

OCCJ

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SPRING 2006 volume 79 number 1

The official publication of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America

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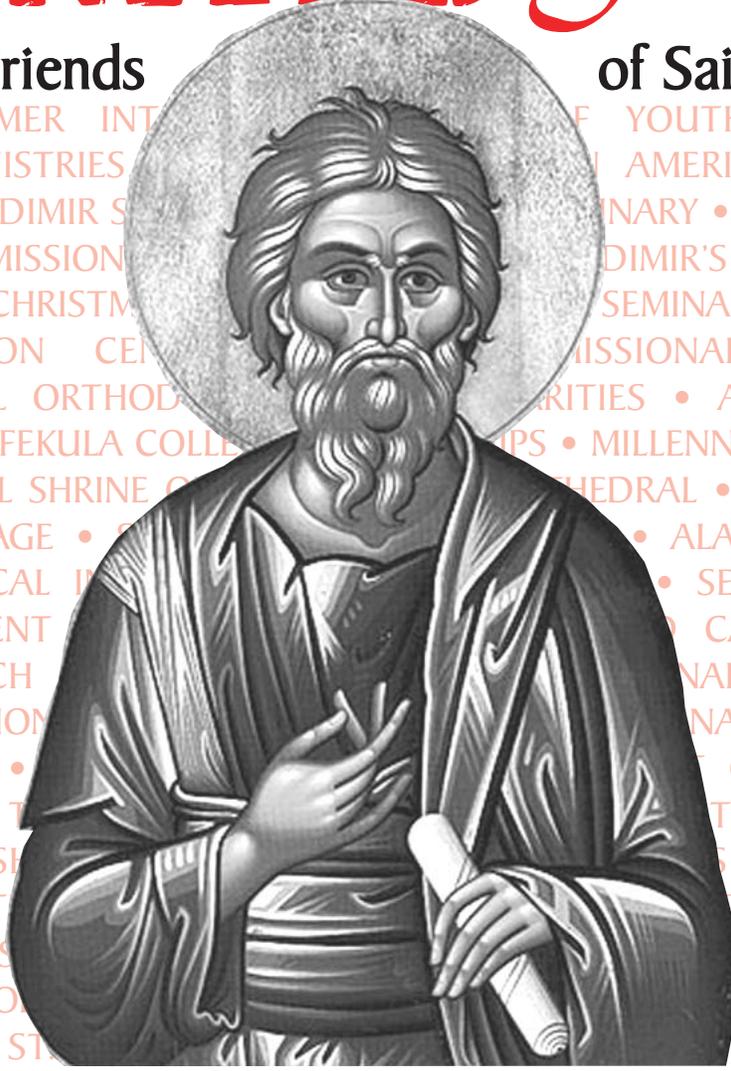
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educate the membership of the Fellowship of
Orthodox Christians in America,
to showcase the talents of its membership
and, in so doing, to propagate the
Holy Orthodox Christian Faith.

Mission Statement of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America is a national organization of Orthodox Christians. ***Our mission is to proclaim, share and reveal our Orthodox Christian Faith through service, fellowship and example.*** We accomplish this by:

- studying the tenets of our Faith
- supporting, encouraging and promoting Orthodox Youth ministries
- supporting, encouraging and promoting the missionary growth of our church
- encouraging and promoting unity among all Orthodox jurisdictions
- establishing practical means for Orthodox Christians to form enduring friendships on local and national levels through networking
- providing educational, cultural, social and athletic activities for the people of our Orthodox Faith.

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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY

Dr. John Schultz

38th National FOCA President

The F.O.C.A. National Executive Board and Board of Trustees met for the Annual Spring Board Meetings February 9 – 11 at the Kingston Plantation in Myrtle Beach, SC. During the meetings the Board discussed many topics as follow-up to Convention actions taken at the 2005 National Convention and in anticipation of the 2006 National Convention.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report presented by the Treasurer. As of the Meeting there was not a significant change in membership and income was within projections. The “emergency/temporary” dues change was discussed. It was reported that the majority of discussion at the Fall District Conventions were generally favorable. It is anticipated that a formal Bylaw amendment regarding a “permanent” dues change will be presented for consideration at the 2006 Convention.

The Board reviewed the preliminary reports of the several committees formed at the 2005 Convention. The Charitable Review Committee had several proposed scenarios to enhance and streamline our many charitable efforts. The Committee will continue their work and present their final report and recommendations to the National Convention. The Strategic Planning Committee presented their plans for the development of short, medium, and long-term goals of the organization. It is anticipated that this effort will include input from many current and former members of the Fellowship.

Plans for the Leadership Training Summit were reviewed by the Board. Despite concern about the chosen date the consensus was that the proposed program was excellent. Final approval was given to hold the initial Summit at the National Basketball Tournament. A recommendation to hold a second Summit in conjunction with the National Convention also passed.

Plans for the National Convention were reported by the Convention Committee. The program looks to provide loads of fun and entertainment. The Hotel facilities are outstanding and provide many activities themselves. National Spiritual Advisor Fr. William Evansky discussed plans for a first ever Clergy/Spiritual Advisor Conference to be held at the National Convention. Based on comments from the Delegates at the 2005 Convention it was decided that this Convention will have more time for sessions and breakouts.

Junior Department Director Fr. Emil Hutynan review plans for the Junior Department in general and Junior Olympics camp in particular. He along with Ron Tucci and Neena Malinich prepared an outstanding summary of plans and guidelines for Camp. Their hard work is truly appreciated.

