life of the world to come.

The heart of Archbishop Tikhon's pastoral ministry was his desire to establish a full and stable Orthodox Church life in North America. This full and stable life would be the foundation upon which the young Church in America could grow and flourish. The monastery was an important part of this vision, as was the establishment and building up of parish communities. The great leaders of this period of our Church life – before, during, and following the years under Saint Tikhon – shared his vision and purpose. Early photographs and documents point to the tireless building activity of Archbishop Tikhon, as well as Bishop Nicholas (later Metropolitan of Warsaw), Saint Raphael of Brooklyn, Saint Alexis Toth, Saint Alexander Hotovitsky, Saint John Kochurov, Archimandrite and later Archbishop Arseny, Father Leonid Turkevich (who later became our beloved Metropolitan Leonty), and so very many others. They established communities and consecrated churches from one coast to the other. They established institutions, blessed organizations, and provided direction and resources to meet the challenges of the Orthodox mission. It was a remarkable time. They traveled by train, horseback, carriage, and automobile over an under-developed highway system. They communicated through letters and telegraph and, as the possibility presented itself, by telephone. They accomplished this pastoral and evangelical work in a land whose language most of them did not speak fluently. Although they were burdened with obstacles and difficulties, they persevered – even at great personal cost. And yet, what great works they accomplished! Building upon the heritage received from the first missionaries to North America, they laid the foundation for our Orthodox Church in America – the Church we serve, the Church entrusted to our care at the beginning of yet another century. May their extraordinary dedication serve as an inspiration to all of us and stir up in us a greater zeal in our own times – zeal for the Gospel, zeal for the Kingdom of Heaven, zeal for the Orthodox Church in America.

This year, at the spring session of the Holy Synod, we commemorated the 35th anniversary of the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America. We prayerfully remembered those whose vision and commitment made the granting of our autocephaly a reality. Among them we recalled those who have gone before us: Metropolitan Iriney, Metropolitan Nikodim, Archbishop Kiprian, Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann, Protopresbyter John Meyendorff, Archpriest John Skvir, Archpriest John Turkevich, and Mr. Stephen Kopestonsky. We also gratefully remembered those who are still among us – Metropolitan Theodosius, Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak, Archpriest John Nehrebecki, and Dr. Constantine Kallaur – who were present when the Tomos of Autocephaly was formally presented to the Orthodox Church in America. While this 35th anniversary reminded us that we are still a young Church, it also reminded us that the gift of autocephaly calls us to greater things.

Within a few short weeks, we will celebrate another profoundly significant anniversary – the 35th anniversary of the glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska. Saint Herman was the first saint glorified by our Church. The celebration of this anniversary is an invitation to all of us to renew the zeal and enthusiasm present in Alaska and throughout our newborn Church at the time. By the prayers of our Father among the saints Herman, may we take up the cross of his apostolic labors!



And so, although we are a young Church, we are also a Church with a rich history and heritage – a legacy. It is a legacy that compels us to be energetic in the work of proclaiming the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to this land. As we recall our great spiritual and missionary legacy, I wish to note that this fall, with the concurrence of the Holy Synod of Bishops and the blessing of His Grace, Bishop Nikolai, the wonderworking Sitka Icon of the Mother of God will begin a two-month pilgrimage throughout the “lower 48.” This pilgrimage will include visits to over 600 parishes, monasteries, and Church institutions. Although unknown to some of the clergy and faithful in North America, the Sitka Icon of the Mother of God is far more than an historic or artistic treasure. It is one of our Church’s great spiritual treasures. It is our prayer that this unique pilgrimage will be a blessing for all Orthodox Christians in America and that, through the intercessions of the Mother of God, prayerful seekers will find healing, consolation and mercy. Let us all recognize and honor those holy things that are part of our unique legacy as the local Church on this continent.

I have mentioned the 100th anniversary of Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, the 35th anniversary of autocephaly, and the 35th anniversary of the glorification of Saint Herman. I can note only in passing the many parish anniversary celebrations during these past three years, including the 100th anniversaries of Chicago’s Holy Trinity Cathedral and Saints Peter and Paul Church, South River, New Jersey. Our past is a living and present reality in the historic continuity of so many of our communities.

And we continue to expand and extend the mission of the Church as new temples are consecrated throughout the continent in such places as Southbury, Connecticut; Colorado Springs, Colorado; and Palatine, Illinois. New missions have been established in Kona, Hawaii; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Pella, Iowa; Stafford, Virginia; and elsewhere. And here in Canada, new communities have been established in Toronto and in neighboring Hamilton.

Our three seminaries have witnessed the graduation of larger-than-ever classes. We are thankful that it has been possible to ordain many young men eager to answer the call to serve Christ’s Church. Our parishes are filled with wonderful volunteers engaging in various ministries and programs. A modest – but important – snapshot of the recent activities and accomplishments of our Church institutions, departments, and programs can be found in the reports distributed for this Council. There is so very much for which to give thanks!

I cannot help but think that the spiritual and missionary legacy that has come down to us is indeed being fulfilled in our Church life today. Although those concerned for the well-being of our Church are often tempted to think in terms of crises and problems, the truth of the matter is that, even if we are weak vessels, we are striving with God’s help to realize our vocation as the local Church on this continent. Our Council is dedicated to renewing and re-energizing our sense of this vocation. It is my hope that as we gather here, through the prayers of all the saints who have shone forth in North America, each one of us will be encouraged to return to our respective dioceses and parishes with a rekindled enthusiasm for the active support of the apostolic work of the Orthodox Church in America!

**Church life since the 13th All-American Council.** Several extraordinary events have shaped the life of the Orthodox Church in America since my report to the 13th All-American Council three years ago.

In April 2002, the Holy Synod of Bishops announced the retirement of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius. In July, the Council was convened in Orlando, Florida. The retirement of Metropolitan Theodosius became effective at the conclusion of the first plenary session. With His Eminence

Archbishop Kyrill of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania presiding at the following plenary session, His Eminence Herman, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, was elected Primate of the Orthodox Church in America.

The Orlando Council was an extraordinary one, in that it was the occasion of the retirement of one Metropolitan and the election of his successor. Undoubtedly, because of the great interest generated by this, the number of people who participated in the Council exceeded every expectation. There was a sense that the Council expressed and generated a remarkable enthusiasm and commitment on the part of the clergy and faithful of our Church.

The enthronement of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America took place less than two months later, on the Great Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos. Twenty-five bishops, numerous priests and deacons, hundreds of Orthodox Christian faithful, and many special guests were present at Saint Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, DC, to witness the event. Joining the hierarchs of the Orthodox Church in America were over a dozen hierarchs representing many of our sister Orthodox Churches throughout the world. In greeting the numerous well-wishers, Metropolitan Herman noted that, while honoring him at the beginning of his ministry as Primate, they also were honoring the entire Orthodox Church in America. Among the Orthodox Churches represented at His Beatitude's enthronement were the Ecumenical Patriarchate; the patriarchates of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Moscow, the Churches of Romania, Poland, and the Czech Lands and Slovakia; and the Autonomous Churches of Finland, Japan, and Ukraine.

The election and the enthronement of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, were accomplished in a manner that demonstrated the maturity of the Orthodox Church in America. Our place and role in North America and throughout the Orthodox world were afforded a high profile. The sincere love and respect in our Church for Metropolitan Theodosius at his retirement and Metropolitan Herman at his election and enthronement, and their shared commitment to an orderly, canonical process in the administrative transition, offered important witness in the midst of the changes and challenges facing the various Orthodox jurisdictions present in North America today, as well as those facing Orthodoxy throughout the world.

**The hierarchs and dioceses of our Church.** There have been several significant changes and developments in the episcopate of our Church in the past three years. On November 1-2, 2002, His Beatitude presided at the episcopal consecration of His Grace, Bishop Irineu of Dearborn Heights, Auxiliary Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America. Bishop Irineu had earlier been nominated to the episcopacy by delegates to the Episcopate's Church Congress. His canonical election by the Holy Synod took place during the Council in Orlando.

At the fall 2003 session of the Holy Synod, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, formerly Bishop of Baltimore and auxiliary to the Metropolitan, was elected ruling bishop of the Albanian Archdiocese. He was enthroned at Saint George Cathedral, Boston, on November 22, 2003, to the great joy of the archdiocese's faithful, who had been for many years without their own ruling hierarch. Since his election, Bishop Nikon also has continued to serve as administrator of the Diocese of New England.

The Holy Synod recently decided that steps should be taken for the nomination and election of a ruling diocesan hierarch for the Diocese of Hartford and New England. To this end, His Beatitude, as locum tenens of the diocese, recently convened a special diocesan assembly for the purpose of nominating a candidate for the office of ruling bishop, whose name would then be presented to the Holy Synod for its decision and possible canonical election. This special assembly was held in

Hartford, Connecticut, on Thursday, June 23, 2005. Because the nomination process was inconclusive, His Beatitude will present this matter to the Holy Synod for final determination.

Archimandrite Tikhon [Mollard], deputy abbot of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery, was elected to the episcopacy at the fall 2003 session of the Holy Synod. He served as Bishop of South Canaan and auxiliary to the Metropolitan until his election to the See of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania on May 27, 2005. His installation will take place on Saturday, September 10, 2005, at Philadelphia's Saint Stephen Cathedral.

Archimandrite Benjamin [Peterson] was elected to the episcopacy at the spring 2004 session of the Holy Synod. He was consecrated in our historic Holy Trinity Cathedral, San Francisco, on May 1, 2004. As Bishop of Berkeley and auxiliary to His Grace Tikhon, Bishop of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the West, Bishop Benjamin also serves as diocesan chancellor.

At its spring 2005 session, the Holy Synod elected Archimandrite Alejo (Pacheco Vera) as Bishop of Mexico City and vicar of the Metropolitan. His consecration to the episcopacy took place during the centennial celebration at Saint Tikhon's Monastery, May 27-28, 2005. With the blessing of the Metropolitan and under the direct guidance of His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri, Exarch of Mexico, Bishop Alejo had served the Mexican Church for many years as dean of Mexico City's Holy Ascension Cathedral and as the exarchate's administrator. His election and consecration promise a bright future for the ongoing growth of the Orthodox Church in our neighbor to the south.

On June 8, 2003, hundreds of faithful from the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania gathered to honor the senior member of the Holy Synod, His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his consecration to the episcopacy. A Service of Thanksgiving was celebrated by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman; His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius; His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas of the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and numerous clergy. Later in the month, the Bulgarian Diocese of Toledo honored His Eminence on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the holy priesthood. His Eminence, who celebrated his 85th birthday earlier this year, continues to serve Christ and His Church with zeal and enthusiasm.

In November 2003, His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri, celebrated his 80th birthday. He continues to serve the Diocese of the South with dedication and devotion. His Eminence, Archbishop Job, celebrated the 20th anniversary of his consecration to the episcopate in January 2003, and was elevated to the rank of archbishop on March 17, 2004. His Eminence first served as diocesan hierarch of the Diocese of New England, and for the past 13 years has served as ruling hierarch of the Diocese of the Midwest.

This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the episcopal consecration of His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel. His Eminence's service as ruling hierarch of the Romanian Episcopate is deeply appreciated by all those to whom he ministers, as is his outspoken defense of Orthodox unity in North America.

His Grace, Bishop Mark, former Bishop of Boston, also celebrated the 25th anniversary of his episcopal consecration last November. We are pleased that His Grace continues to make his presence known and to participate, whenever possible, in the life of our Church.

At the October 2004 session of the Holy Synod, His Eminence, Archbishop Peter of New York and New Jersey indicated his intention to retire sometime before the spring 2005 session. At the spring session, the Holy Synod granted the Archbishop's request, which became effective on April 31, 2005. In keeping with its canonical prerogatives concerning the creation of dioceses, the Holy Synod also determined to create a new Diocese of Washington and New York, merging the territories of the former Diocese of Washington and the former Diocese of New York and New Jersey. Metropolitan Herman is the ruling hierarch of the new diocese, with the title "Archbishop of Washington and New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada." His Beatitude has initiated the steps to begin making arrangements for the transition in the administration of the new diocese.

Last October, hundreds of clergy and faithful gathered in South Canaan, Pennsylvania, and joined the members of the Holy Synod, the entire episcopate of our Church, as well as many invited guests, to honor His Beatitude on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of his ordination to the holy priesthood. This celebration honored His Beatitude's life of service to the Church as an example of the dedication and love by which those who follow Christ are known.

My selection of just a few visible highlights in the life of the episcopate of the Orthodox Church in America clearly reveals that the Lord continues to bless our Church with dedicated and caring archpastors. They are absolutely committed to nurturing the ongoing life and future growth of Christ's Holy Orthodox Church in these lands. We are truly blessed by the dedication of our hierarchy. Their common ministry represents literally hundreds of years of combined service to Christ. By their example and through their prayers – and with their blessing! – may we all continue to serve the Lord in accordance with the unique call given to each one of us.

**Interchurch and ecumenical relations.** We are a self-governing Church. This means that we are canonically self-reliant (autocephalous) while maintaining the bonds of unity with all the local Orthodox Churches. As an autocephalous Church, it is incumbent upon us to nurture our relationships with these sister Churches. These relationships strengthen our witness to the Orthodox Faith, not only here in North America but throughout the world.

As Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude bears the responsibility of representing the Orthodox Church in America in its relations, both public and private, with all the autocephalous and autonomous Orthodox Churches. It is his role to be the focal point and sign of unity between our Church and the rest of the Orthodox world. Following the time-honored custom for newly elected Primates to visit the heads of the other Orthodox Churches, His Beatitude has initiated an ongoing series of visits to our sister Churches.

- ***The Church of Russia.*** In June 2003, at the invitation of His Holiness Aleksy II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, His Beatitude made his first official visit, as Primate, to the Orthodox Church of Russia. The Orthodox Church in America continues to maintain a strong bond of faith and love, of shared history and common practice, with the Russian Orthodox Church. The Russian Church, having brought the Orthodox faith to North America, is both our mother Church and our sister. During this visit to Russia, His Beatitude concelebrated with His Holiness and visited the Holy Trinity-Saint Sergius Lavra, where he venerated the relics of Saint Sergius of Radonezh and Saint Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow and Apostle to America. His Beatitude also addressed the students of the Moscow Theological Academy and visited a number of other monasteries and holy sites in and around Moscow, including the Donskoi Monastery, where he venerated the holy relics of Saint Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and Enlightener of North America. His Beatitude served the Divine Liturgy at Saint Catherine the Great Martyr Church, representation church of the Orthodox Church in America in Moscow.

His Beatitude visited Russia a second time in July-August 2003, as a guest of the Russian Church, for the celebration of the centennial of the glorification of Saint Seraphim of Sarov. At the invitation of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine, His Beatitude then traveled to Ukraine and participated in the annual pilgrimage to the Pochayiv Monastery. During this visit, he was also welcomed to western Ukraine, the native land of the forebears of many members of the Orthodox Church in America, by His Eminence, Metropolitan Onufrey of Chernovtsy and Bukovina. The visit included visits to many monasteries and Church-sponsored social service institutions. His Beatitude's travels throughout Ukraine were highly publicized as a means of supporting the canonical Church in Ukraine, which suffers from large-scale schismatic and sectarian opposition. The presence of His Beatitude afforded very visible support to Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev, bearing witness to the unity of the Church through adherence to proper canonical order.

In February 2004, His Beatitude participated in the celebration of the 75th birthday of His Holiness, Patriarch Aleksy. His Beatitude expressed not only his personal best wishes, but those of our entire Church, and honored His Holiness for the instrumental role he has played in the Church's growth in Russia since the fall of the communist regime. I would like to stress that Patriarch Aleksy, from the first days of our autocephaly and well before his election as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, has been a very dear friend of the Orthodox Church in America and a strong supporter of our role within the communion of Orthodox Churches.

In June and July, 2004, His Beatitude participated in the long-awaited return of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God to the Russian Orthodox Church. This beloved icon, so widely venerated in Russia before the 1917 revolution and throughout her long sojourn abroad, including a 55-year stay in America, was welcomed by literally hundreds of thousands of clergy and faithful. The return of the icon began at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago. His Eminence, Archbishop Job, hosted His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and His Eminence, Metropolitan Vladimir of Saint Petersburg, who traveled to the United States to accompany the icon on its return journey. From Chicago, the icon traveled first to Riga, Latvia, accompanied by Metropolitan Vladimir and His Grace, Bishop Seraphim. Metropolitan Herman and our OCA delegation welcomed the icon in Moscow and formally returned the icon to His Holiness, Patriarch Aleksy, and the Russian Orthodox Church. Among those present on this historic occasion were Archbishop Job and Bishops Seraphim, Nikolai and Nikon. Archpriests Sergei and Alexander Garklavs were instrumental in arranging the return of the icon. Father Sergei, the guardian of the icon since he first received it from his adoptive father, the ever-memorable Archbishop John of Chicago, led the Garklavs family and a number of OCA pilgrims in the festive events, culminating in the icon's return to its original home, the Dormition of the Mother of God Monastery in Tikhvin, a city within the Diocese of Saint Petersburg.

In December 2004, Saint Catherine the Great Martyr Church celebrated its 10th anniversary as the Orthodox Church in America's representation church in Moscow. Archimandrite Zacchaeus (Wood), organized the celebration, at which His Beatitude, Archbishop Nathaniel, Bishop Seraphim, and Bishop Nikon were present. His Holiness, Patriarch Aleksy concelebrated the Divine Liturgy and was present at the banquet which followed. His Holiness expressed gratitude for His Beatitude's support of the work of our representation church in Moscow, as well as his appreciation for the presence of the other hierarchs representing our Church at the anniversary celebration. In light of this 20th anniversary celebration we must commend Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak, the first representative of the Orthodox Church in America to the Moscow Patriarchate; Archimandrite Nicholas [Iuhos], who succeeded him; Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky, who served as temporary

representative for a brief period; and Archimandrite Zacchaeus [Wood], the current representative, for their work in Moscow on behalf of the Orthodox Church in America.

- ***The Church of Constantinople.*** At the beginning of July 2003, His Beatitude was warmly received by His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, at the patriarchal complex at the Phanar. While there, His Beatitude made a pilgrimage to Nicea, site of the First and Seventh Ecumenical Councils, and to Ephesus, the site of the Third Ecumenical Council. Many other shrines and historic sites were also visited. His Beatitude was able to tour the theological academy at Halki, closed since the 1970s by the Turkish government. During his visit to Constantinople, His Beatitude was received by the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, His Beatitude Mesrob II. His Beatitude also made courtesy calls to the Ambassador of the United States to Turkey, the Honorable W. Robert Pearson; Dr. David Arnett, United States Consul General; and various Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim leaders. The following year, His Beatitude also joined in welcoming His All-Holiness on his visit to the United States at a reception at the Chancery of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

- ***The Church of Poland.*** At the invitation of His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Warsaw and All Poland, His Beatitude visited the Polish Orthodox Church in September 2004. The Polish Church numbers over one-half million Orthodox faithful. Many of the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America can trace their ancestry to Poland, including the late Metropolitan Iriney and Archbishop Kiprian. Saint Tikhon also served the Church in Poland. Metropolitan Herman's visit highlighted the warm and close relationship that has developed between our Churches in recent years. As is customary for most official visits abroad, His Beatitude was also welcomed at the United States Embassy and the Canadian Embassy.