Our ongoing Seminarian Assistance and Gift Programs were reviewed. There was much discussion on how to improve these programs while at the same time reduce duplication of effort. Concrete recommendations will be discussed at the Summer Executive Board Meeting and presented at the Convention.

Finally, The Board of Trustees reviewed and passed a plan to implement the “Policies, Standards, and Procedures of the Orthodox Church in America on Sexual Misconduct” which were adopted at the 2005 Convention. Provisions and requirements for Criminal Background Checks were also passed.

The Spring Board Meetings were productive and laid a good foundation for the work to be done at the National Convention. There will be much important work to be accomplished at the Convention. Delegates attending the Convention will help to create the blueprint for the future of the FOCA. Please plan on attending this Convention as a Delegate and participate in this important work as well as the great social activities planned by the Convention Committee.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Nicholas Ressetar

Editor, *Orthodox Christian JOURNAL*

Christ is Risen! On behalf of the entire *Journal* staff, I extend the heartiest greetings of Holy Pascha to all Fellowship members, friends and readers of this publication. Joining us are the many supporters of the *Journal* who personally convey their own Paschal greetings in the pages of this issue.

Our cover features an icon of St. Andrew the First Called, the FOCA's patron saint, and Mary Jane Lucak urges you to support this year's United Fund which benefits the many Orthodox Christian charities we fund (many of which are listed on the cover). Managing Editor/IPP John Kruchok provides the details inside and invites all of us to join the "Friends of St. Andrew" in order to meet and exceed the UF goal.

Highlighting the spring edition are invitations from the Junior department to participate in this summer's newly renamed National Sports Tournament at St. Vladimir's Camp in Ohio. Details are given and counselors are sought. Check out the back cover and contact Ron Tucci or Neena Malinich to register. Juniors from the Upper New York State District fill us in on their recent convention/bowling tourney & we welcome the newest Junior chapter from Christ the Savior Church in Milton, NY - #252-J! We also have news from the South River "R" Club, the St. Mary's Juniors and the New Jersey District. Keep us informed of your chapter & district events, and be sure to include some digital photos.

A feature of this issue is "Reflections on Berisso" by new FOCA member Jennifer Mourar, who received an FOCA OCMC short-term missionary grant to participate in a special January trip to Argentina. Read the moving account of her two weeks assisting needy fellow Orthodox Christians - young adults especially should consider applying for future trips, an experience of a lifetime according to Jennifer.

In our center section the New Jersey District and "Myrtle the Turtle" bring us four pages of photos and info on the upcoming 80th National Convention in Myrtle Beach, SC. Suitable for "pull out," this special insert contains everything you need to know, from the schedule of events to accommodation options. Elsewhere in this edition are a promo and entry form for the Summer Sports tourney to be held in conjunction with the convention. See y'all in South Carolina.

Rounding out this edition are an update from President Dr. John Schultz, an invite to the annual Richie Miskiv scholarship dinner, and a Kidz Page activity for Pentecost Sunday. And last but not least, we managed to squeeze in a few photos from last weekend's (as I write) enormously successful basketball tourney hosted by the Cleveland "R" Club - we'll have full coverage on it, the bowling tourney in Maple Shade, NJ, and the winners of the "Celebrations of Faith" contest in the summer issue. Until next time, enjoy the Fellowship you find on these pages!

F.O.C.A. HIGHLIGHTS AND NEWS-IN-BRIEF

SCENES FROM 2006 NATIONAL FOCA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

As this issue of the *Journal* goes to press, this year's national basketball tournament on April 28-30 has just finished. Sponsored by the Cleveland "R" Club, #4/6, a total of 28 teams of various ages participated and a capacity crowd of 450 attended the awards banquet at St. Michael's Woodside on Saturday evening. Congratulations to all! A complete report will appear in our next issue.



The FOCA's United Fund – Your Gift Funds the Vision

FOCA **UNITED** Fund

For more than fifty years, the FOCA's "United Fund" has raised nearly two million dollars of support for Orthodox seminaries, youth programs, scholarships, missions and other charitable projects. The annual drive, which ends officially each May 31st, is funded by a voluntary goal of \$15 per member and through the personal gifts from the "Friends of St. Andrew" program. The United Fund is the main stewardship effort of the FOCA's network of chapters throughout America. In concert with the organization's mission statement of supporting youth and missions, the fund assists young people pursuing higher education at colleges, universities and seminaries; provides for an intern annually in the Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministries Department of the Orthodox Church in America; provides support to the St. Vladimir's Camp and Retreat Center in Ohio and helps fund annual Christmas gifts to the children of our seminarians. The mission services category of the fund supports the work of the FOCA's "Mission Hotline" program and when specially earmarked by chapters or individual donors, St. Herman's, St. Tikhon's, St. Vladimir's and Christ the Savior Seminaries receive funding annually. The major gift funded by the program is a \$9,000 annual contribution to the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS) for the internship. Scholarships totaling approximately \$10,000 are distributed each year.

The United Fund, not to be confused with the "United Way" or any of that program's recipients, is a unified approach to funding many needs of the Church. Throughout its history, it has been modified to assist many causes. Over the years, past recipients have included the "Alaska Orthodox Project", the Millennium Bell Tower at the War Memorial Shrine in Washington D.C. and the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) to mention a few. Goals, percentages of unearmarked funds and recipients are approved at each national convention for the upcoming fundraising year.

Contributions can either be unearmarked or earmarked. Funds "unearmarked" are divided based on the percentages of support based on a "pie chart", i.e. 40% for one category, 20 % for three other categories, totaling 100%. Charities which receive a portion of the "pie" include the William Fekula Scholarships, Junior Department/Youth Ministry and Mission Services/Outreach. Charities approved to receive "earmarked" or specially designated funds include the four seminaries and the St. Vladimir's camp in Ohio.