- ***The Church of Georgia.*** Metropolitan Herman paid a nine-day visit to the ancient Church of Georgia in April 2004, at the invitation of His Holiness and Beatitude, Patriarch-Catholicos Ilia of All Georgia. His Beatitude visited many shrines, parishes, and monasteries, and met with numerous Church, religious, and political leaders, including Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili. Patriarch Ilia will be the guest of the Orthodox Church in America in October of this year. During his visit, he will meet with the members of our Holy Synod, as well as with other Orthodox hierarchs, religious leaders, and leaders of civil society and government. We anticipate that the visit of the Patriarch-Catholicos will further strengthen our ties with the Church of Georgia and encourage the large number of Georgian faithful participating in the life of our parish communities, most notably in New York City and Washington, DC.

- ***The Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.*** In September 2004, His Beatitude made an official visit to the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia, the homeland of so many of our ancestors. He was welcomed by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Nikolaj, and he visited many parishes and monasteries. Metropolitan Herman addressed students at the Presov Orthodox Theological Seminary, and met with a number of civic and religious leaders. Throughout the visit, His Beatitude distributed humanitarian aid to Church-sponsored institutions providing various forms of social service. The generosity of our clergy and faithful in their humanitarian support for such projects is always deeply appreciated and strengthens our ties of faith and love with our sister Churches.

- ***The Church of Finland.*** In December 2004, after the celebration of the 10th anniversary of Saint Catherine the Great Martyr Church, His Beatitude visited the autonomous Orthodox Church of Finland. His Beatitude was accompanied by Archbishop Nathaniel, Bishop Seraphim, and Bishop Nikon. Graciously hosted by His Eminence, Archbishop Leo, this visit served to further strengthen the warm ties of friendship between the Orthodox Church in America and the Finnish Church, dating

from the days of the ever-memorable Archbishop Paul. Archbishop Leo will return this visit at the end of July 2005 to participate in the 35th anniversary celebration of the glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska. He will be present at the monastic gathering to be held at Saint Tikhon's Monastery in conjunction with the centennial of its founding. As a special blessing, His Eminence will bring with him the wonderworking Valaam Icon of the Mother of God. This wonderworking icon, originally from Valaam in Russia, has not left Finland since it was first brought to New Valamo Monastery by the monks during the Winter War of 1940. We are extremely grateful to Archbishop Leo and the Finnish Orthodox Church for this special blessing, as well as for the continuing good relationship we enjoy with them.

In addition to visiting our sister Orthodox Churches, His Beatitude has also received several primates and hierarchs from abroad. In February 2003, he welcomed His Beatitude, Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and All Albania, to Saint Vladimir's Seminary and bestowed on him an honorary doctorate. His Beatitude has also welcomed other guest hierarchs from the Churches of Russia, Romania, Serbia, Georgia, and Jerusalem.

- ***The Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia.*** We are all grateful that talks have begun between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia (ROCOR). As relations have improved between the Moscow Patriarchate and ROCOR, so have relations between the Orthodox Church in America and ROCOR. His Beatitude has met with Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of ROCOR, and representatives of Metropolitan Laurus were present at the celebration of the 40th anniversary of His Beatitude's ordination to the holy priesthood and the centennial celebration of Saint Tikhon's Monastery. Good relations and mutual cooperation between our respective seminaries – and parishes and clergy in many parts of the country – are encouraging signs of a normalizing of relations and the possibility of common witness. We anticipate a fruitful resolution of canonical issues in a manner that will be beneficial to Orthodoxy in America.

His Beatitude is often invited to represent the Orthodox Church in America at various significant celebrations in the life of the other Orthodox Churches. Given his responsibilities, His Beatitude is not always able to accept these invitations personally. In his place, he has sometimes asked members of the Holy Synod to represent him and our Church. Bishop Seraphim, vice-chairman of the Department of External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, and Archpriest David Brum, secretary to the Metropolitan, represented our Church at the consecration of the new Holy Trinity Cathedral in Tblisi, Georgia. Bishop Seraphim and I were present for the enthronement of His Holiness, Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria. His Eminence, Archbishop Kyrill, and Father David Brum represented His Beatitude at the celebration of the 90th birthday of His Holiness, Patriarch Maxim of Bulgaria. Bishop Seraphim and Priest Alexander Rentel were also present in Rome for the funeral of Pope John Paul II. His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of Eastern Pennsylvania, and Father David Brum represented the Orthodox Church in America at the installation of Pope Benedict XVI.

Our need to maintain and foster our relationships with our Sister Churches is often unappreciated, and even disparaged, by some in our Church. They see the nurturing of such relationships as an unnecessary exercise. Some are critical because they are afraid of “foreign” influences upon our Church. Others are concerned about the expenses related to fostering and preserving these relationships. Although we are sensitive to these voices, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and the Holy Synod of Bishops are firmly committed to maintaining and developing effective relationships with our Sister Churches throughout the world, even those – most especially those – that do not recognize our status as an autocephalous Church. This is not a time to become isolated.

With so many real and potential factors working against the unity of the Church in America and abroad, the Orthodox Churches are in greater need than ever of supporting one another. Our official presence and participation in the wider Orthodox world continues to allow the Orthodox Church in America to make significant contributions to the ongoing conversation about critical issues affecting the Orthodox world today. These are matters with real impact on the life and witness of our Church.

We recognize, of course, that while maintaining and fostering our relationships with the Orthodox Churches around the world, we must remain true to our fundamental pastoral and evangelical vocation in North America. I pray that our celebration of the 35th anniversary of the granting of our autocephaly and the 35th anniversary of the glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska, our Church's first saint and fervent intercessor, will refresh our shared memory and allow us to reclaim and renew our common commitment to who we are as the Orthodox Church in America and our unique place among the Orthodox Churches.

**Dioceses of the Orthodox Church in America.** Within weeks of his election, Metropolitan Herman traveled to the Diocese of Alaska, the mother diocese of the Orthodox Church in America and the guardian of the relics of our Venerable Father Herman, wonderworker of Alaska and All America. At the invitation of His Grace, Bishop Nikolai, he participated in the annual pilgrimage to Kodiak and Spruce Island, leading the clergy and faithful in venerating the relics of Saint Herman and challenging them to reclaim the spiritual and missionary heritage brought to North America in 1794.

In January 2003, His Beatitude made his first official visit to the Mexican Exarchate, accompanied by His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South and Exarch of Mexico. His Beatitude presided at the Divine Liturgy and the Blessing of Water at Holy Ascension Cathedral in Mexico City. While in Mexico, His Beatitude met with Metropolitan Anthony [Chedraoui-Tannous] of the Antiochian Orthodox Church, as well as with representatives of the Mexican government, including Dr. Javier Montezuma Barraga, Cabinet Officer of the Mexican Government, and Dr. Alvaro Castro Estrada, General Director of Religious Associations. Throughout his visit, Metropolitan Herman praised the tireless efforts of the clergy and laity alike in their work to build up the Body of Christ in the capital city and beyond, and he encouraged them to bring the Light of Christ to other regions of this large nation.

During these past three years, His Beatitude has been present at many diocesan assemblies and celebrations, including the assemblies of the Diocese of the South, the Diocese of the Midwest, the Diocese of New England, the Archdiocese of Canada, the then-Diocese of New York and New Jersey, and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania. His Beatitude will also be present for the assembly of the Diocese of the West in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in October.

During his visits to the dioceses and parishes of our Church, His Beatitude has been able to witness firsthand the growth in the number of our missions and new parishes. We are pleased to note today that the Orthodox Church in America has established or received 35 new missions and other institutions since the last All-American Council. For several years, a new surge of church construction and renovation has been seen in such diverse places as Santa Rosa, California; Las Vegas, Nevada; Wheaton, Palatine, and Burr Ridge, Illinois; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Dallas, Texas; Campbell, Cleveland, Dayton, and Rossford, Ohio; Bethlehem and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and elsewhere. The construction and renovation of churches is a sign of our Church's health, a sign that growth is continuing, and that the commitment to the Church's life and mission remains strong. As a sign of mutual love and our unity as the Orthodox Church in America, His Beatitude participated in the consecration of a number of new church temples, including Saint George



Cathedral, Rossford, Ohio; Saint Alexis Church, Clinton, Connecticut; Holy Transfiguration Church, Livonia, Michigan; and Christ the Savior Church, Southbury, Connecticut. Holy Resurrection Church, Palatine, Illinois, was also recently consecrated.

**Ecumenical witness.** The Orthodox Church in America continues to bear witness to the Orthodox Faith and Tradition in various ecumenical forums. While we are clearly aware of the tensions that arise in connection with Orthodox participation in ecumenical events, we must stress that our own Church is always represented in a manner consistent with Orthodox teaching and governed by the Holy Synod's *Encyclical on Christian Unity and Ecumenism*. Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky continues to serve as our principal representative to the World Council of Churches (WCC), the National Council of Churches (NCC), and the newly-formed Christian Churches Together (CTT). CTT is the result of a movement to create a new ecumenical organization, composed not only of the Orthodox Churches and the mainline Protestant churches, but also including the Roman Catholic Church and the conservative evangelical Protestant churches and bodies. Among the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches that have also joined CTT are the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, the Armenian Church, and the Syrian Orthodox Church.

Father Kishkovsky, a senior priest of the Orthodox Church in America, is a respected Orthodox voice at conferences and seminars hosted by our sister Orthodox churches, in our relations with government and diplomatic officers and non-governmental organizations, and in inter-faith dialogues and multi-faith organizations. He is vice-moderator of the World Conference of Religions for Peace, and Moderator of Religions for Peace USA and a trustee of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation.

Prof. Richard Schneider, a member of our Archdiocese of Canada, is currently serving as president of the Canadian Council of Churches and, together with Mr. David Wagschal, strives to make the presence of the Orthodox Church in America known within that forum.

Other representatives of our Church at certain ecumenical events are the Archpriests David Brum and Joseph Fester, the Priest Alexander Rentel, Dr. Paul Meyendorff and Dr. Peter Bouteneff, as well as many other clergy and laity on national, diocesan, and parish levels.

**Government and societal relations.** Metropolitan Herman represented The Orthodox Church in America at the second inauguration of President George W. Bush in January 2005. He also was present for the national prayer service in the National Cathedral, attended by the President and the leadership of the Senate, the House of Representatives, and other government bodies and agencies, as well as members of the diplomatic corps. In October 2002, His Beatitude met Canada's incumbent Prime Minister, Jean Chretien. As I have already noted, His Beatitude met with government officials in Mexico in 2003. Such meetings are usual in the course of his official visits to the local Orthodox Churches. We also maintain relations with foreign embassies and embassy staff in America, and our own American embassies abroad. Our presence at government events and meetings with representatives of governments enables us to make Orthodoxy in general – and our Church in particular – better known. This is a time-consuming ministry that demands flexibility and creativity. We are very grateful for the extraordinary dedication of our Chancery staff in developing and maintaining these important contacts in the interests of the Orthodox Church in America.

His Beatitude continues to be a leader in the pro-life movement. Every January, he participates in the March for Life in Washington, DC. His Eminence, Archbishop Job, was also present this year. Our hierarchs have consistently made the march an occasion for Orthodox witness, and many of our

clergy, seminarians, and faithful are regular participants. Orthodox support of the dignity of human life is widely recognized, primarily due to His Beatitude's many years of personal commitment to the cause. By means of this witness, as well as by public statements on biomedical and bioethical issues, in discussions of ethics in our publications and on our web site, and in our pastoral practice, we remain perhaps the most prominent Orthodox voice in the United States to speak out in defense of the unborn and for respect for human life at all stages, from conception to natural death. Under the guidance of the Holy Synod, Archpriest John Breck, chairperson of our Church's Medical Ethics Commission, and the other members of the commission provide appropriate Orthodox counsel on developments in medical science and bioethics, as well as the various moral and ethical issues faced by Orthodox Christians today.

**The Standing Conference.** Shortly after his election, Metropolitan Herman hosted a meeting of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) at the OCA Chancery. This was the first of several SCOBA meetings that have taken place in the past three years.

The work of SCOBA continues, mostly through its Study and Planning Commission, in which the Orthodox Church in America continues to play a key role. On behalf of the SCOBA hierarchs and with their blessing, the commission oversees the work of the various commissions and organizations endorsed by SCOBA. The commission also supports various ecumenical dialogues, such as the Orthodox-Lutheran Dialogue and the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Dialogue, and maintains relations with the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches (SCOOC). Most visible among the SCOBA-sponsored agencies are the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC), International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), and the college-based Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF). We participate directly in these agencies.

Our Church is often asked to act as a bridge between the various jurisdictions present in North America. It is our hope that the relationship between its member hierarchs will allow SCOBA to reclaim the positive influence on Church life in America that it once had. Regrettably, apart from the work I have noted, SCOBA activities have diminished to the point where the original goals of cooperation and unity are generally experienced only on a liturgical level, such as annual sponsorship of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, and shared sponsorship with SCOOC of the annual United Nations Prayer Service. This latter event was hosted by Metropolitan Herman in October 2003, in the form of the celebration of Vespers at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral in New York City, with responses sung by a combined choir from Saint Tikhon's and Saint Vladimir's seminaries.

**The ongoing task of evangelization.** Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself gave us the Great Commission to evangelize when He told His apostles, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you" [Matthew 28:19-20].

This mandate has been taken to heart by Orthodox Christians in North America throughout the past 200 years. It is a mandate we take seriously as the Lord's disciples in this place, at this time. We believe that the Orthodox Church in America is uniquely committed to the task of evangelization, following the spirit and tradition directly handed down to us by the first Orthodox missionaries in Alaska, who brought the Orthodox Faith to these lands, proclaimed the Gospel, made disciples, baptized, and taught.

As part of this missionary task, we continue to teach and evangelize within our established parishes, as well as in places across this continent in which people have yet to hear the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed and the new life in Christ made tangible in the worship and mutual care of the Church. A review of parish statistics for the past triennium demonstrates a trend toward growth, and testifies that our missionary efforts have continued to bear fruit. Many new missions and parishes have been established. Older parishes are being revitalized. As already noted, 35 new missions have been opened. Two which had previously been closed were reopened. It is true that six missions and monastic institutions were closed during this period. We truly regret that things can come to the point that closure is necessary, and we trust that we may learn important lessons from such circumstances. Indeed we take seriously, as a mark of maturity, learning from mistakes or miscalculation, adapting to change, and integrating lessons learned into our future plans. With God's help, such wisdom will support the overall growth of evangelization and the mission of our Church.

**Conferences.** In order to enhance, encourage, and support the work of evangelization and other parish ministries, the Orthodox Church in America sponsored three special conferences in 2004.

The Third OCA Pastoral Life Conference took place at Saint Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary June 2-4, 2004. Attended by nearly 125 clergy, it focused on the unique challenges encountered in the priestly ministry. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for our clergy to pray, study, reflect, and engage in fellowship.

Nearly 100 clergy and laity participated in the parish ministry "Faith in Action" conference sponsored by the Department of Christian Witness and Service at Saint Vladimir's Seminary July 28-31, 2004. This conference featured 25 workshops over a three-day period. Those who participated returned to their home parishes revitalized and enthusiastic for the work with which the Church has entrusted them.

A conference addressing the needs of older parishes and parishes with declining membership was sponsored by the Department of Evangelization at Saint Vladimir's Seminary August 30-September 1, 2004. Almost 40 clergy and lay participants discussed various aspects of parish renewal and growth. This was the second conference hosted by this department, the first having taken place in 2003.

We are grateful for the presence at this Council of so many of our youth and young adults. The Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry continues its strong program of educational, service, and fellowship activities, encouraging youth to be actively involved in the life of the Orthodox Church in America. A highlight of the past three years has been the participation of so many of our young people in helping with "hands-on" work in the Diocese of Alaska and with Project Mexico. The Priest Michael Anderson, who has served as youth director for the past 11 years, will complete this phase of his ministry later this year, as he takes on a parish assignment in the Diocese of the West. We are grateful for the commitment and enthusiasm he has brought to this key area of Church life and ministry. Cheryl Morris, department chairperson, aided by Joseph Matusiak, will oversee the department's work until a full-time director is appointed sometime next year.

**Theological education and pastoral formation.** The great importance of sound theological education and appropriate pastoral formation for our clergy cannot be stressed enough. This is true in some measure for all of those who will be engaged in church leadership. This All-American

Council calls us to reflect upon the manner in which our clergy are educated and prepared for parish ministry. From the time of the establishment of our first seminary in Minneapolis 100 years ago, our Church has consistently made theological education a priority. Our institutions have been blessed with visionary leadership, excellent faculties, and sound scholarship. Theological education and pastoral formation continue to be the basic work of the three seminaries serving the Orthodox Church in America. Last year, Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary was granted full accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary also has had its accreditation re-affirmed. Saint Vladimir's Seminary also continues its capital campaign and is in the process of constructing new housing for married students. Saint Herman Orthodox Theological Seminary continues to expand and develop a unique program that prepares clergy and Church workers in and for the Diocese of Alaska. A total of 52 students graduated from our seminaries in 2005 – a record number! Saint Herman Seminary graduated four students, while Saint Tikhon's Seminary graduated 19 students and Saint Vladimir's Seminary graduated 29 students. Although not all graduates are or will be ordained, we believe that the general increase in the size of incoming classes is a positive sign of the health of our seminary programs and bodes well for the Church.

**Church ministry departments.** The reports of the Church ministry departments were distributed well before the Council. These reports provide an update on the work being accomplished in the many and varied aspects of our Church life. Our Church has 21 departments, boards, and commissions, served by over 200 clergy and laity, for the most part on a volunteer basis. Our departments are committed to serving the needs of our dioceses, parishes, clergy, and faithful. They are constantly seeking to improve communications among departmental members, with those they serve directly, and with the broader Church membership. The minutes of department meetings and all reports are forwarded for review to the members of the Holy Synod, the Metropolitan Council, and the diocesan chancellors. We are grateful to Michelle Jannakos, Church ministries coordinating secretary, and David Lucs, assistant to the chancellor, for the attention and care they give to coordinating and distributing these materials on a regular basis. As you review these reports, we hope that you will be impressed by the many things we have been able to accomplish on a very small budget and with a limited number of staff. Taken together with news and articles published in *The Orthodox Church* newspaper, and the extensive, growing amount of information on our web site, these reports point to an active church supported by dedicated volunteers. These volunteers are to be thanked for their laudable and consistent dedication to our mission.

- ***The Department of Communications.*** The missionary effort of Saint Herman and his monastic brethren inspires us. The apostolic zeal of Saint Innocent, Saint Tikhon, Saint Raphael, and Saint Alexis, and many others, known and unknown, challenges us. In their dedication, we see the most sublime example of commitment to Christ and His Church as they utilized every means at their disposal to advance the Church's mission. Following their example, we are always trying to find the best possible means to "get the message out."