Your chapter and personal contributions to the United Fund assist both needy Orthodox Christians and the Church's programs and institutions. These gifts, raised through the FOCA's network, also help recognize the organization's long standing support to the Church and its people.

Gifts to the United Fund can be sent to:

Mary Jane Lucak
FOCA United Fund Chairman
4686 Oakridge Drive
North Royalton, OHIO 44133

"The Friends of St. Andrew" Meeting and Exceeding the FOCA's United Fund

"The Friends of St. Andrew" is an important source of meeting and exceeding the FOCA's United Fund annual drive. It is a personal gift of stewardship to FOCA supported charities such as the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS), St. Herman's, St. Tikhon's, St. Vladimir's and Christ the Savior Seminaries, the William Fekula Scholarship program, the St. Vladimir's camp and retreat center, youth ministry and mission services.

Formerly known as the "St. Andrew's Fellowship" the program was established during the presidency of Dr. Robert Weger (1986-1988) as a bold move to increase the FOCA's United Goal from \$30,000 to \$40,000 annually. Individual (or couple) donors contributed at least \$100 to United Fund. Approximately \$10,000 was immediately raised from the program's inception and has continued for the nearly twenty years of existence. Each year at the national convention, a reception or breakfast is organized as a means to gather the donors in fellowship and appreciation from the National Executive Board. The program was renamed by the convention body in 2004 and various levels of giving were added as an effort to boost fundraising. The various levels of giving include: **Platinum: \$500 and up • Gold: \$300-\$499 • Silver: \$150-\$299 • Bronze: \$100-\$149**

Each steward's gift can be earmarked lump sum or in designated amounts to the FOCA's eight categories of charities or can simply be unearmarked. Unearmarked funds are simply distributed by the percentages adopted by each convention body at the national convention. Your personal gift is also credited to your chapter and is another way to exceed its goal!

For those who are members of the "Friends of St. Andrew", thank you for your gift. For those who would like to contribute, please select a level of giving and send a check to:

Mary Jane Lucak
FOCA United Fund Chairman
4686 Oakridge Drive
North Royalton, OH 44133

Remember, you can earmark your gift to the following charities (scholarships/junior department-youth ministry/mission services/St. Herman's Seminary/St. Tikhon's Seminary/St. Vladimir's Seminary/Christ the Savior Seminary/St. Vladimir's camp and retreat center) Unspecified gifts will be added to unearmarked funds and distributed in the percentages designated by the convention body.

The "Friends of St. Andrew" would like to thank the following from the Hartford "R" Club for their gifts

Bronze Level

**Basil Matychak
Michael & Mary Beth Stenko**

**Helen Lichatz
John & Joan Holobinko**

Chapter news

South River R Club, Chapter 167, took its annual trip to Lake Placid, NY, in January. After a chilly, but breathtaking nature hike through the icy High Falls Gorge, family and friends warmed up by a campfire and toasted marshmallows. This weekend excursion has been a South River tradition for more than 20 years for young and old alike. It's always filled with activities like skiing down Whiteface Mountain, cross country skiing, ice skating, dogsledding, bobsledding, and shopping, to name a few - and of course karaoke! Many thanks!!! ~Kristy Kaminsky



Always do right; this will gratify some people and astonish the rest.

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

Minneapolis MN: On February 17, 2006, as the temperature dropped to 23 below, the St. Mary's Cathedral teens drove 3 hours north to brave the cold for a weekend at the Stenach's family cabins. The topic of the retreat was Armageddon, the Second Coming of Christ. Father Stacey Richter led the weekend worship services and discussions. FOCA Youth Advisor Kristy Morse and Youth Director Ron Tucci organized the weekend and the outdoor activities of flag football, snowmobiling and "capture the flag." The



Stenach family kept the wood stove and bonfire going along with providing plenty of good food and hot chocolate. With the wonderful support of the adult team, the youth survived the Arctic temperatures and they are already looking forward to repeating the experience again next winter.

- Cheryl Morse

NEW JERSEY DISTRICT:

Featuring the Spirit of Orthodoxy choir, under the direction of Maestro Aleksei Shipovalnikov, the New Jersey District sponsored its annual St. Nicholas/St. Andrew vespers service at SS. Peter & Paul Russian Orthodox Cathedral in Passaic, NJ on Sunday, December 11, 2005. After singing the responses to vespers, the choir then gave a Christmas concert. A reception followed. Proceeds benefitted the district scholarship fund.

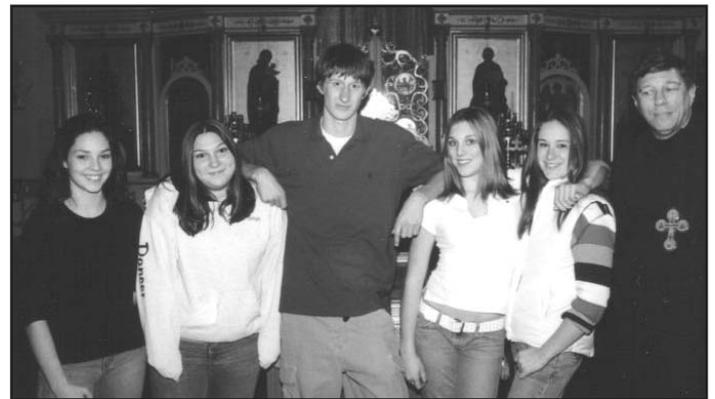
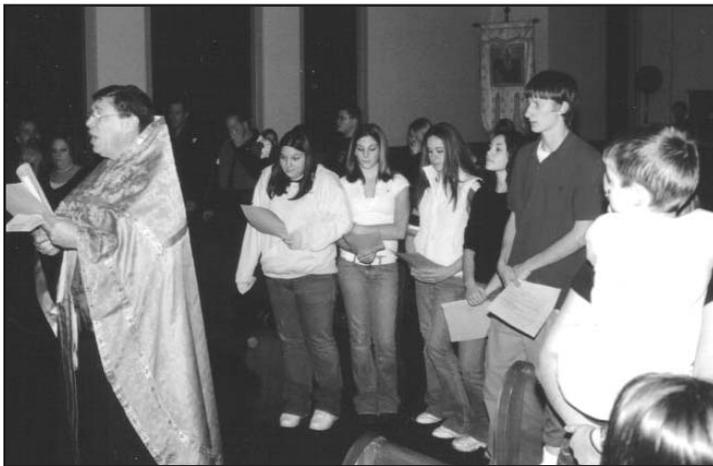
Although the vespers service is an annual event, this is the first time the district had a guest choir instead of a featured speaker. The response was very successful. Michael Kupec, Jr., a member of both the choir and the district, helped coordinate the event.

- Mrs. Marge Cimboric

UNYS Junior District Convention – Auburn, NY

The Juniors of the Upper New York State District held their annual convention and bowling tournament on November 12-13, 2005 in Auburn, NY. Sponsored by the Auburn Junior "R" Club, it was attended by 37 Juniors from Auburn, Cohoes, Endicott, Syracuse and Watervliet. A business meeting, including election of officers, was held on Saturday morning and bowling followed in the afternoon. Outgoing officers are Gov. Erica Wild, Lt. Gov. Alex Bendon, Exec. Secretary Valerie Wolanski, Rec. Secretary Nicole Watson and Treasurer Chris Mack. William Dupkanick, the district's senior Lt. governor, briefed the assembly on the various national FOCA events scheduled for 2006.

Prior to vespers, Fr. Stephen Mack inducted the new slate of district officers: Gov. Valerie Wolanski (Cohoes), Lt. Gov. Alex Bendon (Watervliet), Exec. Secretary Kathy Watson (Endicott), Rec. Secretary Lauren Berdar (Watervliet) and Treasurer Tanya Mack (Auburn).



After vespers, the Juniors participated in an evening of swimming, basketball and socializing at the Auburn YMCA. The Auburn parish provided lunch and dinner as well as housing for the Juniors overnight plus breakfast following Sunday's Divine Liturgy. Congratulations to all who participated! It was a wonderful event and special thanks are extended to the Auburn parish, the Auburn Juniors and their advisor, Mrs. Kathy Wild, and their spiritual advisor, Fr. Mack. A district youth rally is planned for July.

- Joan Dupkanick

Welcome to Our Newest Junior Chapter!!!

Christ the Savior Junior "O" Club, Christ the Savior Church, Milton NY, Chapter #252-J, is the Fellowship's newest chapter with 17 members (3 adult members also joined the district chapter-at-large). The chapter's founding junior advisor is David Homyk. He says: "We are very excited about starting a new chapter here in Saratoga County, and we have a great group of kids who really enjoy doing things together, especially with the other Orthodox churches in the area. We kicked off our first activity with a bowling fun day with over 25 kids and parents having fun together. My hope is the kids will have the same wonderful experience that I had as a 35-year member of the 'R' Club. We have an active group of kids, and I'm looking forward to bringing them to both district and national events." Welcome Juniors!

Reflections on Berisso

Mission Argentina 2006

by Jennifer Mourar

It's amazing how a two week experience can change the way you think about life. One of the remarkable things about a short-term mission trip is how a team of people who barely know each other can grow together spiritually, forming lasting bonds in such a short period of time. Not only are these bonds forged between the mission team members, but between the team and the local community as well. This is exactly what happened on our January trip to Argentina.

During January thirteenth through the twenty-eighth, OCMC sent a team of six people to help repair the homes of three families in Berisso. A small town, located approximately one and a half hours south of Buenos Aires, Berisso clearly bears the scars of Argentina's recent economic breakdown. This collapse resulted in the closure of many businesses and factories, causing unemployment to sharply increase, as well as the devaluation of the country's currency, the peso. According to a statistic published in *The Economist*, "56% of Argentines had fallen below the official poverty line" by June 2002. In large cities, such as Buenos Aires, this poverty is not always evident upon first glance. However, one only needs to wait until nighttime, when the streets begin to fill with *cartoneros*, people who pick through the city's trash in order to earn some money, or drive outside of the city limits, where the communities consist of tightly packed houses made of corrugated tin and other materials. Although one could hardly consider Berisso or Argentina for that matter to fall under the definition of "third world" in the sense that an undeveloped country would, there are definitely elements of poverty everywhere - - both subtle and blatant. In Berisso, however, this poverty was solely monetary, as it was a community that is rich in generosity and hospitality.

We arrived in Berisso two days after our arrival in Argentina. Two days were spent in Buenos Aires, touring the city, getting acquainted with His Eminence Tarasios, Metropolitan of Buenos Aires and South America, and the mission of the Greek Archdiocese in Argentina, which is



Lunch at the *collectividad* after arriving in Berisso.

desperately in need of priests and teachers of catechism, who speak both Greek and Spanish. When we traveled to Berisso, the Metropolitan came with us in order to meet the families. We went directly to the *collectividad*, which was the Greek Orthodox community center in Berisso. The community welcomed our arrival and greeted us with open arms, offering us a large meal in typical Orthodox fashion. Many people from the community came to meet us, and even the local newspaper and TV station were there to interview us.