Our Department of Communications has grown substantially since the last All-American Council. Over 32,000 families now receive *The Orthodox Church* newspaper. Thanks to the Archpriests Leonid Kishkovsky and John Matusiak, editor and managing editor respectively, the paper continues to serve as the most important of our Church's printed communications.

Our Church's web site ([www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org)) continues to be the most widely utilized of all English-language web sites providing information on the Orthodox Faith. It is a fundamental resource for the history, life, mission, and message of the Orthodox Church in America. We currently receive an

average of 105,000 visitors, or 1.2 million “hits,” every month. A new design was introduced earlier this year with a more effective and user-friendly format. We constantly receive favorable comments on the web site. We are grateful to John J. Mindala II, assistant to the chancellor for communications and graphic design and our webmaster, for his dedication to this important form of outreach and education.

In addition to providing Orthodox educational materials and information about the Orthodox Church in America, and our dioceses, parishes, and institutions, the web site provides coverage of a wide range of events in the life of our Church. Photo documentation of events taking place on the diocesan and parish levels, as well as coverage of the international activities of the Metropolitan, are extremely popular. We attempt to post photos and commentary on these events in a timely manner, but we are sometimes limited by the small size of our staff, which consists of Father Matusiak, John Mindala, and David Lucs, and the demands of multi-tasking at the Chancery.

The fact of the matter is that the work of the Department of Communications is growing. It continues to expand the services it provides to members of the Orthodox Church in America, as well as to countless others who utilize our web site. The Department publishes the annual *Sourcebook and Church Directory* and the annual *Church Desk Calendar*. I wish to note that it is our intention to post the 2006 *Sourcebook* on our web site. It will be printed only in limited number to meet our foreign distribution needs and the needs of those who may require desk copies.

The Holy Synod of Bishops is keenly aware of the importance of communications in this day and age. They support the work of this department and anticipate its continued growth and development. As we look ahead to future expansion and improvement, we are naturally concerned that our budget will reflect communications as a priority.

Electronic mail will soon become the most usual and primary means of regular communication between the Central Church Administration and the parishes and clergy of the Orthodox Church in America. We have yet to use e-mail for any significant mailing because we are concerned that someone may inadvertently not receive important information. It is still the case that maintaining an up-to-date database of e-mail addresses is a challenging task. Nonetheless, as the general population becomes accustomed to e-mail, we will be exploiting the cost reduction and time-saving features of electronic communication. We currently have a list of 680 clergy e-mail addresses, representing 69 percent of our clergy. In the meantime, those who do not have e-mail services will continue to receive mailings in the customary manner.

The use of internet forums by some of our clergy and faithful is of ongoing concern to us. We have witnessed several instances in which the wonderful potential of electronic communication has been used to destructive and malicious ends. The fact of the matter is that ease of communication has not improved the *quality* of our communications; at times, sadly, it has given miscommunication, false information and provocation an even wider circulation. Instantaneous communication, without the nuances of personal encounter or space for reflection, can easily arouse fallen passions. I feel I must comment on this because, as clergy who have been ordained to preach the Word of God and to set an example to the faithful, we are all too often found speaking against one another and undermining the dignity of the priestly office. We must reflect on the sins of bearing false witness, argumentativeness, and disputation. I respectfully ask my brother priests to use the internet for the cause of the Gospel and not in any manner that would subvert the mission entrusted to us.

- ***The Office of Humanitarian Aid.*** The Office of Humanitarian Aid has continued to call upon parish communities, chapters of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, Church organizations, Church schools, and individuals to raise funds for holiday gifts for children around the world through our Christmas Stocking Project. Funds collected are used to purchase filled stockings or similar gifts for needy children in eastern and central Europe, Albania, Alaska, and elsewhere. The office also continues to distribute substantial amounts of medical and other aid to those in need around the world. The past three years have seen an increased number of parishes participating in this meaningful form of outreach. It is through this department that the Orthodox Church in America reaches out with loving support to those in need. Our charitable endeavors over the past three years have been quite significant and have included assistance to survivors of the terrorist attack in Beslan, those whose lives were affected by the hurricanes in Florida and the heavy storms in central Pennsylvania, and those whose lives were changed forever by the tsunami in Southeast Asia.

- ***The military chaplaincy.*** The entire world was affected by the events in New York City on September 11, 2001. Chief among these effects has been the resulting military conflicts, first in Afghanistan, and now in Iraq. In two separate statements, the Holy Synod of Bishops called upon the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America to pray and fast for a speedy conclusion of the war in Iraq. Although the hope for a speedy resolution of this war has yet to be realized, we continue to pray for peace in Iraq and the Middle East. In the words of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, “we continue to pray... that by Our Lord’s supreme goodness, that which is evil might be transformed into that which is not only good, but godly... for our nation’s leaders and the leaders of other nations, that they will be moved to bring about an end to the conflict in a speedy manner, focusing their attention on producing a just and lasting peace... and for the countless innocent people, Christians and Muslims alike, whose lives are, and will continue to be, torn apart by untold suffering.”

As the war in Iraq continues, and as the armed forces of the United States and its allies continue to work for peace throughout the world, the Orthodox Christian men and women in the armed forces and their families are ministered to by the Orthodox Church in America’s military chaplains. With His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and the Holy Synod of Bishops, we offer our gratitude to and commend the efforts of our military chaplains. Like the military personnel they serve, they leave their families and communities to perform their duties. They faithfully and courageously provide pastoral care and guidance to our brothers and sisters serving in the military.

- ***The Orthodox Church in America’s Benefits Office.*** The Orthodox Church in America’s Benefits Office continues to serve the needs of those clergy and lay employees who participate in the Orthodox Church in America’s pension plan. As indicated in the department reports, the pension plan remains strong, and it effectively serves those who participate in it. The benefits office also watches over the services provided through the Personal Assistance Program, a program that has seen increased participation in recent months. We are grateful for Elizabeth Kondratich’s dedication to the pension plan and benefits office and her attentive care for the clergy and employees who seek her assistance. All newly ordained clergy receive information concerning the benefits available to them.

I am also pleased to inform you that this past October, the Loyal Christian Benefit Association honored His Beatitude on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of his ordination to the holy priesthood by providing life insurance coverage to all our Church’s seminarians and, if married they are married, to their spouses and children, during the time of their enrollment in the seminary. We

are deeply appreciative of this gift, which represents approximately two million dollars in insurance coverage.

- ***Sexual misconduct issues.*** There is an understandable growing public concern over cases of sexual misconduct by clergy and other Church workers associated with various denominations across the United States and Canada. The Orthodox Church in America is vigilant in these matters and fully committed to prevention, due process, and pastoral care as appropriate. The Holy Synod of Bishops, at its March 2003 meeting, issued a comprehensive set of *Policies, Standards, and Procedures of the Orthodox Church in America on Sexual Misconduct* and directed that this policy be implemented in all parishes, missions, and institutions of our Church. The Holy Synod also created an Office for the Review of Sexual Misconduct Allegations. This office is under the direct supervision of the Metropolitan. We are thankful that we have had only a few instances requiring action. Nonetheless, the standard of vigilance inherent in our policies cannot be relaxed. It must be maintained for the spiritual and physical well-being of the faithful and for the safety and stability of our communities. It must be maintained for the good reputation of the Church, so that our proclamation of the Gospel will not be compromised or suffer from distractions. In addressing allegations of sexual misconduct, the hierarchs of our Church are guided by a true pastoral concern for their flock.

The Orthodox Church in America requires background checks of clergy and lay workers. This is a policy that is implemented in each parish at the direction of the local bishop. Background checks have also been made on every member of the Holy Synod and all of the Chancery staff, beginning with me. We are arranging to have in place a mechanism to ensure background checks on all candidates for ordination, as well as on the clergy of other Orthodox Churches petitioning to be received into our ranks. It has been proposed that at some point in the admissions, matriculation, or graduation process, our seminarians will undergo confidential background checks.

***The challenge of finances.*** Finance continues to be a challenge on all levels of our Church life. This is true in many parishes and dioceses. It is especially true for the Central Church Administration, where we have witnessed a decrease in voluntary free-will gifts through bequests and special donations. It must be noted that, although there has been an annual increase in gifts received, the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS) has been unable to meet its budgeted income for the past several years. The Chancery has managed to meet its payroll expenses and is current in payment to the various benefits programs, including hospitalization insurance, the Personal Assistance Program, and the Orthodox Church in America pension plan.

We adhere strictly to the budget approved by the Metropolitan Council and the Holy Synod of Bishops. Prior to its approval, and while still in draft form, the budget is subject to a line-by-line review by His Beatitude, the Holy Synod, the Church Administration Committee, the Metropolitan Council, the Office of the Treasurer (which includes the comptroller and auditors), and the chairpersons of the Church ministries departments. The membership of each of these bodies is encouraged to ask questions and offer suggestions for changes, all of which are taken seriously. Having been reviewed, the budget then receives approval from the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan Council.

We have often heard the claim that the administration of the Orthodox Church in America – the various bodies I have just mentioned, comprised of almost 200 people representing dioceses and Church institutions – is not fully accountable or transparent in its management of the Church's finances. However, the members of these bodies, particularly the diocesan representatives on the

Metropolitan Council, are encouraged to keep their respective diocesan councils informed regarding the Church's budget and finances. It is our hope that this is taking place regularly, so that the people who are interested in this aspect of the Church's life may be kept fully informed.

Parish priests regularly make announcements from the amvon. However, on any given Sunday, there will be persons who either do not listen to the announcements, or who fail to understand them fully, and who, as a result, leave church on Sunday with no information - or misinformation that can then be relayed to others. This happens in many areas of Church life, including the area of finances, even though reports are provided regularly.

However, to maintain the budget it is also necessary to receive the income that is budgeted! Because of current income limitations, we cannot implement everything that is provided for in the budget, and we are thus faced with the challenge of prioritizing the services the administration is able to provide to the dioceses, parishes, and institutions. This challenge is not unique on the Church-wide level, but is also experienced on the level of the dioceses and parishes. Indeed, dioceses often find it necessary to increase assessment levels in order to meet their growing needs.

The decrease in free-will gifts is not unique to the Chancery and departments of the Orthodox Church in America. This also has had an impact on the diocesan and parish levels, and is not unique to the Orthodox Church in America. All Orthodox jurisdictions in North America have reported a drop in income, as have most religious and not-for-profit organizations. This decrease in voluntary contributions must also be seen in the context of the proliferation of so many appeals from so many different Church institutions and areas of Church life.

As we think about the future of our Church, it is important to connect our enthusiasm and commitment with our responsibility to support the programs we need and want. The Fair Share resolution is offered in good faith as a step forward in our search for appropriate and equitable ways for everyone within the Church to share in supporting its work.

***FOS, development, and special appeals.*** Upon the resignation of Archpriest Joseph Fester from his position as executive director of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards, (FOS), Metropolitan Herman appointed Archpriest Eugene Vansuch as the new FOS executive director. We are grateful to Father Joseph for his dedication to the work of FOS and continuing the tradition of his predecessors, the Archpriests Sergei Glagolev and Basil Summer. Father Eugene has the urgent task of increasing membership and revenues. We must remember that the work of our Church ministries departments, based on the resolution passed at the 11th All-American Council in 1995, depends exclusively on FOS and other voluntary contributions. We also look forward to the appointment of a full-time development director in the near future. The reality is that the funds needed to support the work of the Church on all levels are available "out there." We need to identify sources for these funds and make our case in the context of competing appeals. We know that a full-time, committed development director would be able to do this, and that the benefits of having such a director would be felt at all levels of Church life.

***Our Church and the future.*** In concluding this brief overview of the life of our Church and the activities of the Chancery since the last All-American Council, I wish reflect for a moment on our theme, "Our Church and the Future." I am optimistic as we look ahead. Just as we have a rich history and legacy of mission and evangelization, so too we have a future which promises continued blessings for us in our work of preaching the Gospel. These blessings may take on unexpected forms. Our cultural assumptions may be shaken to the very foundations. But if we are faithful to the



Gospel, we will find that the Lord will provide for us and present us with new opportunities for living our life in Christ and sharing our faith with others. This is the experience of our past. The early missionaries of Orthodoxy in North America were presented with enormous challenges, great changes, and even reversals in the circumstances of their ministry. They remained faithful to the Lord, and the Lord was faithful to them, always guiding, consoling, and renewing them in doing His will.

I view everything our Church does within the context of our past history (what we have been and what we have accomplished), (of our present who and what we are as the local autocephalous Church in North America), (and of our future what we are called to be and do in the future). As we commemorate the 35th anniversary of the glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska, we recall that he was a man of his times. He lived out the very real difficulties of life in a distant outpost in a foreign land. But he accepted the challenges of the mission, and even the contemptuous manner in which his fellow Russians treated him and the isolation in which he lived. By God's grace he refused to allow circumstances to overwhelm him. His zeal and enthusiasm did not wane. To read through his existing letters is to have this zeal and enthusiasm kindled in our own hearts. In our reading of the letters, diaries, articles and other accounts of the missionary laborers in North America, we find ourselves spiritually refreshed and deeply moved. Are we not moved? Is our heart not warmed? Do we not yearn to follow in their steps? Their common witness over the centuries constitutes a legacy for us – the legacy of Saints Herman and Innocent, Saints Jacob and Alexis, Saints Tikhon and Raphael of Brooklyn, the holy martyred priests John Kochurov and Alexander Hotovitzky, Archbishop Arseny and Metropolitan Leonty, Metropolitan Theophan Noli and Bishop Policarp Morusca, and of so many others, known and unknown – a legacy we believe comes down to us through them from our Lord Himself and His apostles. By their prayers and through their example, may our Orthodox Church in America live the faith we have received in a God-pleasing and fruitful manner!

***Words of gratitude.*** I have now served as chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America for 16 years. I count each of these years as a special gift from God. With the support and blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, I strive to do all within my ability to serve our Church. I view my labors as chancellor as being in service to the Primate, to the Holy Synod of Bishops, and to all the clergy and faithful of our Church. While the role of chancellor is not without its own unique challenges – sometimes disheartening – and responsibilities that are often difficult to implement, the day does not pass that I do not thank God for being entrusted with this ministry. All of us will face unwarranted and cynical criticism; nonetheless, we are open to honest, constructive criticism and any advice that will help us in our ministry of service to Christ's Holy Church. Above all, I wish to express my gratitude for the many ways in which I am supported and assisted in the work I am called to do as chancellor of The Orthodox Church in America.

First of all, I thank God for the profound commitment to Christ and His Church of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops. They provide us with a generous measure of spiritual guidance and archpastoral leadership. As our fathers in Christ, they assure that we remain faithful to the mission entrusted to us. May their fidelity to the Orthodox Faith and their love for their flock continue to inspire us in our own service to Christ.

I also wish to express my thanks to all those who have labored to make this Council possible: His Grace, Bishop Seraphim, episcopal moderator of the Preconciliar Commission, and our host; Archpriest Myron Manzuk, Council manager; Dr. Alice Woog, project manager; Joseph Kormos, commission facilitator; the members of the Preconciliar Commission; Archpriest Dennis Pihach,

chancellor of the Diocese of Canada and clergy co-chair; Dimitry Chernomorsky, lay co-chair; Sophia Kolaroff, secretary; Alexis Troubetzkoy, treasurer; and all the members of the local committee. Special thanks, as well, to the members of the Chancery staff in Syosset for the long hours of additional work assigned to them.

I would also like to thank the Church officers – Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky, treasurer, who is about to retire from this office as he takes up a new parish assignment in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Archpriest Paul Kucynda, secretary, for their devoted service and their friendship. I am grateful to Archpriest David Brum, secretary to the Metropolitan, and to every clergy and lay member of the Chancery staff. Once again, I would like to express my personal gratitude for their commitment. They work long hours – far beyond the hours for which they are compensated. And these long hours of work are offered in the spirit of loving service to the Orthodox Church in America. I wish to note that all the members of the Chancery staff have a loving and positive approach to the work they do for the Church. This is a source of great encouragement for me, and an example to us all. We are all aware that those who work on behalf of Christ and His Church are inevitably subject to negative comments and criticism, very often from the very people they strive most faithfully to serve. I am very pleased that the members of the chancery staff manage to rise above such pettiness and remain focused on the work entrusted to them by His Beatitude and the Holy Synod.

Throughout my many years of service to the Church, first as a parish priest, then as a member of the Chancery staff, and now for 16 years as chancellor, I have been supported and encouraged by my wife Bette. She is a living example of an Orthodox Christian who knows what it means to give of oneself and to sacrifice for the sake of the Church. Without her patience and understanding, her great love and deep faith, and her own personal commitment to Christ and the Orthodox Church in America, I would never be able to fulfill the responsibilities entrusted to me as chancellor. I give thanks to God daily that He has blessed me through her and through our children, Robert, James, Lisa, and their families. In expressing my appreciation to my wife and family, I would also like to express my sincere gratitude, and the gratitude of us all, to all clergy wives and families. May the Lord bless and reward them for their own commitment to Christ and for the sacrifices they make on behalf of the Church.

Finally, I must take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my brother clergy for their compassion and love, for their support, and for all they accomplish on behalf of the Church, often in the hidden and unheralded struggles of pastoral ministry. Priesthood cannot be exercised without the presence of the Cross – and so many of you carry the Cross of Christ with faith, with love, with dedication, and without complaint, always aware that the One we serve has called us into His own wonderful Light, for “through the Cross joy has come into all the world.” I also wish to thank all of you gathered here, who are dearly beloved in Christ. The work we accomplish on behalf of the Church does not belong to any one individual – it is not mine, it is not yours – it belongs to Christ, Who has called us to serve Him. In accepting this call, may we always remember the words of the Apostle Paul to the Church in Ephesus, and pray that we may grow “into a holy temple in the Lord, in Whom [we] also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” [Ephesians 2:21-22].

Respectfully submitted,

Protopresbyter Robert S. Kondratich, Chancellor  
The Orthodox Church in America

## **Report of the Treasurer 2002-2005**

Your Beatitude, Your Eminences, Your Graces, Clergy, Lay Delegates, Observers and Guests:

You have had the chance to review the financial report for the past triennium. I would like to simply highlight and expand upon a few items from that report and then Archpriest Stavros Strikis, the comptroller of The Orthodox Church in America, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

### ***The Budget Process***

It has been suggested that the budget process of The Orthodox Church in America should be changed from the current process, which is established by rule of The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America and confirmed by the Holy Synod of Bishops. Some feel that a fifteen-page, hundreds-of-lines document might be better served by having 600 delegates to the All-American Council review it line-by-line for eventual editing and approval. This idea is simply not feasible.

The current system, in use for over thirty-five years, ensures accountability and input from every level of the Church. The financial officers of the Church begin the development of a budget outline, the Church Administration formalizes the budget, the Holy Synod of Bishops reviews the document, and the Metropolitan Council studies, amends, and approves the annual budget, which is then distributed to the Holy Synod. Each diocese has clergy and lay representation on the Metropolitan Council. Since the original drafting of the Statute, the role of the All-American Council has been to approve the funding method of the operating budget, not the budget itself.

To improve this system we are happy to announce that, beginning with the 2006 Operating Budget of The Orthodox Church in America, we will add the following layers to the process:

1. We will post the approved line-by-line budget on The Orthodox Church in America web site.
2. A working draft of the next year's budget will be distributed to each Metropolitan Council member no later than thirty days before the meeting at which the budget will be discussed. Those diocesan representatives will be encouraged to discuss the budget with their diocesan councils and to offer feedback to the Church Administration.
3. We will publish on the web site the internal auditor's statement of the veracity of the financial records of The Orthodox Church in America.

### ***The Last Triennium***

The Fair Share per capita equivalent of \$85.00 proved to be adequate only for the year 2003. The decision to maintain the same number for 2004 and 2005 is a major factor for the cash flow problem that is presently being experienced by the Church. It would have been better to follow the financial strategies of most of our dioceses by increasing the per capita equivalent for the years 2004 and 2005 by at least the cost-of-living index.

We believe that the Fair Share presentation to this All-American Council to support the work of The Orthodox Church in America for the next triennium is the next step in moving from an antiquated

and ineffective system of financial support to one that has as its ultimate goal “first portion” percentage giving, a system not only biblical, but proven extremely effective.

### ***A Look at the Last Three Years***

Despite large reductions in planned spending, the inadequacy of voluntary gifts by individuals and the leveling off of FOS gifts over the past three years have led to a substantial deficit for the Orthodox Church in America. For the triennium, our deficits totaled 1.9 million dollars.

Several factors account for this three-year deficit. We were left with a huge deficit from the last All-American Council for the following reasons:

- 1) The rate of assessment for the 2002 council expenses remained the same as it was in 1999;
- 2) The Preconciliar Commission had to redo all of its plans (hence additional meetings) with the announcement of the retirement of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius;
- 3) The size of the council doubled with the announcement of the election of a new Primate; and
- 4) The cost of the enthronement of the new Primate was greater than originally planned due to the fact that most, if not all, of the Orthodox Churches throughout the world had representatives at the enthronement.

Other factors contributing to the deficits:

- A computer systems enhancement at the Chancery office over the past three years.
- A three-year Chancery building maintenance project continues.
- Extraordinary expenditures in the areas of Inter-Orthodox and Ecumenical affairs due to the many responsibilities that are placed on The Orthodox Church in America in the areas of national and international Orthodox relations as well as ecumenical and governmental concerns.
- The return of the Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God to Russia added additional and unanticipated expenses for 2004.
- Two automobiles were purchased for Chancery use in 2004, a sedan and a sports utility vehicle. This purchase replaced vehicles that were six years old and completely worn out.

It must be noted, however, that in 2003 and 2004, spending was below what was planned. If income had matched expectations, there would have been no deficits in 2003 and 2004.

Several steps were taken to deal with the deficit:

1. A line of credit was established with Commerce Bank to pay the outstanding bills of the 13<sup>th</sup> All-American Council and the Enthronement Ceremonies of our new Metropolitan.
2. With the approval of the Church Administration of the Metropolitan Council, we have borrowed monies from ourselves to defray expenses. All borrowed monies are accounted for and are being repaid to the Church.

3. The Fair Share proposal being presented to this 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council includes deficit payment and repayment funds. It also must be said, however, that the Fair Share proposal you are about to discuss will not appreciably expand programs or administration. It will only allow us to do what we had hoped to do three years ago without deficits. In other words, it will simply be maintenance.

### *Conclusion*

Due to my new assignment as Rector of St. Nicholas Church in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the responsibilities of that position, and the great amount of distance between there and Syosset, I will be unable to continue as an officer of the Church. Therefore my position as treasurer of the Church comes to a close at the end of this 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council.

I would like to thank my coworkers at the Chancery for their work ethic and dedication to The Orthodox Church in America. Every full-time person at the Chancery fulfills not only the responsibilities of his or her position, but also assumes additional responsibilities in order to meet the demands of the Church. This is also the case with many of the part-time positions. The standard-bearer of this awesome work ethic is none other than our Chancellor, Protopresbyter Robert Kondratich. His workday begins at 6:00 A.M. each morning as he accepts calls at his home, continues while he travels to the Chancery, and never ends before 6:00 P.M. And when you take into consideration the additional number of days he's away from the office and his family on domestic concerns of dioceses, individual parish celebrations of all types, and international affairs of the Orthodox Church in America, you only stand in amazement at what he accomplishes for the good of the Church.

Your Beatitude and Father Bob, I thank you for the opportunities you have given me over the years to be of service to the Church. I can only hope that I have in some small way lived up to your expectations of me. I ask for your blessing and your prayers as I continue in service to the Lord as a parish priest.

Respectfully submitted,

Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky, Treasurer  
The Orthodox Church in America

## Fair Share Presentation

Your Beatitude, Your Eminences, Your Graces, Clergy and Lay Delegates, Observers and Honored Guests:

The Orthodox Church in America central administration and program budgets have been insufficiently funded for years — almost *never* adequately funded. This has led to a difficult existence, as we risk deficits due to lack of adequate income. As the Church in America, our responsibilities as an autocephalous Church demand certain unavoidable expenditures. You have just heard from the Treasurer of the Church that we must plan deficit reduction and repayment of borrowed funds.

With the implementation of the Fair Share resolution of the 13<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, the Council felt assured that we would be able to adequately fund the Church's budget. But after various discussions at the 13<sup>th</sup> All-American Council concerning the total amount of budgeted income, we agreed upon a per capita equivalent, *de facto* keeping in place the same system that has contributed to our current difficulties. Second, we immediately budgeted up to the maximum allowed by our income, instead of gradually building to it, limiting budget spending and allowing for an annual increase. When we apportioned by Fair Share the maximum amount to the dioceses, the reported supporting membership again declined; we actually are receiving *less* in budgeted income in 2005 than was received in 2002. This has been aggravated by the fact that annual, voluntary and development giving have fallen far short of the yearly budgeted amounts. Both of these factors present a great challenge in meeting the annual budget needs of the Church.

The All-American Council is entrusted with determining the method of funding for The Orthodox Church in America. The Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council are entrusted with approving and implementing the budget. As we consider what amount to apportion through Fair Share to the dioceses at the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council, we must understand that if a normal cost-of-living increase had been implemented each year, we would have gone from the equivalent of an \$85 per capita in 2003 to \$88.00 in 2004, and to \$91.00 in 2005 (approximately 3.3% per year). Therefore, what we would be discussing now would be the *equivalent* of a per capita increase from \$91.00 to \$105.00. All figures are rounded up to the nearest dollar. There has been no raise at all in the annual Fair Share to The Orthodox Church in America, but, in order to meet its own budgetary needs, virtually every diocese at some point has increased its annual assessment at a minimum of the rate of inflation.

We must also be prepared to answer the questions of the average parishioner. What are we doing that inhibits Church growth? How can we fund those structures, organizations, and services that are provided at all levels of Church life? There are answers to all these questions; but these questions must be answered if we expect the average parishioner to continue funding the work of the Church. The Chancery staff and financial officers of the Church strive to do this every day. It must also be noted that in addition to those paid staff, there are *242 volunteers* who assist with the work of the departments, boards and commissions of the Church.

It is very clear that, on a grass-roots level, the average parishioner has no problem whatsoever in supporting the Church, but is of the opinion that a "fair share" program of funding in which not all members of The Orthodox Church in America share equitably in the funding responsibilities is not "fair" at all. This opinion is widely held and is nothing new. However, the solution to this difficulty

lies not in irresponsibly demanding no further Christian stewardship to the Church by those already participating in the fair share program. The answer lies in patiently encouraging, inspiring and educating those others in raising the commitment of their stewardship in time, talent and treasure to The Orthodox Church in America. As a pastor, I would not look at two of my parishioners — one exercising sound, responsible Christian stewardship; the other not offering much stewardship at all — and expect the good steward to freeze the offerings given. I would encourage that steward to continue to be as generous in all areas as possible, because it doesn't matter what the other is doing and God commands us to give generously. But I would then gently try to lead the other parishioner to a greater awareness of the blessings God has bestowed and encourage realistic, generous stewardship on his or her part.

In addition, the proposal for the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council can be looked at in an historical context. The amount of \$2,600,000 contributed annually requested of the dioceses of The Orthodox Church in America participating in fair share is the minimum needed for the Church to offer its services and fulfill its responsibilities. If we look at that figure historically using the actual spending power of the 2004 dollar as our benchmark (the last benchmark available), we can see that the Church has been funded inadequately for several years. In the year of our autocephaly (1970), we actually received more in “real dollars” for the funding of the Church than we are *asking* for in 2006. *We have actually expected the Church to get by on less and less over the past thirty-five years, while expecting more and more in programs and administration!* To simplify the figures, this is what we need(ed) presented as a per capita and what we actually *received* in bold (all figures are in 2004 dollars).

2004	2000	1990	<b>1970</b>	1960
104.59	95.39	72.38	<b>21.44</b>	16.42
85.00	62.50	57.80	<b>24.39</b>	6.37

Put another way, the figure in 1970 is equivalent to \$119.02 today. In addition, back in 1970, before everyone started getting concerned about just who a “supporting member” was, the OCA received support from approximately 37,000 adults. In today’s dollars, that would equate to support of about \$4.4 million! Even understanding that there are more dioceses (hence, structures) to support today, the most anyone would be asked to support for both the diocese and the Orthodox Church in America together is equivalent to \$180.00 per capita — \$15.00 per month.

We can also look ahead to see how time and inflation erode the resources we do give the Church. Again using the 2004 dollar as the constant, it is estimated that to maintain the same “buying power” of the \$2,600,000.00 we receive in 2006, we will need \$2,779,400.00 in 2007 and \$2,844,400.00 in 2008. We anticipate that we can close that “spending power gap” with annual and voluntary giving and through thoughtful budgeting. However, without increased funding now to allow full-time attention to these areas, the closing of this gap cannot be anticipated and the deficits with which we are currently struggling may be aggravated.

Although we are moving away from the understanding of Church support as a “per capita” commitment, it must be noted that the increase in funding is minimal even if viewed that way. The increase equals approximately:

- \$20.00 per year or 39 cents per week. Not per day. Per *week*.
- The yearly total of support requested for the Church in this proposal is the equivalent of about 42 gallons of gasoline, [at current July 2005 prices] or about three or four fill-ups of the average vehicle.

- The average person can fund both the Church and the diocese for THREE MONTHS with the average amount paid for ONE MONTH of cable TV.

If every parish of The Orthodox Church in America simply put diocesan and central fair share support as a line item in the budget, every parishioner would come to view these expenses as simply what it “takes to run the Church.” The financial officers of the Church, the Chancery staff, and the Department of Stewardship stand ready, willing, and most importantly, able to assist any diocese, deanery, parish, or stewardship committee having difficulty in this area.

It is clear that development and voluntary giving must be grown quickly. We hoped for a Director of Development after the past All-American Council, but the position was cut in the face of the deficits. We hope to establish the Order of St. Raphael, seeking generous annual donors to the Church. We have no one to handle the very specialized area of grants. SCOPA recently received a \$300,000.00 grant from the Farah Foundation to establish an Office of Development! What are we trying to do? St. Vladimir’s Seminary also received a grant from the Farah Foundation to update their computer and technological infrastructure. What are we doing? We must invest in these areas seriously and quickly to ensure the viability of our Church structure and the many services it is able to provide to hierarchs, clergy, and faithful on all levels. As mandated by the 1995 All-American Council, our “fair share” should be used to fund the administration of the central Church. Actually, more than a small amount of the fair share goes toward the programs of the Church.

Look at all the young people here in Toronto this week. I was reunited with Christina Jannakos this week, a lovely young lady; the daughter of Fr. Paul and Michelle Jannakos. I held her in my hands and placed her in the baptismal waters almost twenty years ago! She is still here in the Church — dedicated, prayerful, active. We owe it to her and the other young people like her to hand over the Bride of Christ without spot or blemish.

- Finally, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, please remember that giving offerings to support the work of the Church — both programs and administration — is biblical.
- From the Old Testament Levitical laws commanding the tithe,
- to the wisdom of the Psalms,
- through the prophets,
- by the words of our Lord Himself,
- and by the teaching of the holy Apostle Paul, offerings are viewed as essential to our being Christian and for the working out of our salvation.

We have heard comments and even arguments this week about spending — percentages of this and percentages of that. We can argue all we want about spending — everyone has an opinion of the best places to allocate our resources. Elect new members of the Metropolitan Council if you don’t like the way money is used. But this measure is not about spending; it’s about giving. And God simply commands us to give.

**YOU CAN’T OUTGIVE GOD.** What we give is multiplied, blessed and returned to us. What we hold onto is ultimately lost anyway.



### ***Proposals Reviewed by the Metropolitan Council***

At the request of the Holy Synod of Bishops, multiple proposals were presented to the Metropolitan Council at its meeting on April 16, 2005. We must note that the annual support needed from the dioceses for the day-to-day operation of the central administration of The Orthodox Church in America is \$2,710,000.00. *All the proposals hope that increased annual and voluntary giving will lead to reduced Fair Share amounts in the future.*

Before the Metropolitan Council reviewed and voted upon the various proposals, each proposal was forwarded to all the bishops for comment, direction and suggestions.

This proposal was unanimously adopted by the Metropolitan Council and reviewed once more by the Holy Synod of Bishops.

### **FAIR SHARE PROPOSAL**

*(Adopted 4/16/2005 by the Metropolitan Council)*

**RESOLVED:** That the amount of income support each year (2006, 2007, 2008) be \$2,600,000.00. This amount will be apportioned out to the territorial dioceses of The Orthodox Church in America using a formula of The Orthodox Church in America membership percentage (i.e., if your diocese is 15% of the supporting diocesan membership of The Orthodox Church in America, it will be asked to support 15% of the fair share income amount).

Parishes shall forward to their diocesan treasurer the reported financially supporting membership number no later than September 30th of each year. The diocesan treasurer shall forward to the OCA Treasurer the diocesan reported financially supporting membership no later than October 15th of each year. That figure shall be used to recalculate the fair share for the following January 1<sup>st</sup>.

These amounts to be apportioned will not be raised. If membership changes, the amount will be a different proportion for each diocese. Each diocese shall forward one-twelfth of their respective fair share amount to the OCA Chancery no later than the 15th of each month.

### **FAIR SHARE (NON-FAIR SHARE DIOCESES)**

The Primate of the Church will request dioceses that do not participate in the fair share support of the Orthodox Church in America to raise the support they do send (\$74,000.00 actual in 2004) to:

2006: \$110,000.00

2007: \$120,000.00

2008: \$130,000.00

### **ANNUAL GIVING/DEVELOPMENT**

In order to reduce the dependency of the Orthodox Church in America on the mandatory, imposed fair share on dioceses and members of the Church for budgetary funding, a concentrated effort shall be made to build the annual, planned, and development giving to the Church. A full-time Director of Development will work with the Director of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards to strive to meet the following income goals:

2006: FOS, \$400,000.00 DEV, \$450,000.00 2008: FOS, \$450,000.00 DEV, \$650,000.00

2007: FOS, \$430,000.00 DEV, \$550,000.00

In the event that annual and development giving exceed these annual goals, the fair share amount for the supporting dioceses of The Orthodox Church in America shall be reduced in the following year by an amount equivalent to the excess raised. For example, if annual/development giving in 2006 totals \$900,000.00 (+\$50,000.00), the fair share amount for 2007 will be reduced by \$50,000.00 (making it \$2,550,000.00).

Respectfully submitted,

Archpriest John Dresko  
Preconciliar Commission

## Homily

*Delivered by His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, on at the Divine Liturgy,  
Thursday, July 21, 2005, at the 14th All-American Council*

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Your Eminences, Your Graces, Reverend Fathers, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

By God's Mercy, we are able to participate once again in an All-American Council, the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council of the autocephalous Orthodox Church in America. We find that most of the things that take place are no different than the first Council. There was concern for the Church, there was concern for every department of the Church, concern for the faithful, and especially concern that the Word of God would be preached to all people so that they may be able to gain eternal salvation and entrance into the heavenly Kingdom.

In the short time of this past week during this Council, we have had the opportunity to review much. We have had the opportunity to review all those things in the life of the Church that have taken place in the last three years. Depending on how we look at things, how we look to the Church and Her hierarchical structure - that is a feeling that comes from within us. If we begin only with a negative thought in our mind, then we really don't see anything that is good or anyone accomplishing anything that is worthwhile. However, if we are willing to look for the good that has taken place, then very quickly anything that did not take place or in the proper manner is overshadowed by the good. And we rejoice knowing that so many good things have taken place.

This Council is no different than any other Council; there are always some disappointments, and that should not be strange to any of us. As we go through life we know, beginning with ourselves - not with anyone else - that there is no one who is perfect. How good it would be if we could be perfect and please our Heavenly Father with every act that we perform, every word that we utter. That, indeed, would be wonderful. However, we know that this does not take place. But our Lord, who is loving, merciful, and compassionate, is very compassionate when we make a mistake, providing that we are willing also to acknowledge our errors, repent of our actions and, most importantly, to make a change within our life.

Probably the greatest disappointment we can have is that we are not bringing more people to Christ. And we should be disappointed. There is no question about it. Because that is our main task - to bring God's children to His Heavenly Kingdom. Unfortunately, when we begin to look at that we want to blame everyone else. Sometimes it gets to the point that we want to turn to the Lord and blame Him, that somehow He has abandoned us - that He has somehow not made it possible for us to do His work. Now perhaps this is so because we look to everyone else and not first to ourselves.

As I said earlier, this Council is no different than the first or the ones that will come after this one. There are imperfections, but we have done many good things. Can we do better? We absolutely can. Will we do much better? We can only answer that individually. No one else can answer for us. I am sure three years ago we were all disappointed - as disappointed as we may have been three years before that - disappointed that the census was going down. Usually the only thing we connect with that census is that there is going to be less money coming into the Church. That must not be our main concern. Our main concern must be that we are not doing our main work. That we are not

leading God's children to His Heavenly Kingdom – that work that was entrusted to us by the Grace of God. Can it change? Yes it can change. However it will only change if the change begins with each and every one of us – the archpastors, the pastors and the faithful.

The very command that our Lord gave to His first disciples is the same commandment that He has given to each and every one of us. To go out and “baptize all nations in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” He knew that this would not be a simple task. He knew that it would require work on the part of all of us. It would require sacrifice. But He gave us comfort because He also said to us, “Lo, I am with you always even unto to the very end.” We know that regardless of what trial or tribulation we have gone through in our personal life, in our parish, in our deanery, or in our diocese, we know that the moment we turn to the Lord and offer up our prayer, that there comes to us peace and comfort. And therefore, even now, if we really want to see change come about, if we really want to see more people within our Church, more people walking in the direction of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ, it requires that we do something. We must make the examination, not so much of anyone else, but of ourselves. When we go to bed at night, perhaps even before we say our evening prayers, we should ask ourselves, “What have I done today for the building up of Christ's Holy Church?” And that naturally includes our own personal salvation. Have we heard His commandments and His teachings? Are we living in accordance with those commandments and those teachings? Are we a good example to the people we come in contact with – whether it is our spouse and children in the morning or the people we are going to meet out on the street? We need not only to ask ourselves these questions, but also answer and resolve that we are going to change our life. That we are going to change to a life in Christ.