All three of the families whose homes we would be repairing were there. They were anxious to meet the North Americans who had traveled thousands of miles just to help them. The families included Efrosini Michalakakis and her son Demetri, Constantinos and Laureana Siutis, and the Touloupas family. Each family either suffered from some type of illness, or had a disability which rendered them unable to do any repair work on their homes.

Efrosini, a woman in her eighties, had just lost her husband and was still mourning his loss.

Because of her age, she was physically unable to keep up with repairs on her home.

She had high walls and ceilings in her home and could not reach the mildew that was growing on them. In fact,

mildew was a problem that plagued most of the homeowners. Another common problem, even worse than mildew, were the rotting floor boards that covered the floors in the homes of both Efrosini and the Touloupas. This was a precarious and dangerous situation. While the teams were working, there were several instances wherein people came close to falling through the floor, and Sheila, one of the local youth who collaborated with us, did. Luckily, she was not hurt, but it warned us to be especially careful.

In Efrosini's home, there were many large structural problems. The ceiling was pieced together and part of it needed to be replaced. Sections of a wall were falling apart, and when we tore off the corrugated

tin layer that was attached to the outer portion of the wall, we immediately realized that it was a bad idea, since the underlying wood was rotted and eaten by termites. Additionally, the rooms needed to be painted, since the paint on the walls was faded and peeling. The Touloupas'



Efrosini in her home.



Rotting floor in Efrosini's home.

home was also in need of these same repairs, as their home was constructed of similar materials. As for the Siutis, they lived in a home with stucco walls that had a different layout than the other two homes, and consequently different problems. While the other two were single homes, the Siutis lived in a small row house type structure. On the ground level were their bedroom, one bathroom, a living room, and a small kitchen. To go upstairs, one had to go outside and up a flight of stairs, where there were two more rooms, a small kitchen and a bathroom. All of the rooms were in disrepair and they too shared in the mildew problem. The walls were in need of some spackling, and there was a large crack in the ceiling that had to be mended. Both of the bathrooms had exposed electrical wires right next to the shower, and a few of the window panes were broken. Like all of the other homes, this one also was in need of a thorough paint job. We only had about seven days, and the work before us was daunting.

Fortunately for us, we had a wonderful team of people, comprised of both North Americans, as well as South Americans. Although small, it was a very diverse team, since there were people of varied ages, professions and experience. Fotios Buchas, president of the *collectividad*, was also a skilled civil engineer, who was integral in the planning and execution of this mission. He donated a large portion of his time to oversee the work and provided insight as to how certain jobs should be approached. Nathan Renfree, from California, was also a valuable addition to our team. Having lived and served with Project Mexico, where he oversaw construction projects for four years, he had a lot of experience to offer the team, and helped to oversee the work. The rest of the team members from North America included Adam Makrinos, a retired NYC transit worker, John Ganotis, a lawyer, Aaron Gall, a music student, Andy Lekos, director of short-term missions at OCMC, Cynthia Baldwin-Thanos, a long-term missionary, who is serving as Director of Social Action for the Archdiocese, and myself, a recent graduate from Penn State, who is now working for a financial company. As for the South American portion of the team, there were several youth who decided to help. The initial group included, Sheila and Sushai, who are sisters, Juan Pablo, Costas, and Martin. Despite some tension in the community between the youth of Berisso and the adults, they came every day,



Oop! I accidentally got a little paint on Juan Pablo's nose!

sincerely wanting to help. Then, when Fr. Demetrios, the community's priest, called the local youth together for a meeting, he told them about what we were doing and that we could really use their help.

Amazingly, in true Christian love, they put their anger and

grudges behind them to help the families. Our team grew, and despite the language barrier, we all quickly became friends.

The *collectividad* became the official place to meet. All of our meals, which were graciously prepared by the ladies of the community, were served and hungrily consumed there. Located next to the church, it was a place for us to rest, reenergize, and play. Although our days were long and the work was challenging, we always found the energy to play with Jessica. She was the six year old daughter of Vanessa, the woman who cooked most of our meals. Jessica and her mother lived in a small apartment above the *collectividad*, and while her mother was cooking or cleaning, Jessica played. Of course she was ecstatic to find that she suddenly had new playmates who were willing to play tag, listen to her read her favorite book of fairytales and watch her do tricks on her roller skates. Every time we walked through the doors of the *collectividad*, she was there to greet us with a big smile on her face.



Andy, Jessica, and Mrs. Buchas

One night after dinner, Andy pulled out a game called "pass the pigs," which involved rolling two little plastic pigs, like dice. Depending on how they landed you could either earn points or you would have to pass them on. Jessica won the first game and stayed on this winning streak



Adam (right), finishing up the first coat of paint, and Andy (left), cleaning some mold off Efosini's ceiling.

for the next four games. Needless to say, she was thrilled.

It's remarkable how much can be accomplished when you have a team of people working together for a common goal in the name of Christ. It really becomes evident that through Christ anything is possible. After seven days, we had replaced the flooring in the Michalakakis' and the Siutis' homes, painted every room in all three homes, spackled walls, cleaned off mildew, cleaned floors, and repaired roofing.