There is always disappointment. Remember that when Christ called His first disciples to become “fishers of men” they were disappointed because they didn't catch any fish. But what did the Lord tell them? He didn't say to them go out and find someone else to fish for you. He said “Go out into the deep.” And that is exactly what they did. They went out into the deep waters and there they caught many fish. So it is with each and every one of us. Too often we are preaching and talking to the wrong people. The people we should be talking to we hesitate to talk to. Instead, we are talking to the people who are already obedient to the Lord – those who have heard His commandments and teachings, maybe not perfectly, but they are trying to live in accordance with those commandments. But what about those people who were baptized and confirmed into the Orthodox Faith but have gone astray for one reason or another? Regardless of what or who they were disappointed in, they walked away from the faith. It is better that we go out and preach to those people - those people who if we look out into our church we see the empty spaces, those are the people who we must bring back. It can be done only by example. And the most perfect example has been given to us already by none other than our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ. It must be done by taking upon ourselves His humility, His Love – His Love for all of mankind that will permit us to fulfill our love for each other and to continue to do the work of the Lord.

In today's Epistle reading the Apostle Paul tells us very clearly that, even though they wanted him to come to Rome and even though he himself wanted to go to Rome, he said to them, “No I am not going to go there” because he wanted to go somewhere where Christ had not yet been preached. He knew that Christ was being preached in Rome but he also knew that not everyone was true to Christ our Savior there. But it was his desire to go elsewhere. And so, it must be with each and every one of us – we must be willing to go out and look for those people. We have an obligation as the Orthodox Church here in North America to be able to go out and bring people to eternal salvation. We have the opportunity and the obligation to offer them the True Faith. That regardless of what their life is on this earth; in the end they will gain eternal life of joy in His Heavenly Kingdom.

It is easy to pass judgment on someone else. But for there to be a change in our own spiritual life, for there to be a change in our leading people to Christ, there must be that change, that transfiguration, that transformation, in our own life. That must come first. The moment we are going to do that is the same moment that the Lord sees that we love Him and that we are obedient to Him. Just as the Lord gave us that very first commandment and everyone else that followed Him within the Church has given us the very same commandment. We know that Saint Patriarch Tikhon didn't say anything different. He didn't say anything different at all. He told us that it is our obligation spread the faith of Jesus Christ. And in order to do that it first of all must be foremost in our own heart. And we must not hesitate. We must be willing to go out to preach boldly – no differently than the Holy Apostle Paul did. But, unfortunately, those who have fallen, those who at one time were part of the Orthodox faith and no longer are there, it seems that we don't want to say a word, we don't want to “hurt their feelings.” Their feelings mean absolutely nothing here upon this earth. What is most important is that in the end they will not be disappointed but rather will gain for themselves eternal life in His Heavenly Kingdom. That is the challenge that is given to each and every one of us. We must go out and preach His Word and lead people to His Heavenly Kingdom.

We must go out and give sight and understanding to everyone who wants to be one with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Of course it is not a simple task. But at least we need to have that satisfaction that we are attempting to do the right thing. At the same time, we know that there is always disappointment – even already in these few days I have heard so much conversation and many times it is upsetting to hear of the finances and the support of the Church. And again we try and put blame on this one or that one. But our thoughts should rather be how much more could we add to the Church in order that more of God's work will be done. To think positively and not negatively. We always think that someone else needs to do the work. Can you imagine what could be accomplished if even those of us who are here today and this week would fulfill the obligation of tithing 10 percent? There would be no problem whatsoever. We can't ask others to do what we ourselves are not willing to do. It is almost impossible for the words to even come out of our mouths. Therefore today and this week, as we seriously discuss the life of the Church, we must also make sure that we are going to be a part of that serious discussion. That the very same enthusiasm that we have today, we are going to take back to our parishes. That we are going to be willing to share with others – those within our households, those within our communities – and that we are going to work every day of our life so that when that next All-American Council comes - if God blesses us to be able to participate in that Council – we will not be disappointed in ourselves. It is our Book of Life that we take before the Lord. And there, before the Lord, with every page of our Book of Life opened, the Lord tells us whether or not we were good and faithful servants. Whether we will gain eternal life in His Heavenly Kingdom.

May the Lord look favorably upon us today. May He strengthen us every day, every moment of our life, so that we may go out and imitate Him only – by thought, by word, and by deed – in humility and filled with love. Knowing that through that process we will indeed bring many of His lost children to His Heavenly Kingdom. But most importantly we will gain for ourselves that eternal life in His Heavenly Kingdom both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## **Grand Banquet Address**

*Delivered by His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, during the Grand Banquet at the 14th All-American Council, Thursday, July 21, 2005*

Your Eminences, Your Graces, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, Monastics, Beloved Faithful, Honorable Representatives of other Churches and of the Ecumenical Community, Distinguished Guests, Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Our 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council has completed most of its work. We have been together during the past week, meeting in plenary sessions and in other forums, striving together to discern God's will for the Orthodox Church in America. One of the precious gifts we receive in assembling for our Council is the gift of fellowship with one another. This gift allows us to discern the Church as family, the Church as Temple of the Holy Spirit, the Church as the joy of seeing Christ in one another, the Church as the Body of Christ.

The purest expression of the Church as Body of Christ is given to us in the Divine Liturgy, in the Eucharistic gathering. We partook of the joy of the Eucharist during this Council. Yet, as we know well from the life of the parish communities which sustain us through common prayer and through the sacraments, the Orthodox Christian Liturgy does not end with the dismissal. Our liturgical life continues in fellowship, in breaking bread together, in bearing one another's burdens and thus fulfilling the law of Christ, and in witnessing to the Good News of Christ.

Tonight, we are together to share a family meal, to celebrate, to affirm the bonds of peace and joy and unity which hold us together. If we receive all these gifts with gratitude, we will be sustained in the long and difficult journey of Orthodox Christian witness which lies ahead.

To gather for celebration is not to exclude the possibility of some moments of reflection and thoughtfulness. I would like to take the freedom this moment offers to share with you some anxieties about Orthodoxy in today's world, as well as some hopes for Orthodoxy. And I hope you will sense that what I say is rooted in my love for the Orthodox Church, a love which I know you share.

As Orthodox Christians who live and labor in Canada and the United States of America and Mexico, we are well aware of the challenges as well as the opportunities our societies present to us. When we see the secularism, the selfishness, the immorality which permeate our societies, we grieve for the loss of religious and moral values and for the countless distorted and lost lives. When we see the thirst for authentic religious experience, the selfless actions to help the poor and the hungry and the homeless, we rejoice at the presence of religious and moral impulses and values and the holy lives of so many.

As Orthodox Christians living in the Western Hemisphere, we are fully conscious that we live in Western societies. Indeed, we are educated in the schools of our societies, we are informed and influenced by their media, we participate in their culture. It is fair to say that the vast majority of our faithful are Western people in their way of living and thinking. At the same time, we are fully aware that the Orthodox Church represents Eastern Christianity – a Christianity which is distinctive.

The Orthodox Church offers a way of worship and prayer, a way of Christian life and thought which take a different approach than that of Western Christianity, both Roman Catholic and Protestant.

What we can offer, therefore, if we take up the challenge, is a *critique* of our culture from *within* the culture. To do this, we must find the appropriate and effective ways to engage our culture, acknowledging what is good in it and confronting what is evil in it. We must take our stand in the particular culture in which we live, without being enslaved by it. And we must do so from the Orthodox perspective and worldview.

This is the point at which our criticism must be turned toward Orthodox tendencies and habits. As we know very well, the image of Orthodoxy in our societies is identified with specific and limited areas of the world, with specific cultures and nations. Orthodoxy is seen as Middle Eastern and Eastern European, as Greek or Russian, Romanian or Serbian, Albanian or Bulgarian . . . and so on. Orthodoxy is perceived as a foreign faith, tied to foreign cultures. The fault for this lies not in the way our societies look at us. The problem lies with what they actually see when they look at us.

Orthodoxy fails to live up to its universal, worldwide calling. We have allowed ourselves to be confined to narrow cultural boundaries. On the world level, when heads and representative of Orthodox Churches assemble, we see only Eastern Europe and the Middle East. The so-called “diasporas” found in Western Europe, North America, South America, and Australia are not visible in most pictures or profiles of Orthodoxy.

In many Orthodox settings, the view prevails that Orthodoxy is fully achievable only in the traditional and historic Orthodox contexts. Thus to be fully Orthodox and fully American, or Canadian, or French, or Australian is thought to be a contradiction in terms. The irony – indeed tragedy – is that the traditional and historic Orthodox contexts have all undergone painful histories of domination by atheist communism, or secularism, or Islam. It is most often not *preservation* of the Orthodox tradition which is the real agenda of the day, but rather the *recovery* and *restoration* of the Orthodox tradition after decades of persecution and even genocidal violence.

The end of the twentieth century became a time of a renewal of Orthodox life in formerly communist societies. We welcome this miraculous revival, thanking God for His mercy and power, praising God for the countless martyrs who witnessed to Christ in their lives and by their deaths. We also see in our time the steady and vital witness of Orthodox Churches in Muslim societies. We have much to learn from our brothers and sisters in other regions of the world.

Yet we must insist that the historic centers of Orthodox life do not have a monopoly on Orthodoxy. In truth, even if the revival and renewal of Orthodoxy in the Middle East and Eastern Europe is fully successful and wonderfully fruitful in the years ahead, Orthodoxy would still be confined to its historic regions, and would still not have a consciousness of its universality.

The universality of Orthodox witness is put to the test today in those regions and countries where the Orthodox Church is relatively new. We freely admit that even in North America, where the Orthodox Church now has a history of more than two hundred years, we are comparatively new – when the comparison is with the ancient Orthodox patriarchates. The newness of Orthodoxy in North America parallels the newness of the Canadian and American societies – when the comparison is with the ancient cultures of the Middle East, Europe, and Asia.

Why is Orthodoxy in North America an important, probably decisive, test for Orthodoxy worldwide? It is here that the Orthodox Church is demonstrating its ability – or inability – to deal with new cultures and to be engaged in a real encounter with modernity. It is here that we Orthodox must move forward in our following of Christ. It is here that we manifestly fail if our orientation is toward nostalgia for empires long-gone and glories long-faded.

And the test for Orthodoxy of which I speak challenges us here in North America, and challenges the Orthodox Churches with whom so many Orthodox Christians in North America are identified. It is a matter of fact that the Orthodox mind is often seduced by nostalgia for the past. This is as true in New York and Toronto as it is in Constantinople and Moscow.

Instead of addressing together, as a fully unified Orthodox Church, the challenges and opportunities our societies offer us, we remain preoccupied with the questions of “self-rule” and “autonomy” of archdioceses in North America, with the “recognition” or “non-recognition” of the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America.

The obvious logic of our own ecclesiology – our own understanding of the Church - clearly confronts us with the only authentic model of Orthodox church life and organization, which is full canonical unity, full collaboration for mission and witness. We evade what is obvious by taking a defensive posture, in fear that full unity and collaboration would deprive us of the fullness of our various cultural, linguistic, and historic heritages. Some suggest – or suspect – that the Orthodox Church in America’s “real” goal is the elimination of the cultural and historic identities in the Church and the creation of one homogeneous identity.

The truth is that the model of diversity within unity prophetically seen by Archbishop Tikhon one hundred years ago is the model to which our Church is fully committed today. Within one Orthodox Church in North America it is obvious that the cultural, national, and ecclesial traditions and heritages would be maintained and nourished by the existing archdioceses and dioceses. In a united Orthodox Church in North America diversity would contribute to unity. In a disunited Orthodoxy in North America, diversity is a sign of our spiritual impotence.

Some years ago Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch asserted that the Christ whom we follow walks ahead of us into the future, and that we will not be able to follow Christ if we look for Him in the past.

My hope for Orthodoxy is that we will follow Christ into the future, bearing within us the living Tradition of the Orthodox Church, bearing witness to this Tradition in theology and ecclesiology, in prayer and spirituality, in charity and in mission. If we bear within us the living Tradition of our faith, we will not fear modern culture, but will engage it with the fullness of Christ’s love and truth. If we live up to the living Tradition of our faith, we will, together, give dynamic, credible witness to Christ as a united Orthodoxy whose mission is in each particular society, and is at the same time a universal, worldwide mission.

I invite you to join me in this hope. Let us, together, invite our Orthodox brothers and sisters in North America and around the world to join us in this hope, and in its fulfillment!



## **Closing Remarks**

*Delivered by His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, at the closing Plenary Session of the 14th All-American Council, July 22, 2005*

Once again on behalf of my brothers on the Holy Synod of Bishops, I want to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all those on the Preconciliar Commission, and all the clergy and the faithful who have participated in this All-American Council.

The deliberations themselves have come to an end. However, our work is just beginning. As to whether or not it is going to be successful, that will be proven once we come for review again at the next All-American Council. There is no question that many good things have been discussed and many good suggestions have been made by clergy and laity alike. These are the things that need to be put into action. Nothing comes about unless we are all interested in making sure that it is going to take place. Just as there was that concern with regard to unity, be assured that for as long as I have been a member of the Holy Synod, that has always been the greatest concern of the Holy Synod – Unity in North America. However, sometimes we learn quickly that this requires a great deal of patience, and we need to endure much as we continue in that process.

I know from personal experience, and I am sure that Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky can attest to this also, that in our desire for unity, and in our desire to make contact, locally, with the local Orthodox hierarchs of other jurisdictions, as well as my contacts abroad, in which I have met representatives of every Patriarchate, you can only imagine what we go through when you are standing there in the midst of 50 or 100 hierarchs, and all of a sudden you see confusion in one corner, because someone, some representative, has said, “If Metropolitan Herman is serving, we are not serving.” Now we could get upset, we could run away and say we never want to participate in such a thing again, but we don’t. We continue in those conversations, and sooner or later, not in our time, but in God’s time, it is going to take place.

Last night, standing as we were preparing to go into the banquet, I had a conversation with the representative from the Church Abroad. Both of us stood in amazement. Father Vladimir Malchenko expressed it so nicely when he said, “Who would ever think that I would be able to be here at this All-American Council, at the banquet.” And I agreed with him. And yet, conversations have been going on for a long time. My first conversation with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was the year that I was elected as a bishop. But we don’t give up. There is disappointment on our side; there is disappointment on their side. But we will continue to work in that direction knowing that the Lord witnesses to all that is taking place. He blesses our good intentions and sooner or later He is going to resolve it in such a manner that it will be pleasing for all of us and most importantly it will be pleasing for His Church.

I know that there has been conversation that the bishops have not “participated.” Maybe vocally they did not. But be assured that the bishops are well aware of everything that has taken place. We have heard. And really it is a compliment to all of you that we have not stood up because, rest assured, if you would have been doing the wrong thing, every bishop would be standing up and then all of a sudden all of you would be standing up and saying, “When can we, the clergy and laity, express ourselves?”

We have heard everything that you have expressed. Perhaps we did not all care for some of those things. But everything will be discussed by all of us at our very next meeting. We have already

discussed some of those things and be assured that all of us support every good intention that all of you have, regardless of what it is. It is our desire to do whatever is possible to build up Christ's Holy Church and especially to have unity of all the Churches. I must tell you, that there is no question that the local hierarchs of the different jurisdictions in North America – they all want it. But their hands are tied. They cannot be the ones who are going to make the decision. They must be obedient just like we ask all of you to be obedient to your hierarch. They must also be obedient to their First Hierarch. And it is not going to be until they are all convinced that the Church in America is ready to be one autocephalous Church.

During my last conversation - and on more than one occasions - with Patriarch Aleksy, even though a Greek Metropolitan from Constantinople was present, the Patriarch said, "Don't worry whether or not you are acknowledged by all the Churches. Continue to do your own good work. Let them see all that is taking place and in the right time, in God's time, it will take place." And I believe in this very much. I think that all of us need to work in that direction even though there is disappointment, even though we would like to have more gatherings such as we had at Ligonier. But sometimes you cannot call such a gathering because it may turn out for the worst and not the better. So, sometimes you have to move very slowly.

Again, we thank all of you for all of your good endeavors not only here, but that you take back to your parishes all those things you have witnessed here, share them with all the people you come in contact with in your parish so that we can continue to do the work of the Lord.

In closing, I would ask that you all stand as we sing "Memory Eternal" on the anniversary of the repose of the late Protopresbyter John Meyendorff.

## **Youth Statements and Presentations**

*Offered at the Closing Plenary Session, Friday, July 22, 2005 of the  
14th All-American Council*

During the final plenary session on Friday, the Youth Observers of the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council presented what they learned and experienced during the week as they explored the theme “Our Church and the Future: Become What You Are.”

Priest Michael Anderson introduced the presenters emphasizing how the All-American Council over the past several years has become a place where the Church’s youth are challenged “to have something to say about their faith and are heard” in response to the Our Dream of the Church statement made by the youth observers of the 10<sup>th</sup> All-American Council.

### **7 to 9 Year-Old Presentation**

*Representatives from the 7 to 9 year old youth read a poem that summarized their experience of the  
14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council.*

The Life of the Church was our theme this week  
Of God’s love daily did we talk  
The life of the Church shields us from sin  
To help us in our walk.

St. Tikhon’s father was a priest  
Just like some of us.  
He encourages us to be a lighthouse of our Faith  
And be in unity in the Americas.

When you are a healthy Orthodox Christian  
In five areas you must grow  
You need to pray, to talk to God,  
and to confession you must go.

You come to Liturgy, the people’s work  
And of His Body and Blood partake  
You bind yourself to all of God  
A healthy body this will make.

Study God’s Word, the Bible  
And how the saints have lived  
Serve others and deny yourself  
To keep your soul well fed.

Too much fellowship will make you fat  
But don’t let it be  
For we have learned a lot this week  
Together at the AAC!

### **10 to 12 Year-Old Presentation**

*The 10 to 12 year olds had four presenters. Each participant presented what occurred on each day with his or her religious education class along with the outings of the day.*

Day 1 – **Who am I?** - The participants discussed God’s creation and why we were created. They showed a puzzle they created with the words from Genesis: “God saw what He created, and behold it was very good.” Our field trip was to the Ontario Science Centre

Day 2 – **What is the Church?** – Each participant was given an individual poster which was designed as a newspaper, and each person was responsible for filling in the information about themselves and their life in the Church. All created prayer ropes and prayer books. We visited a park called Ontario Place.

Day 3 – **What are my spiritual gifts?** – Participants created gift coupons after studying the lessons in Galatians about the fruits of the spirit. We traveled to Ontario Wonderland.

Day 4 – **Am I spiritually fit?** – Spiritual pyramids were created after a discussion about what we need to be spiritually fit, and we completed the Church poster that was presented to the Council with the quote from 1 Corinthians – “There are many members but only one body.”

The group then showed a sample of a newspaper that each participant had made, outlining things that made him/her - and his/her parish - unique.

They also presented and explained a puzzle they created of the Orthodox Church in America’s logo, with each piece representing a participant and his/her parish.

### **Teens Presentation**

*Ben Safchuk and Michael Zebrun spoke on behalf of the teens.*

“The opportunities that are provided by the All-American Council continue to bring the future priests, deacons, and parishioners of the Church together. The friendships and relationships that are formed within the teen group will help us to become the stronger stewards of our faith that Metropolitan Herman stressed the need for in his sermon at Thursday’s Liturgy. The discussions that were held every day proved to be a guiding light to the path that we must follow. The Council is not just about theme parks, water rides, and waterfalls, but more importantly the need to become stronger beacons of our one true faith.”

They then showed a Power Point presentation that outlined what the teens had discussed and agreed upon during their sessions each day. The text of the presentation follows.

We become what we are by

- Striving to be inwardly and outwardly beautiful to God
- Being good stewards of God’s Creation
- Witnessing to our faith

Inner and Outer Beauty

Together we realized that beauty can be achieved by...

- Striving to attain God's perfection and beauty in our souls
- Having compassion, kindness, and understanding
- Helping people in need and reaching out to others
- Being selfless and giving of ourselves
- Becoming obedient and humble

We define beauty as...

- how we show that God is inside of us
- the ability to see Christ in every person
- the true presentation of ourselves without any outer influences and being in tune with God
- everything God originally created us to be
- a selfless, Christ-like state of being in which one has acquired a spirit of peace, love, and purity

Together we realized that good stewardship involves

- Understanding that there is a connection with all aspects of God's creation
- Becoming aware of how our wants and desires can inadvertently affect others in the world
- Striving to utilize our resources (water, food, shelter, and clothing) more wisely

When it comes to witness, we want the world to...

- believe in one God, creator of all, who gave up His only Son for our salvation.
- share the fullness of the Christian faith in which the love of God is seen in each member
- understand that we are the oldest Christian Church that is pure, everlasting, and filled with the light of God leading to ultimate salvation

In Conclusion

- Despite our differences, we are all one in the Church
- Here at the AAC we come together as one body in Christ where all boundaries are transcended.
- We become who we are in communion with our fellow believers as members of the Body of Christ.

Fr. Michael Anderson then acknowledged all the work of the youth activities staff and volunteers and asked for a round of applause for their commitment to our Church and its youth.

## **Council Information**

**The Orthodox Church in America  
14th All-American Council  
July 17-22, 2005 - Toronto Sheraton Centre Hotel**

### *GENERAL INFORMATION*

*Toronto Sheraton Centre Hotel (Main Number):* 416-361-1000  
*14th All-American Council Telephone Number:* 416-947-4982  
*14th All-American Council Fax Number:* 416-945-6282

Secretarial Rooms: Huron and Kent  
Utility Room: Kenora  
Summary Team/Preconciliar Commission: Cosmopolitan

Young Adult Office: Parlor # 2829  
Play Group: Conference D & E  
Kidz: Windsor Ballroom  
Pre-Teens: Conference B & C  
Teens: Essex Ballroom & Conferences F & G  
Young Adults: Ice Palace, Simcoe/Dufferin or Spindrift/Spring Song  
(Kidz and pre-teens will be dropped-off and picked-up promptly for all outings in their designated rooms that are listed above.)

### Requirements for Council events

- Priests (black riasa with pectoral cross) with council badges properly displayed.
- Deacons (black riasa) with council badges properly displayed.
- Laity (proper business attire) with council badges properly displayed.

### For your convenience

- The Daily Schedule Summary will be included on your hotel room tv monitor, on the in-house events station, and listed on the electronic events boards located on the lobby, 2nd floor, mezzanine and 4th floor.
- Primary access to the Mezzanine Level is the second floor stairway located to the right of the central elevator and escalators.

### COUNCIL REGISTRATION & CREDENTIALS (on Concourse Level)

Friday 3 pm - 12 am (set-up only)  
Saturday 1 pm - 10 pm (Opens)  
Sunday 2 pm - 11 pm  
Monday 9:30 am - 6 pm  
Remainder of the Week: (Kent Room)

### BANQUET RESERVATIONS AND TICKETS (on Concourse Level)

Friday 3 pm - 12 am (set-up only)  
Saturday 1 pm - 10 pm (opens)  
Sunday 2 pm - 11 pm  
Monday 9:30 am - 6 pm

Tuesday 9 am - 6 pm  
Wednesday 9:30 am - 12 pm  
Thursday 12 pm - 3 pm (Moved to Lower Concourse Level)  
6 pm - 7:30 pm

**EXHIBIT HALL (in the Sheraton Hall - Lower Concourse Level)**

Friday 3 pm - 11 pm (set-up only)  
Saturday 8 am - 12 pm (set-up only)  
1 pm - 8 pm (Exhibit Hall opens)  
Sunday 1 pm - 9 pm  
Monday 9:30 am - 9 pm  
Tuesday 8:30 am - 9 pm  
Wednesday 8:30 am - 9 pm  
Thursday 9:30 am - 11 am (Exhibit Hall closes)  
11 am - 1 pm (breakdown)

**AIRPORT SHUTTLE SERVICE RESERVATIONS**

Should be made at the hotel's concierge or bellhop desks before 12 pm on Thursday.  
(Reservations are necessary even if round-trip tickets were purchased in advance.)

## **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

### **Thursday, July 14, 2005**

4 pm Precovene Hotel Staff Meeting (Dufferin)  
7 pm Executive Board Dinner Meeting (Simcoe)

### **Friday, July 15, 2005**

7:30 am - 8:30 am Seminarian's Breakfast / Meeting (Gingersnap)  
7 am - 12 am PRE-COUNCIL SET-UP  
Chapel (Grand Ballroom West)  
Secretarial Room I (Huron)  
Secretarial Room II (Kent)  
Teens Plenary & Crash Room (Essex)  
Play Group Room (Conference D & E)  
Pre-Teens Room (Conference B & C)  
Kidz Room (Windsor)  
Young Adult Office (Suite Parlor # 2829)  
Young Adults Meeting Place (Spindrift/Spring Song)  
Vestry I (VIP)  
Vestry II (Vide Office)  
3 pm - 11 pm Exhibit and Display Hall Set-up (Sheraton Hall)  
3 pm - 12 am Council Registration Set-up (Concourse)  
3 pm - 12 am Banquet Reservations Set-up (Concourse)  
4 pm ARRIVAL OF METROPOLITAN HERMAN / WELCOME (Lobby)

## **Saturday, July 16, 2005**

- 8 am - 5:30 pm Military Chaplains Meeting (Gingersnap)  
BULGARIAN DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY  
(St. George Macedono-Bulgarian Church  
17 Regent St, Toronto, ON M5A 3N4)
- 8 am - 12 pm Exhibit and Display Hall Set-up (Sheraton Hall)  
1 pm - 8 pm Exhibit and Display Hall Opens (Sheraton Hall)  
1 pm - 10 pm Council Registration Stations open (Concourse)  
Banquet Reservations Stations open (Concourse)  
PRE-COUNCIL WORKSHOPS
- 1 pm - 3 pm 1. Understanding the Statutes (Dominion South)  
2. Preventing Sexual Misconduct (Civic South)
- 3 pm - 4:30 pm 3. Liturgical Music Workshop (Dominion South)  
4. Continuing Education for Clergy on Homiletics (Civic South)
- 6 pm GREAT VESPERS (Grand Ballroom West)  
8 pm Youth Activity Volunteer Meeting (Essex)  
8:30 pm Preconciliar Commission Meeting (Executive)  
10 pm Confessions (Grand Ballroom West)

## **Sunday, July 17, 2005**

- 8:30 am Staging Area: Clergy, Altar Boys, and all Children (City Hall)  
9:30 am Hierarchy's Staging Area: Procession (VIP)  
9:45 am Entrance of Hierarchs  
10 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy  
(Grand Ballroom West & Centre)
- 12:30 pm CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (for all in attendance)  
(Sheraton Hall, Grand Ballroom & Vida Foyers)
- 12:30 pm Holy Synod Breakfast (Grand Ballroom East)
- 1 pm - 9 pm Exhibit and Display Hall Open (Sheraton Hall)  
2 pm - 11 pm Council Registration Stations open (Concourse)  
2 pm - 11 pm Banquet Reservations Stations open (Concourse)  
2 pm - 4 pm Youth Activities Staff Meeting (Parlor # 2829)  
6 pm Great Vespers (Grand Ballroom West)  
7 pm - 8 pm Youth Activity Orientation - parents and participants (Essex Ballroom)  
7 pm Joint Dinner Meeting - Holy Synod of Bishops, Metropolitan Council and  
Preconciliar Commission (City Hall)
- 8 pm - 9 pm Youth Activity Volunteer Meeting (Conference B & C)  
8:30 pm - 10 pm WELCOME RECEPTION (for all council participants)  
(Waterfall Gardens & Civic Ballroom/Foyer)  
(rain location: Grand Ballroom & Vida Foyers)
- 9 pm - 12 pm Young Adults: Welcome Orientation and Reception (Spindrift/Spring Song)  
10 pm Confessions (Grand Ballroom West)



## Monday, July 18, 2005

- 7 am Vesting - Priests and Deacons (City Hall)  
Vesting - Hierarchs (VIP)
- 7:30 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy (Grand Ballroom)
- 9:30 am - 6 pm Council Registration Stations open (Concourse)  
Banquet Reservations Stations open (Concourse)
- 9:30 am - 9 pm Exhibit and Display Hall Open (Sheraton Hall)
- 9:45 am CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (for delegates and observers only)  
(Sheraton Hall & Grand Ballroom/Vida Foyers)
- 9:45 am - 10:30 am Institutional Chaplains Meeting (Executive)
- 10:15 am - 12:30 pm KIDZ - Become What You Are: Who am I? (Windsor)  
PRE TEENS - Become What You Are: Me...a Creation of GOD (Conference B & C)  
TEENS - Become What You Are: Inner Health (Essex & Conference F & G)
- 10:30 am - 12:30 pm PLAYGROUP - Become What You Are: We See the Church (Conference D & E)
- 10:30 am PLENARY SESSION I (Grand Ballroom)
- Opening Prayer
  - Call to Order
  - Preconciliar Commission Report
  - Council Organization "Getting the Most Out of the Council"
  - Address of the Primate
- 12:30 pm - 5 pm KIDZ - Ontario Science Center Outing  
PRE TEENS - Ontario Science Center Outing  
TEENS - Ontario Science Center Outing
- 1 pm - 2:30 pm LUNCH RECESS  
Department of Christian Education / Diocesan  
Representatives Meeting (Gingersnap)  
Ecumenical Guests Luncheon (Ice Palace)
- 1:30 - 2:30pm LUNCHEON FORUMS
1. How do I as an Orthodox Christian Evangelize? (Civic North)
  2. Hosting a Seminarian Intern: What It involves for a Parish (Civic South)
  3. A Pan-Orthodox Singles Group: It's Success in the DC Area (Dominion North)
  4. Tips for Healthy Christian Parenting (Dominion South)
  5. Worship and Pastoral Coverage in Times of War and Conflict: Accounts of Chaplains Recently Back from Afghanistan and Iraq (City Hall)
  6. A Parish Nursing Program: What It Is, Its Benefits, How to Organize It (Spindrift/Spring Song)
  7. Connecting Our Youth Across Parish Boundaries(Grand Ballroom)
- 2:45 pm PLENARY SESSION II (Grand Ballroom)
- Nomination Procedures
  - VISION and IDENTITY
- 3 pm - 4 pm YOUNG ADULTS - Keynote Presentation: Become What You Are!  
(Simcoe/Dufferin)
- 4 pm - 5 pm YOUNG ADULTS - Affinity Groups: networking/discussions (Simcoe/Dufferin)
- 6 pm Council Registration (Kent Room for the remainder of the week)  
Vespers (Grand Ballroom West)
- 6 pm - 10:30 pm YOUNG ADULTS - Dinner Cruise (meet in Lobby)

7 pm DINNER BREAK  
8:30 pm - 10 pm FOS Members Reception (Dominion Ballroom)  
9 pm - 12 am TEENS - Crash room (Essex)  
10 pm Nominating Committee (Executive)  
10:30 pm - 12 am YOUNG ADULTS - Meeting Place (Spindrift/Spring Song)

## **Tuesday, July 19, 2005**

7 am Vesting (VIP)  
7:30 am Matins (Grand Ballroom)  
8:30 am Clergy Wives / Hierarchs Breakfast (Dominion Ballroom North)  
Nominating Committee Breakfast Meeting (Executive)  
8:30 am - 9 pm Exhibit and Display Hall Open (Sheraton Hall)  
9 am - 6 pm Banquet Reservations Stations open (Concourse)  
9:30 am - 12:30 pm KIDZ - Become What You Are: A Member of the Church (Windsor)  
PRE-TEENS - Become What You Are: What is the Church? (Conference B & C)  
TEENS - Become What You Are: Holy in Body and Spirit (Essex & Conference F & G)  
9:45 am - 1 pm PLENARY SESSION III (Grand Ballroom)

- Summary Team Update
- Report of the Chancellor
- CLERGY FORMATION

10 am - 11 am YOUNG ADULTS:

- Equipping the Saints (Simcoe)
- Engaging Young Adult Ministries (Dufferin)

10:30 am - 12:30 pm PLAYGROUP - Become What You Are: We Feel the Church (Conference D & E)  
11 am - 12 pm YOUNG ADULTS:

- Equipping the Saints (Simcoe)
- Engaging Young Adult Ministries (Dufferin)

12 pm - 1 pm YOUNG ADULTS - Affinity Groups: networking/discussions (Simcoe/Dufferin)  
[or during a trip to Canada's Wonderland]  
12:30 pm - 8:30 pm KIDS - Ontario Place Outing  
PRE TEEN - Ontario Place Outing  
12:30 pm - 10 pm TEEN - Canada's Wonderland Outing  
YOUNG ADULT - Canada's Wonderland Outing  
1 pm - 2:30 pm LUNCH RECESS  
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm LUNCHEON FORUMS

1. "Chew and Chat" about Christian Education (Civic North)
2. Strengthening the Parish Family (Civic South)
3. Sanctity of Life Issues: From Conception to Death (Dominion North)
4. The Place of Technology in the Church (Dominion South)
5. Parish and Pan-Orthodox Outreach to the Hungry and Homeless (City Hall)
6. Overcoming Hurdles in Developing Parish Ministries (Spindrift/Spring Song)
7. Engaging Young Adults in Church Life (Grand Ballroom)
8. The OCA Pension Plan: The Latest Information (Long Bar)

- 2:45 pm        PLENARY SESSION IV (Grand Ballroom)
- Nominations
  - CLERGY FORMATION
  - The Dioceses of the Orthodox Church in America
- 6 pm            AKATHIST TO ALL SAINTS OF NORTH AMERICA (Grand Ballroom)
- 7 pm            DINNER BREAK
- 8:30 pm        KIDZ - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers (Essex)
- 8:30 pm        PRE TEENS - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers (Essex)
- 10 pm          TEENS - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers (Essex)
- 10 pm          YOUNG ADULTS - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers (Essex)
- 8:30 pm - 10 pm St. Tikhon's Seminary Alumni Association Reception (Civic Ballroom)
- 8:30 pm - 10 pm St. Vladimir's Seminary Alumni Association Reception (Dominion Ballroom)
- 10:30 pm - 12 am TEENS - Crash room (Essex)
- 10:30 pm - 12 am YOUNG ADULT - Meeting Place (Spindrift/Spring Song)

### Wednesday, July 20, 2005

- 7 am            Vesting (VIP)
- 7:30 am        Matins (Grand Ballroom)
- 8:30 am        Nominating Committee Breakfast Meeting (Executive)
- 8:30 am - 9 pm Exhibit and Display Hall Open (Sheraton Hall)
- 9:30 am -12 pm Banquet Reservations Stations open (Concourse)
- 9:30 am -12:30 pm KIDZ - Become What You Are: What God Wants Me to Do (Windsor)
- PRE-TEENS - Become What You Are: Gifts from God (Conference B & C)
- TEENS - Become What You Are: Stewards of the Mysteries of God (Essex and Conference F & G)
- 9:45 am - 1 pm PLENARY SESSION V (Grand Ballroom)
- Summary Team Update
  - EVANGELIZATION
- Workshops: Evangelization
1. Civic North
  2. Civic South
  3. Dominion North
  4. Spindrift/Spring Song
- Workshops: Parish Health
1. Dominion South
  2. City Hall
  3. Long Bar
  4. Grand Ballroom
- 10 am - 10:50 am YOUNG ADULTS
- Workshop - Healing Soul and Body (Gingersnap)
  - Workshop - Engaging Prayer and Spiritual Life (Ice Palace)
- 10:30 am - 12:30 pm PLAYGROUP - Become What You Are: We Hear the Church (Conference D & E)
- 11 am - 11:50 am YOUNG ADULTS
- Workshop - Healing Soul and Body (Gingersnap)
  - Workshop - Engaging Prayer and Spiritual Life (Ice Palace)
- 12 am - 1 pm    YOUNG ADULTS - Affinity Groups: networking/discussions (Executive)

12:30 am - 8 pm KIDS - Canada's Wonderland Water Park outing  
 PRE TEEN - Canada's Wonderland Water Park outing  
 TEEN - Canada's Wonderland Water Park outing

12:15 pm - 7:30 pm YOUNG ADULTS - St. John The Compassionate Mission Soup Kitchen  
 (meet in Lobby)

1 pm FREE TIME (afternoon & evening)

2 pm - 6 pm SOUTH DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY (Civic Ballroom South)

2:30 pm - 6 pm MIDWEST DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY (Dominion Ballroom North)

6 pm Vespers, followed by confessions (Grand Ballroom West)

7 pm CANADIAN ARCHDIOCESAN ASSEMBLY/BANQUET  
 (Dominion Ballroom South)

8 pm KIDS - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers (Essex)  
 PRE TEENS - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers (Essex)  
 TEENS - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers (Essex)  
 YOUNG ADULTS - Evening Prayers: youth and young adult observers  
 (Essex)

9 pm - 12 am TEENS - Crash room (Essex)  
 YOUNG ADULT - Reception by FOCA (Spindrift/Spring Song)

Thursday, July 21, 2005

7 am Vesting - Priests and Deacons (City Hall)  
 Vesting - Hierarchs (VIP)

7:30 am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy (Grand Ballroom)

8 am - 3 pm YOUNG ADULTS - St. John The Compassionate Mission Soup Kitchen  
 (meet in lobby)

9:30 am - 11 am Exhibit and Display Hall Open (Sheraton Hall)  
 (The Exhibit Hall closes at 11am for breakdown)

9:45 am CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (for delegates and observers only)  
 (Sheraton Hall, Grand Ballroom/Vida Foyers)

9:45 am - 10:15 am Nominating Committee Breakfast Meeting (Executive)

10 am - 10:50 am YOUNG ADULTS:

- Workshop - Faith and Finances (Gingersnap)
- Workshop - Love and Marriage (Ice Palace)