The faulty ceiling in Efrosini's home was ripped off, and was repaired by some of Fotis' men after our departure, and a local electrician devoted an entire Saturday in order to fix the electrical problems at the Siutis house. During the week in which we were doing work, the homeowners were all a little apprehensive. Here we were ripping up their floors and they did not know if we would really be able to do all of the work, in spite of our good intentions. It was especially difficult for Efrosini, since her husband had built their house. In order to make the necessary repairs, we had to change and replace a lot of things that he had done. She was notably distressed during the week, and we were all empathetic with her, after all, she had just lost a husband. Yet, at the end of the week, everything came together. It was so rewarding to go into the homes and walk on fresh, strong wooden floors and see the newly painted walls, which made the rooms brighter.



Constantinos and Laureana Siutis hold back tears and thank us after the house blessing.

leaf. As we followed Father into each room, we sang "When Thou O Lord was Baptized in the River Jordan," in Spanish, Greek, and English. It was very emotional, and each family cried as their home was being blessed – even Fr. Demetrios had tears streaming from his eyes as he was



Fr. Demetrios blessing Efrosini's house.

On our last day in Berisso, Father Demetrios, who had been working alongside of us the entire time, blessed each home with holy water and a basil leaf. As we followed Father into each room, we sang "When Thou O Lord was Baptized in the River Jordan," in Spanish, Greek, and English. It was very emotional, and each family cried as their home was being blessed – even Fr. Demetrios had tears streaming from his eyes as he was doing the blessing.

The families thanked us profusely, saying that they would never for-

get us, or what we did. Efrosini said that she would always keep us in her heart and kept kissing and hugging us. As a final gift, Andy presented each family with either an icon of Christ or of the Theotokos.

Leaving Berisso was very difficult. It meant leaving behind many new friends and people that we had grown to look upon as family. Although we had come to help them, the community taught us many things. They clearly demonstrated God's commandment to "love thy neighbor as thyself" by taking us into their homes, feeding us, and treating us as if we were family. They shared what they had with us and tended to our every need. On the other hand, the adults learned that maybe the youth in their community were not so bad after all. After seeing that the youth had been working hard to help us repair the homes, some of the anger between the two factions started to dissolve. Although they still have a long way to go in achieving true forgiveness and understanding of each other, they have at least made a start. As we drove away from Berisso, I looked back at the *collectividad*, and there was Jessica, waving at us and crying. At that moment, I knew that a part of me would always remain in this small town in Argentina, where the people had shared with us the intangible riches of love, generosity and friendship.



Everyone after the house blessing at the Touloupas' house

Editor's note:

Jennifer Mourar, who recently graduated from Penn State and now works for Vanguard outside of Philadelphia, became a new Fellowship member after hearing about the FOCA's short-term OCMC missionary scholarship program from Father John Reeves, her priest at State College, PA. She has a degree in music and her home parish is Holy Trinity Church (OCA) in Pottstown, PA. Jennifer would like to pursue missionary work in the future, and especially enjoys working with children. "I would like to thank each and every member of the Fellowship for enabling me to participate on the mission trip to Argentina. Without this support, I probably wouldn't have been able to go. It's an extremely rewarding experience and I encourage everyone, especially young people, to try to participate in at least one OCMC trip," Jennifer added.



Myrtle Beach, South Carolina Your Destination for the 2006 National F.O.C.A. Convention

Sponsored by the New Jersey District

Embassy Suites Hotel



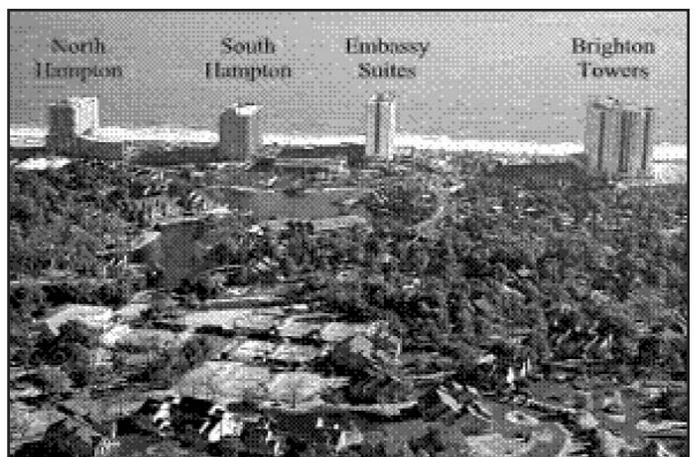
Brighton Tower Condominiums



Splash Water Park - On Premises



Kingston Plantation Aerial View





TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Tuesday 8/29:

For the fishermen and women, we might head out to sea to try and catch “the big one!”



Wednesday 8/30:

National F.O.C.A. Sports Tournament
Myrtlewood Golf Club - Pine Hills Course
Social to follow at Finn McCools restaurant

Thursday 8/31:

National F.O.C.A. Sports Tournament
Arcadian Shores Golf Club

The “**Beach Blanket Bingo Bash**” **Welcome Reception** will be held at Kingston Plantation in the evening. One of the highlights of the evening will be “The Race of the Turtles” that were recently auctioned off at the Spring Board Meeting (see your Governor for details).

Friday 9/1:

Sessions will be held in the morning and afternoon at the Embassy Suites Convention Center.

In the evening, board a bus from Kingston Plantation for dinner at the historic **Pine Lakes Country Club** for a scrumptious seafood buffet. Afterwards, proceed to nearby “**Barefoot Landing**” where you’ll enjoy a fabulous show at the **Alabama Theatre**. Tickets for this event will include dinner, show, and transportation.

Saturday 9/2:

Sessions will be held in the morning at the Embassy Suites Convention Center.

While you’re AT the beach, why not participate in some activities ON the beach? There will be **games, activities, and competitions** for everyone (in the early afternoon)! Included will be District vs. District competitions. This is another great opportunity to meet and mingle with other Orthodox Christians, while having fun in the sun!