10:15 am - 12:30 pm KIDZ - Become What You Are: Healthy Inside and Out (Windsor)  
 PRE-TEENS - Become What You Are: Becoming Spiritually Fit (Conference  
 B & C)  
 TEENS - Become What You Are: Witness to Heaven  
 (Essex & Conference F & G)

10:30 am - 12:30 pm PLAYGROUP - Become What You Are: We Smell the Church  
 (Long Bar)

10:30 am PLENARY SESSION VI (Grand Ballroom)

- Summary Team Update
- Elections
- ORTHODOX RELATIONS

11 am - 11:50 am YOUNG ADULTS:

- Workshop - Faith and Finances (Gingersnap)
- Workshop - Love and Marriage (Ice Palace)

12 pm - 1 pm YOUNG ADULTS - Affinity Groups: networking/discussions (Executive)

12 pm - 3 pm	Banquet Reservations Stations open (moved to the Lower Concourse)
12:30 pm - 10:30 pm	KIDS - Youth Banquet at Niagara Falls PRE TEENS - Youth Banquet at Niagara Falls TEENS - Youth Banquet at Niagara Falls
1 pm - 2:30 pm	LUNCH RECESS
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	LUNCHEON FORUMS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Parish Learns Together: Sessions for All-Parish Education (Civic North)</li> <li>2. Working with New Immigrants in the Parish (Civic South)</li> <li>3. Conflict Management: How to Deal with Challenging People (Dominion North)</li> <li>4. Overcoming Stress, Depression, Addictions through Faith (Dominion South)</li> <li>5. Orthodox Prison Ministry: How a Parish Can Become Involved (City Hall)</li> <li>6. Retirees: a Golden Source for Ministries (Spindrift/Spring Song)</li> <li>7. The Church Choir: Sharing Needs, Challenges, Tools for Growth (Grand Ballroom)</li> </ol>
2:45 pm - 4:30 pm	PLENARY SESSION VII (Grand Ballroom) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the Treasurer</li> <li>• Fair Share</li> <li>• Election Results</li> </ul>
5 pm	Vespers (Grand Ballroom West)
6 pm - 7:15 pm	Banquet Reservations Stations open (Lower Concourse)
6 pm	Grand Reception (Grand Ballroom & Vida Foyers)
7:15 pm	Grand Banquet Seating VIP Procession into Banquet Ballroom
7:30 pm	GRAND BANQUET (Grand Ballroom)
10:30 pm - 12 am	TEENS - Crash room (Essex) YOUNG ADULT - Meeting Place (Spindrift/Spring Song)

### Friday, July 22, 2005

7 am	Vesting (VIP)
7:30 am	Matins (Grand Ballroom)
9:30 am - 1 pm	KIDZ - Become What You Are: Final Presentation and Presentation to Council (Windsor) PRE TEENS - Become What You Are: What am I meant to be? and Presentation to Council (Conference B & C) TEENS - Become What You Are: O Lord, Transform the World & Presentation to Council (Essex & Conference F & G)
9:45 am - 1 pm	PLENARY SESSION VII (Grand Ballroom) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary Group Report: "Looking Forward"</li> <li>• Youth Presentation</li> <li>• Installation and Closing Prayer</li> </ul>
10:30 am - 12:30 pm	PLAYGROUP - Become What You Are: We Taste the Church (Conference D & E)
1 pm	Joint Lunch Meeting - Holy Synod of Bishops and Metropolitan Council (Dominion North)

Pre-teens (Ages 10-12)

Sunday July 17

8:30 am Meet for Procession (City Hall)  
9:45am Entrance of Hierarchs and Divine Liturgy (Grand Ballroom West&Centre)  
12:30pm Continental Breakfast (Sheraton Hall, Grand Ballroom & Vida Foyers)  
2:00 - 11:00pm Registration  
7:00 - 8:00pm Orientation for Parents and Youth Observers (Essex)  
10:00pm Confessions (Grand Ballroom West)

Monday July 18

7:30am Divine Liturgy(Grand Ballroom)  
10:15 - 12:30pm Become what you are: Session 1 (Conference B&C)  
12:30 - 5:00pm Ontario Science Center  
6:00p.m Vespers (Grand Ballroom West)

Tuesday July 19

7:30am Matins (Grand Ballroom)  
9:30 - 12:30pm Become what you are:Session 2 (Conference B&C)  
12:30 - 8:30pm Ontario Place  
8:30 pm Evening Prayers (Essex)

Wednesday July 20

7:30am Matins (Grand Ballroom)  
9:30 - 12:30pm Become what you are: Session 3 (Conference B&C)  
12:30 - 8:00pm Canada's Wonderland Waterpark  
8:00pm Evening Prayers (Essex)

Thursday July 21

7:30am Divine Liturgy (Grand Ballroom)  
10:15 - 12:30pm Become what you are: Session 4 (Conference B&C)  
12:30 - 10:30pm Youth Banquet at Niagra Falls

Friday July 22

7:30am Matins (Grand Ballroom)  
9:30 - 1:00pm Become what you are: Session 5 (Conference B&C)  
Youth Presentation to Council

Young Adults (18-27)

Sunday July 17

8:30 am Meet for Procession (City Hall)  
9:45am Entrance of Hierarchs and Divine Liturgy (Grand Ballroom West&Centre)  
12:30pm Continental Breakfast (Sheraton Hall, Grand Ballroom & Vida Foyers)  
2:00 - 11:00pm Registration  
8:30 - 10:00pm General Council Reception (Waterfall Gardens & Civic Ballroom)  
9:00-12:00am Young Adult Orientation and Welcome Reception (Spindrift/Spring Song)

Monday July 18

7:30am Divine Liturgy (Grand Ballroom)  
3:00 - 4:00pm Keynote:Become what you are (Simcoe/Dufferin)

4:00-5:00pm Affinity Groups: networking/ discussion (Simcoe/Dufferin)  
6:00-10:30pm Dinner Cruise (Meet in Lobby)  
10:30 - 12:00am Meeting Place(Spindrift/Spring Song)

Tuesday July 19

7:30am Matins (Grand Ballroom)  
10:00 - 12:30pm Workshops (Simcoe/Dufferin)  
12:30 - 10:00pm Paramount Canada's Wonderland  
10:00 pm Evening Prayers (Essex)  
10:30 - 12:00am Meeting Place(Spindrift/Spring Song)

Wednesday July 20

7:30am Matins (Grand Ballroom)  
10:00 - 12:00pm Workshops (Gingersnap/Ice Palace)  
12:00 - 1:00pm Affinity Groups (Executive)  
12:15 -7:30pm St. John the Compassionate Soup Kitchen: Group 1 (Meet in Lobby)  
6:00 p.m. Vespers/Confessions (Grand Ballroom)  
8:00 - 12:00am Reception sponsored by FOCA (Spindrift/Spring Song)

Thursday July 21

7:30am Divine Liturgy (Grand Ballroom)  
8:00 - 3:00 pm St John the Compassionate Soup Kitchen:Group 2 (Meet in Lobby)  
10:00 - 12:00pm Workshops (Gingersnap/Ice Palace)  
12:00 - 1:00pm Affinity Groups (Gingersnap)  
5:00pm Vespers (Grand Ballroom)  
6:00pm Grand Reception and Banquet  
10:30 - 12:00am Meeting Place (Spindrift/Spring Song)

Friday July 22

7:30am Matins (Grand Ballroom)  
9:30-1:00pm Final Plenary Session and Presentation to Council (Grand Ballroom)

## **Council Participants**

### **Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America**

The Most Blessed HERMAN (Swaiko)  
Archbishop of Washington and New York  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

The Most Reverend KYRILL (Yonchev)  
Archbishop of Pittsburgh  
Diocese of Western PA and the Bulgarian Diocese

The Most Reverend DMITRI (Royster)  
Archbishop of Dallas  
Diocese of the South  
Exarch of Mexico

The Most Reverend NATHANIEL (Popp)  
Archbishop of Detroit  
Romanian Episcopate

The Right Reverend JOB (Osacky)  
Bishop of Chicago  
Diocese of Midwest

The Right Reverend TIKHON (Fitzgerald)  
Bishop of San Francisco and Los Angeles  
Diocese of the West

The Right Reverend SERAPHIM (Storheim)  
Bishop of Ottawa  
Archdiocese of Canada

The Right Reverend NIKOLAI (Soraich)  
Bishop of Sitka, Anchorage and Alaska  
Diocese of Alaska

The Right Reverend NIKON (Liolin)  
Bishop of Boston  
Albanian Archdiocese

The Right Reverend TIKHON (Mollard)  
Bishop of Philadelphia  
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania



### **Auxillary Bishops**

The Right Reverend Irineu (Duvlea)  
Bishop of Dearborn Heights  
Romanian Episcopate

The Right Reverend Benjamin (Peterson)  
Bishop of Berkeley  
Diocese of the West

The Right Reverend Alejo ((Pacheco -Vera)  
Bishop of Mexico City  
Exarchcate of Mexico

### **Retired Bishops**

The Most Reverend Lazar (Puhalo)  
Former Archbishop of Ottawa

The Right Reverend Mark (Forsburg)  
Former Bishop of Boston



## Clergy Delegates

Fr. James (Bohlman)  
*St. Mary Magdalene  
Mission*  
Rincon, GA

Fr. Isidore (Brittain)  
*St. Innocent Cathedral*  
Anchorage, AK

Fr. Christopher (Calin)  
*Cathedral of the Holy  
Virgin Protection*  
New York, NY

Fr. Patrick (Carpenter)  
*Holy Assumption of St.  
Mary Church*  
Pittsburgh, PA

Fr. Sergios (Gerken)  
*Holy Assumption Monastery*  
Calistoga, CA

Fr. Damian (Gibault)  
*Monastery of the Most Holy  
Theotokos*  
Weaverville, NC

Fr. Joseph (Hoffman)  
*Church of the Holy  
Transfiguration*  
Pearl River, NY

Fr. Nicholas A (Iuhos)  
*St. Basil Church*  
Watervliet, NY

Fr. David (Lewis)  
*St. Michael Church*  
Irvona, PA

Fr. Jonah (Paffhausen)  
*Monastery of St. John of  
Shanghai and San  
Francisco*  
Point Reyes Station, CA

Fr. Iriney (Rochon)  
*St. Seraphim Church*  
Rawdon, QC

Fr. Christopher (Savage)  
*Monks of New Skete*  
Cambridge, NY

Fr. Philip (Speranza)  
*Holy Trinity Church*  
Edmonton, AB

Fr. Vladimir (Wendling)  
*St. George Cathedral*  
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*St. Catherine Church*  
Moscow, Russia

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Fr. Thomas Alessandrini  
*Mission of the Synaxis of the  
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*Church of the Holy Trinity*  
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*St. Michael the Archangel  
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Wilmington, DE

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Adult and Campus Ministry*  
Syosset, NY

Fr. John Edwards Anderson  
Ch MAJ USA  
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Fr. Jonah A Andrew  
*Holy Ascension of Our Lord  
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Unalaska, AK

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*Holy Assumption of the  
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Kenai, AK

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Fr. John (Richard L)  
Armstrong  
*St. Herman of Alaska  
Church*  
Littleton, CO

Fr. David F Arnold  
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*Nativity of the Virgin Mary  
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*Military Chaplaincy*

Fr. John Behr  
*St. Vladimir's Orthodox  
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*Theotokos "Unexpected  
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Ash Grove, MO

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*St. Innocent Church*  
Tarzana, CA

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*St. George Church*  
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*Annunciation Church*  
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Fr. David A Brum  
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Old Forge, PA

Fr. John Mancantelli  
*St. Nicholas of South  
Canaan Church*  
Billings, MT

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Summit, IL

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Livonia, MI

Fr. John J Matusiak  
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Wheaton, IL

Fr. John Maxwell  
*SS. George and Alexandra  
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Fort Smith, AR

Fr. Robert K McMeekin  
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Wrightstown, PA

Miss Kelly Mravetz  
*Holy Trinity Church*  
Parma, OH

Miss Rebecca Mravetz  
*Holy Trinity Church*  
Parma, OH

Mr. John Myers  
*St. Nicholas Church*  
Fort Wayne, IN

Miss Gretchen Myers  
*St. Nicholas Church*  
Fort Wayne, IN

Miss Brigitta Myers  
*St. John the Wonderworker Church*  
Atlanta, GA

Miss Gabrielle Elizabeth Myers  
*St. John the Wonderworker Church*  
Atlanta, GA

Mr. Eddie Northrup  
*St. Panteleimon's Church*  
Summit, IL

Miss Keeley Rae O'Brien  
*Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church*  
Monongahela, PA

Mr. Ehren O'Brien  
*Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church*  
Monongahela, PA

Mr. Gregory Oleynik  
*St. John the Baptist Church*  
Canonsburg, PA

Miss Alexandra Oleynik  
*St. John the Baptist Church*  
Canonsburg, PA

Miss Zoe Sophia Olson  
*Military Chaplaincy*

Miss Alexandra Olson  
*Military Chaplaincy*

Miss Sondra Palivoda  
*Holy Trinity Church*  
Parma, OH

Mr. Bill Paluch  
*St. Elias Church*  
Akron, OH

Miss Cristina Perdomo  
*St. George the Great Martyr Church*  
Pharr, TX

Miss Rosamarie Perdomo  
*St. George the Great Martyr Church*  
Pharr, TX

Mr. Steven Pisarchuk  
*St. Justin Martyr Church*  
Jacksonville, FL

Mr. Christopher Pisarchuk  
*St. Justin Martyr Church*  
Jacksonville, FL

Mr. Roman Piwinski  
*Holy Trinity Church*  
Yonkers, NY

Miss Christianna Piwinski  
*Holy Trinity Church*  
Yonkers, NY

Mr. Alexander Puzza  
*St. Gregory the Theologian Church*  
Wappingers Falls, NY

Miss Rachel Puzza  
*St. Gregory the Theologian Church*  
Wappingers Falls, NY

Miss Presley J Randall  
*Holy Apostles Church*  
Columbia, SC

Mr. Dimitri G Ressetar  
*Christ the Saviour Church*  
Harrisburg, PA

Miss Sophia Ressetar  
*Christ the Saviour Church*  
Harrisburg, PA

Ms. Alexa Rhodes  
*St. Herman of Alaska Church*  
Gradyville, PA

Mr. Steven Roberts  
*St. John the Theologian Church*  
Shirley, NY

Ms. Juliana Rodger  
*Annunciation to the Theotokos / St. Nicholas Cath.*  
Ottawa, ON

Mr. Ethan D Rucker  
*St. Athanasius Church*  
Nicholasville, KY

Mr. Andrew M Rucker  
*St. Athanasius Church*  
Nicholasville, KY

Mr. Benjamin Safchuk  
*St. Mark Church*  
Bethesda, MD

Mr. Alexander Safchuk  
*St. Mark Church*  
Bethesda, MD

Mr. Alexander Sak  
*St. Mary Magdalene Mission*  
Fenton, MI

Miss Natalia Sak  
*St. Mary Magdalene Mission*  
Fenton, MI

Mr. Roman Sapozhnikov  
*St. Seraphim Mission*  
Toronto, ON

Mr. Nikodemos Schaplowsky  
*St. Nektarios Mission Station*  
Red Deer, AB

Mr. Symeon Schaplowsky  
*St. Nektarios Mission Station*  
Red Deer, AB

Mr. George Catalin Serban  
*St. Peter the Aleut Church*  
Calgary, AB

Miss Irina Shak  
*St. Nicholas Church*  
Cohoes, NY

Mr. Michael Shimchick  
*Church of the Holy Cross*  
Cherry Hill, NJ

Mr. Christopher Shimchick  
*Church of the Holy Cross*  
Cherry Hill, NJ

Miss Elena Shortes  
*St. Mark of Ephesus Mission*  
Kingston, MA

Mr. Evan Andrew Shortes  
*St. Mark of Ephesus Mission*  
Kingston, MA

Miss Anna Marie Shortes  
*St. Mark of Ephesus Mission*  
Kingston, MA

Miss Elisabeta Shteto  
*St. Peter the Aleut Church*  
Calgary, AB

Miss Pranvera Shteto  
*St. Peter the Aleut Church*  
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Mr. Damian Sidorski  
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*Transfiguration of Our Lord*  
Brooklyn, NY

Miss Olga Skarina  
*St. John the Theologian*  
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Shirley, NY

Mr. Justin Solak  
*The Sign of the Theotokos*  
*Church*  
Montreal, QC

Miss Lexi Solak  
*The Sign of the Theotokos*  
*Church*  
Montreal, QC

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Miss Emma Mary Solak  
*Holy Trinity Church*  
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Miss Daria Tilimpea  
*St. Peter the Aleut Church*  
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Mr. Giorgio Tomasi  
*Mission of "Joy of All Who*  
*Sorrow"*  
Culver City, CA

Mr. John Tomasi  
*Mission of "Joy of All Who*  
*Sorrow"*  
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Mr. Joshua Tosi  
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Miss Olivia van den Berg  
*St. Stephen the Protomartyr*  
*Church*  
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Miss Sarah Varian  
*St. Mary's Cathedral*  
Minneapolis, MN

Mr. Alexander Vernak  
*Christ the Saviour Church*  
Paramus, NJ

Mr. Alexander Vlachos  
*Christ the Saviour Church*  
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Miss Anastasia Wargo  
*St. Gregory of Nyssa*  
*Church*  
Columbus, OH

Miss Kyra Wilson  
*St. Joseph Church*  
Wheaton, IL

Mr. Greg Wilson  
*St. Joseph Church*  
Wheaton, IL

Miss Natasha Wusylko  
*St. Alexander Nevsky*  
*Cathedral*  
Allison Park, PA

Miss Anna Yates  
*St. Mark Church*  
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Miss Uliana Yerokhina  
*St. John the Theologian*  
*Church*  
Shirley, NY

Mr. Vladislav Yurin  
*St. Andrew the First Called*  
*Church*  
New Port Richey, FL

Miss Kathryn Zayan  
*St. Mary Magdalene*  
*Mission*  
Fenton, MI

Miss Kelly Ann Zayan  
*St. Mary Magdalene*  
*Mission*  
Fenton, MI

Mr. Michael Zebrun  
*St. Barbara Mission*  
Fort Worth, TX

Mr. Grygoriy Zolotarev  
*St. Seraphim Mission*  
Toronto, ON

# Council Overview

## Introduction

This document provides a review of the goals of the 14th All-American Council. It summarizes the keynote addresses, workshops, parish profile results, luncheon forums, youth activities, summary team efforts, and other activities held during the week of the Council. The official minutes provide more additional information on the plenary sessions and decisions and appointments for Council assignments.

**The agenda, plenary sessions, and other activities of the 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council were developed in light of the Council's stated goals.**

### Our Church and the Future 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council Goals

- a. to improve our understanding of a vision of the indigenous Orthodox Church in North America.
- b. to learn how to effectively and respectfully dialogue about the dimensions of different issues affecting the life of our Church.
- c. to discern and define the top three priorities/challenges facing our Church in the next 10 years.**
- d. to define what North American "Expressions of Orthodoxy" look like.
- e. to align the agenda activities of the departments of the OCA with the above-identified priorities.