After attending **Vespers**, take a bus to nearby “**Broadway at the Beach**” with its 350 acres of shops, restaurants, night-clubs, and other attractions.

Sunday 9/3:

Following **Divine Liturgy**, enjoy a free afternoon prior to the **Banquet and Dance**. To allow additional leisure time in the afternoon, the Banquet will begin later in the day, followed immediately by the **Grand Ball**.

Monday 9/4:

The **Farewell Luncheon** will take place at the nearby **Finn McCools**.



LODGING & TRAVEL

The Kingston Plantation:

For best service, please contact the hotel reservation department directly at **1-843-449 0006**.

****When making your reservation, use the code "OCA" or Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America.****

Convention room rates will be honored before and after the convention, pending room availability, from Saturday, August 26 – Wednesday, September 6, 2006.

Brighton Towers (Condominium Units)

All linens, room service, and maid services are provided in the condominium units.

1 Bed Guest Room Ocean View

\$119 - Kitchenette, small refrigerator, microwave, and coffee maker

2 and 3 bedroom units have a living room, washer/dryer, and fully equipped kitchen

\$169 - 2 Bedroom Ocean View

\$199 - 3 Bedroom Ocean View (all are booked in the Brighton but limited availability has been added in the South Hampton Tower which is connected to the Embassy Suites).

Note: All of the convention activities, sessions, and church services will be held at the Embassy Suites building. It's a short, five-minute walk from Brighton Towers.

The early response has exceeded our wildest expectations. Since our room block is nearly full, you may encounter difficulty making your reservations. If so, please contact Michael Steffaro, Greg Cimboric, or Ken Baron and we will do our best to make sure you are accommodated.



Getting to Myrtle Beach:

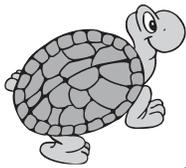
U.S. Highways 17 and 501, and State Highway 9 provide direct access from Interstates 20 and 95.

Myrtle Beach International Airport is the fourth fastest growing airport in the nation with direct service from Atlanta, Atlantic City, Newark, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Detroit, New York, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Charlotte, and Boston.

Airfare:

In addition to the major carriers, competitive pricing is being offered by smaller airlines such Spirit Air.

Ground Transportation: Shuttle Service: \$25 – Advance Reservation required through the hotel concierge. Also, as we go to press, we are finalizing an arrangement with Dollar Rent A Car for discounted rentals. Details regarding any codes to use will be posted on the NJ FOCA web-site soon.



More Information from “Myrtle”

Friday Night: Pine Lakes Country Club/Alabama Theatre

Pine Lakes Country Club

Private Dining
Seafood Buffet
Stately Southern Mansion
One of the oldest in Myrtle Beach

Alabama Theatre

“ONE – The Show”
Guaranteed Premium Seating
Comedians and Entertainers
South Carolina’s #1 attended theatre

Saturday Night: “Broadway at the Beach”

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Dining

Margaritaville
The Crab House
Hard Rock Café
Tony Roma’s Ribs
Landry’s Seafood

Nightlife

Crocodile Rocks
Senor Frog’s
Fat Tuesday
Froggy Bottomz
Malibu’s Surf Bar

Entertainment

Magic Quest
Ripley’s Aquarium
Imax Theatre
Gondola Adventure
NASCAR Speed Park

Shopping

Build a Bear
Embroidery Paradise
Broadway Magic
American Vintage
Father Time Clocks

Locally...

In addition to 60 miles of glorious beaches, Myrtle Beach offers: entertainment theatres, amusement parks, fishing piers, race tracks, golf courses, shopping malls, water parks, nightclubs, sightseeing tours, outlet stores, miniature golf courses, numerous family and fine dining options, arcades, and state parks.

Web sites for your convenience...

- Kingston Plantation: www.kingstonplantation.com
- North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce: www.northmyrtlebeachchamber.com
- Broadway at the Beach: www.broadwayatthebeach.com
- Barefoot Landing: www.bflanding.com
- Alabama Theatre: www.alabama-theatre.com
- Brookgreen Gardens: www.brookgreen.org
- Ripley’s Aquarium: www.ripleysaquarium.com
- Myrtle Beach V.I.P card: www.myrtlebeachvipcard.com/sap
- NJ District web page: www.njfoca.org
- Myrtlewood Golf Club: www.myrtlewoodgolf.com
- Arcadian Shores Golf Club: www.kingstonplantation.com/golf/

If you have questions, please contact the Convention Co-Chairmen:

Ken Baron @ kbaron@interchangebank.com

Greg Cimbolich @ devswincup@aol.com

Michael Steffaro @ [Michael.steffaro@sci-us.com/732-698-1952](http://www.Michael.steffaro@sci-us.com/732-698-1952)

St. Stephen's OCF hosts "LIBERTY BOWL" June 2-4, 2006

June is fast approaching so before you start planning your summer vacation include in your plans a trip to "**The Liberty Bowl**" – *the 67th version of the National FOCA Bowling Tournament*. **St. Stephen OCF** (annual hosts of the Novogodny Ball in Philadelphia) will be your hosts over the June 2-4 2006 weekend in Maple Shade NJ (across the Delaware River from Philadelphia)...

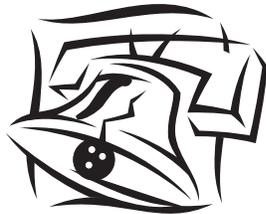
Laurel Lanes (www.laurellanesnj.com) has just completed a full renovation and is anxiously awaiting our arrival. Enjoy the facilities during your visit – arcade game room, billiard room, and Brewster's Bar & Grill.