The All-American Council held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, July 17-22, 2005, was the 14<sup>th</sup> since the reception of autocephaly by the Orthodox Church in America in 1970. It was the second All-American Council to be held in Canada. The All-American Council is the continuation of the tradition initiated by Saint Tikhon, who convened the First All-American Sobor in 1907. According to the *Statute of the Orthodox Church in America*, the All-American Council is the highest legislative organ of the Church. Its decisions are subject to approval by the Holy Synod of Bishops.

The Council theme, "Our Church and the Future," revealed another step in the growth and ongoing maturation of the Orthodox Church in America as it continues to proclaim the Gospel and minister in the name of Christ at the beginning of its third century on the North American continent.

The 14<sup>th</sup> All-American Council opened with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops of The Orthodox Church in America on Sunday, July 17, 2005. An estimated 1,100 clergy and faithful, including many from Toronto-area parishes, attended the Liturgy, thereby

placing the work of the Council within the context of the Church's liturgical worship. Nearly 1,200 hierarchs, clergy and lay delegates, and observers participated in the Council, while over 250 children, teens, and young adults participated in the Council's youth programs and activities.

In a series of daily plenary sessions, delegates considered five essential aspects, or "pillars," of Church life – vision and identity as the Orthodox Church in America; relations with others, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox; clergy formation and development; parish health; and evangelization in North America – each of which was associated with the overall Council theme, "Our Church and the Future."

The Council's preparatory study papers and documents were based on the opinions, expertise, and experience of some 40 hierarchs, members of the clergy, and lay men and women who assisted in the drafting process. These resources elaborated on the five "pillars" noted above and served as the foundation for the Council's plenary sessions, discussions, and workshops.

**METROPOLITAN HERMAN, CHANCELLOR, ADDRESS COUNCIL.** In his opening address to the Council, Metropolitan Herman emphasized that while the Orthodox Church in America has a long history, as evidenced in this year's celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery and the 35th anniversaries of the granting of autocephaly and the glorification of Saint Herman of Alaska, the future course of the Church begs the "responsible and right-ordered participation of the entire People of God in the Church's life and work."

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

Metropolitan Herman further shared his ministry since his election as the Church's Primate in 2002, focusing on his archpastoral visits across North America, his efforts to maintain and strengthen relationships with the sister Orthodox Churches around the world, and his concern for a variety of issues, including ecumenical relations, youth, the internet, theological education, and parish life.

In his concluding remarks, Metropolitan Herman encouraged Council participants to embrace a "greater appreciation of our identity and a stronger affirmation of who we are and who we are called to be" by recognizing that the OCA "has been greatly blessed by the lives, labors, and holy examples of many saints."

In his address to the Council, Protopresbyter Robert Kondratich, the OCA's chancellor, echoed many of the themes expressed by Metropolitan Herman. He offered the personal legacies of numerous hierarchs, clergy, and lay persons who had rendered outstanding service to the Church in North America during its two centuries of witness to the Faith as a challenge for renewed enthusiasm for the work and life of the Church.

Father Kondratich also reported on the work of the Chancery and its staff and commended the nearly 300 individuals who, on *voluntary basis*, serve the Church's departments, boards, and commissions. In addressing concerns expressed with regard to the Church's finances, he noted that the decrease in contributions is not something unique to the OCA; rather, the trend has affected virtually every faith community and nonprofit organization due to a variety of factors and economic trends. He also addressed issues related to the OCA's transparency, inter-Orthodox and ecumenical relations, parish and mission development, clergy pensions, the internet, and matters related to abuse.

The full report of Metropolitan Herman and Father Kondratick can be accessed at the OCA web site: [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org).

**DELEGATES SCRUTINIZE FIVE CRITICAL AREAS OF CHURCH LIFE.** The bulk of the remaining plenary sessions were devoted to the five “pillars” upon which the Council theme was built. In each instance, panel presentations on each pillar were offered, after which delegates participated in workshops and offered a wide range of reactions, recommendations, and ideas for strengthening the life of the Church, which were synthesized by a summary team in regular reports at the beginning of each session. Both large group and smaller breakout session workshops were held with great delegate and observer participation.

**Vision and identity.** Consistent with references in the addresses of Metropolitan Herman and Father Kondratick to the “missionary legacy” of The Orthodox Church in America, delegates expressed a vision of the Church as essentially missionary, one by which the fullness of the Gospel was brought to North America to be proclaimed, rather than preserved. While the missionary imperative finds its roots in Alaska, it is also discovered in the work of Saint Alexis Toth, the vision of the late Metropolitan Leonty, who consistently referred to the Church in North America as “the Mission,” and the ongoing work to revitalize older parishes while planting new communities, especially in regions which in the past had little or no Orthodox presence.

At the same plenary session, Protopresbyter Daniel Hubiak and Dr. Constantine Kallaur, both of whom were among the delegation that received the Tomos of Autocephaly in 1970, highlighted the path The Orthodox Church in America has taken during the past 35 years. In a discussion conducted by a panel consisting of His Grace, Bishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada, and two senior Archpriests, Sergei Glagolev and Vladimir Berzonsky, considerations on the Church’s vision and identity, especially as it relates to the Church’s ongoing ministry in North America, were offered. Delegates then participated in table workshops addressing several questions related to this theme.

**Clergy formation and development.** In workshops following a presentation on issues related to clergy formation and development, delegates lodged strong, yet positive, opinions and observations. The central and traditional role of seminary training was affirmed, along with the importance of providing appropriate funding for theological students, the eventual goal being full funding. Many delegates offered proposals for continuing education, distance learning and satellite programs, and other forms of ongoing formation. Of special interest was an emphasis on pastoral rather than theoretical skill building, resource sharing, mentoring, and internship programs for seminarians. Many delegates expressed serious concern for the reestablishment of the summer internship program, suspended in 2005 due to diminished free-will offerings.

Prior to workshops on this theme, a panel consisting of Archpriests Chad Hatfield, Michael Dahulich, and Prof. John Erickson, the deans of Saint Herman, Saint Tikhon’s, and Saint Vladimir’s seminaries respectively, offered insights into various aspects of clergy formation and development. Priest Jonathan Ivanoff amplified their observations by providing statistical information on clergy age, anticipated retirements, and related demographics.

**Parish Health and Evangelization.** Archpriest Daniel Kovalak opened a plenary session with a presentation on issues related to parish health and evangelization. Sharing their experience and opinions on proven and effective strategies for identifying, creating, and implementing ministries in these areas were Archpriests Theodore Bobosh and Ian MacKinnon, Priest Thomas Soroka, Michelle

Jannakos, and Mary Ann Lopoukhine, with Archpriest William Evansky serving as moderator. Priest Eric Tosi reviewed the success of the Church Planting Grant Program and reported on a number of evangelization and mission initiatives.

In the workshops that followed, delegates stressed the importance of education and formation for clergy and laity alike as foundations for successful evangelization and the health of parish communities. As in the workshops on clergy formation, strong feelings were expressed with regard to the need for experiential and practical, skill-based education for every member of the Church, regardless of level or age. Regular personal contact among members of the Church to share skills, provide mentorship and direction, and receive and offer spiritual and pastoral care was also emphasized. In connection with this, the talents of retired clergy were acknowledged, with many suggesting that they be called upon to share their experience in a variety of areas that would benefit parishes and individuals alike.

Numerous delegates also noted the need for sensitivity with regard to multi-cultural ministry and evangelization, not only to traditionally Orthodox cultural/linguistic groups, but also to the Hispanic, Asian-American, and African-American communities. It was interesting to hear numerous delegates relate their experiences in successfully opening their parishes to neighborhood groups and the broader communities in which they exist rather than abandoning the “old neighborhoods” altogether. Similar experiences were shared in a luncheon forum, one of several conducted throughout the week, on ministering to the needs of immigrants and minorities.

**Relations with Orthodox and non-Orthodox.** In the workshops that followed the plenary session at which The Orthodox Church in America’s relations with other Orthodox Churches and non-Orthodox faith communities was discussed, the delegates clearly noted that parish health and successful evangelistic ministries couldn’t be pursued independently of the quest for Orthodox unity in North America. While the importance of inter-Orthodox cooperation in the quest for administrative unity in North America surfaced as a central concern, the reality – that such unity is not likely in the immediate future – should not hinder the work of the local parishes in developing and strengthening cooperative efforts and ministries in an effort to proclaim and witness to the Gospel.

In the area of ecumenical relations, concerns over the Church’s participation in agencies such as the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches were expressed. It was noted that such matters remain within the competency of the Holy Synod of Bishops. In his presentation, Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky, Assistant to the Chancellor for External Affairs and Inter-Church Relations, echoed the sentiment expressed in Metropolitan Herman’s opening address, in which he recognized the tensions that exist as a result of the Church’s participation in ecumenical organizations while expressing even greater concern for the Church’s responsibility to proclaim the fullness of the Gospel. He also described the connections between the ecumenical participation of most of the Orthodox Churches, both in North America and globally, and the Orthodox Churches’ common witness and common theological voice in ecumenical organizations and events. He noted that ecumenical participation certainly requires careful consideration and discernment. As further proof of our historic commitment to this task, it was reported that the Holy Synod of Bishops had blessed the OCA’s participation as a founding member of Christian Churches Together, thereby providing yet another opportunity to proclaim the Gospel on this continent. It was noted that in the Tomos of Autocephaly, the OCA is charged to “maintain direct relations with all other churches and confessions, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike.”

Prior to the workshops, delegates viewed a nine-minute video in which His Grace, Bishop Basil of Wichita of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, shared his thoughts on varied aspects of Orthodox unity in North America. (Unable to accept the invitation to address the Council in person, Bishop Basil taped his presentation in advance.) The video presentation was well received by the delegates and offered additional food for thought on this “pillar.”

A panel, moderated by David Wagschal, also prepared the delegates for the workshop that followed. Panelists included His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate; Bishop Seraphim; Archpriests Leonid Kishkovsky and Andrew Morbey; Dr. Peter Bouteneff; and Dr. Richard Schneider.

**The Summary Team.** For the first time at an All-American Council, a summary team systematically gathered information on the Council’s daily proceedings, which they reported at the opening of the next day’s plenary session. Appointed at the request of the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops and the Preconciliar Commission, the summary team included several clergy and lay men and women, chaired by Valerie Zahirsky and David Wagschal.

**SUMMARY TEAM FINDINGS.** While no specific resolutions were presented to Council delegates, a number of serious proposals and ideas were shared in a final presentation offered by the Summary Team. While lack of sufficient funding surfaced as the main obstacle to accomplishing many of the Church’s goals, delegates did offer specific long- and short-range proposals in three broad areas.

**Education and Formation.** With funding an ongoing obstacle for many wishing to pursue theological educations, especially as the number of married students continues to grow, delegates recommended that within five to ten years, full funding for all seminarians studying for the priesthood should be available. Delegates also shared strong feelings for the development of skill-based educational resources and mentoring and internship programs, adding that within ten years such programs should become a normal part of clergy formation. Delegates offered two recommendations that could be implemented within the next three years: the creation of national “Orthodox Life” conferences and the establishment of an ongoing pastoral education and care program directed by seasoned clergy. The revival of the summer internship program was recommended as a priority that could be implemented within the next three months. It also was recommended that the development of the means to implement the long and short-range proposals be referred to the Department of Christian Education.

**Orthodox Unity.** Four general recommendations emerged within the area of Orthodox unity. Delegates reaffirmed the role of The Orthodox Church in America as a leading voice for Orthodox unity. They also recommitted themselves to the prayerful support of Metropolitan Herman and the members of the Holy Synod in their ongoing efforts to promote Orthodox unity. The development of inter-Orthodox collaboration, especially on the local level, was affirmed as a principle of action. Delegates also recommended that the bilateral commission between the Orthodox Church in America and the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America be reestablished.

**Mission.** While delegates affirmed the missionary nature of the Church and, as a long-range goal, proposed establishment of 50 new missions and 50 revitalized parishes within the next five to ten years, the establishment of a national evangelization program topped the list of proposals delegates felt could be reasonably implemented. Other proposals included the introduction of courses on mission into the seminary curriculum, the appointment of mission directors in every diocese, and an

increased visibility and profile for the OCA's annual mission appeal. Consideration of mission as the theme of the 15th All-American Council was also proposed. It was also recommended that the Department of Evangelization develop specific recommendations to implement these long- and short-range goals before the 2005 fall session of the Holy Synod.

**FINANCES AND THE FAIR SHARE PROPOSAL** An entire plenary session was devoted to funding the vision and ongoing mission of the Church. Archpriest John Dresko, chairman of the Department of Stewardship, offered a presentation on the Church's financial needs and the proposed 2006 budget of \$2,600,000. He stressed that insufficient funding limits the implementation of the Church's vision and mission and generates deficits due to a lack of adequate income for necessary as well as unavoidable expenditures. In line with the report of Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky, treasurer, he reported that deficit reduction and repayment of borrowed funds are important issues.

## **OTHER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS**

**Liturgical Services.** The celebration of daily Vespers, Matins, and the Divine Liturgy provided the essential context in which the Council's deliberations and sessions took place and served as a tangible reminder that, above all else, God's people are a worshipping people. Daily sermons challenged delegates and observers to deepen their commitment to Christ and His Body, the Church, while Scripture readings set the tone for each plenary session. Council participants also sang the Akathistos Hymn in honor of the North American Saints in celebrating the memory of those who, as Metropolitan Herman stated, "established the vision and path to which we continue to commit ourselves."

**Youth and Young Adult Activities.** A full schedule of activities and outings organized by the Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry was offered to the Council's 250 youth observers. Assisting Priest Michael Anderson, department director, were dozens of volunteers and chaperones. All activities were focused on the theme "Our Church and the Future: Become What You Are." Religious discussions and programs for all ages, and outings to Niagara Falls and other attractions, provided a wealth of opportunities for inspiration and fellowship. Young adults also enjoyed a cruise and participated in an afternoon of ministry at one of Toronto's soup kitchens. Delegates enjoyed a presentation by the youth and young adult observers at the closing plenary session.

**Luncheon Forums.** Under the direction of Arlene Kallaur, nearly two dozen luncheon forums were held. The lively presentations were extremely well attended and offered an opportunity for delegates to share experiences and obtain practical resources and advice for implementation in their respective parishes. Luncheon forums included the following themes.

**Technology and the Church:** Deacon Kirill Sokolov

**Outreach to the Hungry and Homeless:** The Priest Jacob Myers (Loaves and Fishes Program, Atlanta, GA), the Priest Roberto Ubertino (Saint John the Compassionate Mission, Toronto, ON, Canada), Kathy Pieracci, (Saint Michael Food Distribution Program, Sacramento, CA)

**How Do I as an Orthodox Christian Evangelize? What Skills Do I Need?:** Priest Eric Tosi, moderator; the Archpriest John Matusiak; the Priests Ted Pisarchuk and David Rucker

**Working with New Immigrants in the Parish:** Archpriest John Matusiak

**Hosting a Seminarian Intern: What It Involves for a Parish:** Archpriest Alexander Garklavs, Moderator; Archpriests Paul Kucynda and Lawrence Margitich; Priests. Barnabas Fravel and John Hainsworth

**Overcoming Hurdles in Developing Parish Ministries:** Priest Stephen Voytovich

**Conflict Management: How to Deal with Challenging People:** Dr. Albert Rossi

**A Parish Nursing Program: How It Works, Its Benefits:** Natalie Stavrevsky

**A Pan-Orthodox Singles Group: How It Works in the DC Area:** Archpriest Gregory Safchuk

**Strengthening the Parish Family:** Archpriest Ken Stavrevsky, moderator; Suzanne Aleandro, Dunia Hubiak, Lori Kochan, and Karen Mravetz

**Christian Parenting:** Archpriest Michael Matsko, moderator; Priest Vladimir Aleandro, Stephanie Reimund

**Retirees: A Golden Resource:** Kitty Vitko, Leon Sheean, and Dr. Richard West

**Sanctity of Human Life Issues:** Priest Thomas Moore, Leon Sheean, Kathy Kovalak

**Stress, Depression, Addiction, Suicide Prevention:** Archpriests Frank Mayernick and Ken Stavrevsky; Priests John Chudik and John Kreta

**The OCA Pension Plan:** Archpriest Dimitri Oselinsky

**“Chew and Chat” About Christian Education: Members of the Department of Christian Education Support for Family Caregiving at Home, at a Distance:** Donna Karabin, Diane Pasca, and Arlene Kallaur

**Worship and Pastoral Coverage in Times of War and Conflict: Accounts from Chaplains Who Recently Returned from Afghanistan and Iraq:** Archpriest Ted Boback, moderator; Archpriests Jerome Cwiklinski, Joseph Gallick, and John Stefero; Priest John Anderson

**Connecting Our Youth Across Parish Boundaries:** The Revs. Michael Anderson and David Subu

**The Church Choir: Sharing Needs, Challenges, Tools for Growth:** David Drillock

**Displays and Exhibits.** Over 100 displays and exhibits filled the exhibit room during the All-American Council. Religious items, books, vestments, candles, and other church-related items were on display and for sale during the week.

In addition, the dioceses and all of The Orthodox Church in America’s departments hosted exhibits.

**Diocesan Spotlight.** The Rev. Jonathan Ivanoff offered a 30-minute Power Point presentation that highlighted the dioceses of The Orthodox Church in America. The presentation offered delegates a wealth of information on the life of the Church across North America and a better understanding of the richness of our Church under the leadership of the diocesan hierarchs. The Diocesan Spotlight will be available in the near future on The Orthodox Church in America web site.

**Elections to Church-Wide Positions.** Elections for representatives to the Metropolitan Council, Pension Board, and Audit Committee were also conducted. Elected to serve six-year terms on the Metropolitan Council were the Very Rev. Theodore Boback and Professor John Erickson. The Very Rev. Constantine White and Dr. Faith Skordinski were elected to three-year terms, while the Rev. John Maxwell and Ms. Eleana Silk were elected as alternates. The Very Rev. Dimitri Oselinsky and Mr. David Drillock were elected to serve six-year terms on the Pension Board. Elected to serve three-year terms were the Very Rev. John Steffaro and Mr. Gregory Sheshko. The Very Rev. John



Zdinak and Mr. Nicholas Lezinsky were elected as alternates. Elected to the Audit Committee were the Very Rev. Paul Suda and Mr. David Donlick, with Mr. Frank Tkacz serving as alternate.

**Special Events.** A number of special events were held throughout the week

On Monday evening, the seminaries hosted receptions for their graduates, students, and interested faithful. During the reception for members of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS), the Very Rev. Eugene Vansuch, the newly appointed FOS executive director, welcomed the guests and encouraged them to strengthen their witness to and support of the Church through increased stewardship. During the reception, Metropolitan Herman presented a synodal citation to the Very Rev. Joseph Fester, former FOS executive director, in recognition of his years of service in this position.

A breakfast for members of the Holy Synod of Bishops and clergy wives was a highlight of the week. In his remarks, Metropolitan Herman thanked the clergy wives for their essential ministry and commitment to the Church, their parishes, their husbands, and their families.

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