Lodging will be at the Quality Inn (www.qualityinn.com/hotel/nj129), just blocks away from the lanes in Maple Shade. Room rates (\$82 single and \$87 double) will be available through May 15, 2006. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel directly at 856-235-6400 and referencing the "FOCA Bowling Tournament".

Services for the weekend will be at **the Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross** in Medford, NJ (www.ochc.cc) – newly consecrated in September 2004 and just a few minutes' drive from the hotel and lanes.

Saturday evening we will offer a choice of activities to participate in – a Camden Riversharks Baseball Game (minor league baseball), or the "Lights on Liberty" (a fantastic audio / visual extravaganza in the historic area of Philadelphia). Bus transportation will be included for both events from your hotel. For those feeling lucky, Atlantic City casinos are also only an hour's drive away along the Atlantic City Expressway.

Don't forget to support our program book – advertisement deadline has been extended to **May 15th** - it is not too late to participate! Advertisement forms are posted on the FOCA website (www.orthodoxfellowship.org). See you at the "Liberty Bowl" on June 2-4, 2006 !



2006 FOCA National Summer Sports Tournament

Aug. 30, 31 2006 • Myrtle Beach, SC

Hosted by: St. Gregory of Palamas FOCA Club Chap. 246



FOCA Announces Myrtle Beach, Site of 2006 Summer Sports Tournament.

For those of you out there who haven't heard the exciting news, the 2006 Summer Sports Tournament is being held in Myrtle Beach, SC, immediately preceding the National Convention. Russell Petronko of the sponsoring chapter #246 says: "I think that this will be a great opportunity for people to kill two birds with one stone." For those of you that have never attended a FOCA National Sports tournament, the format can be competitive or as relaxed as you care to make it. Golfers of all abilities participate, and an emphasis for the event is placed on golfing enjoyment and fellowship. In addition to the convenient scheduling for convention goers, Myrtle Beach has long been recognized as being one of the premier destinations in the world for discriminating golfers. "If you haven't golfed in Myrtle you are absolutely missing a great experience," Petronko adds. This year's sports tournament boasts another first in the fact that contestants will be able to play not one, but two courses to determine the champion. The tentative schedule has Wednesday's round taking place at Myrtlewood Golf Club's Pines Course. The Pines course has been a Myrtle Beach favorite for more than 20 years. This classic design reflects the typical Low-country flavor and beckons to the more casual relaxed manner so symbolic of the South Carolina coast. The course, with its superbly-maintained Bent greens will challenge any skill level. This is a course that has become a real favorite with returning golfers, as it is consistently well kept. Thursday's round will take place at the beautiful Arcadian Shores Golf Club. Traditional in concept, both Golf Digest and Golf Magazine have acknowledged this facility as a course of distinction. This beautifully-maintained Rees Jones design winds through clusters of live oaks and natural lakes. Says Petronko: "At either course I think our participants will find great, playable golf for an exceptional value, especially by north-east standards." The festivities are slated to wrap up with an afternoon social at Finn McCool's, one of Myrtle favorite watering holes, and finally with the awards ceremony which will be held in conjunction with the National Convention's Thursday night event. All in all, this year's tournament sounds like one not to be missed. Why not bring the whole family down to Myrtle Beach for both the Summer Sports Tournament and the National Convention. Information regarding tournament sign up and sponsorship will be available shortly or by contacting Russell Petronko: 732-259-7231 or rpetronko@hotmail.com.

SEND ALL ENTRIES TO:
National Sports Director
ROBERT STEFFARO
2212 Creekside Circle S
Irving, Texas 75063
(972) 869-0149

**FELLOWSHIP OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS IN AMERICA
2006 NATIONAL SUMMER SPORTS TOURNAMENT**

August 30-31, 2006
Sponsored by: St. Gregory of Palamas "O" Club, Glen Gardner N.J.
Chairman: Russell Petronko, 723-259-7231
Open to all FOCA/Orthodox Christians

All entrants must pay Registration Fee and buy Social Ticket

**All Entries Must Be
Postmarked by
July 15, 2006**

Name _____ Chapter No. _____ District/Orthodox Parish _____

Address _____ Apt. _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____ Phone (____) _____

Name	Handicap Average	2-Day \$115	1-Day \$60	Scramble 2-Day \$115	Scramble 1-Day \$60	Regist. \$1.00	Social Sr. \$15 Jr. Free	TOTAL
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								

Please Read

TOURNAMENT RULES- General Golf Rules

- 1) Rules on score card will be followed
- 2) Special rules will be given before tee-off
- 3) All FOCA and District rules will be followed
- 4) Golfers will be flighted and must provide Handicap or Average

Prizes will be based on number of entries.

GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED

Make all checks payable to: **St. Gregory of Palamas "O" Club**
Include Registration Fees and Social Tickets for each name listed on this form.
Mail all entries to Bob Steffaro at the address above.

HOUSING
Kingston Plantation

GOLFING
Tee-Off Times: Wednesday and Thursday 7am

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I will abide by all the sports rules of the FOCA

Applicant Signature _____

The 2006 F.O.C.A. National Sports Tournament Junior Olympics Q and A

The 2006 National F.O.C.A. National Sports Tournament will be held the week of Sunday, July 16 through Saturday, July 22, 2006. The tournament will be held at the St. Vladimir's Orthodox Camp and Retreat Center located in Farmdale, Ohio. A Training Day will be provided for those who will assist at the tournament on Saturday, July 15 and will be made available for all staff and co-workers of the week. The following is a list of the most common questions and answers regarding the FOCA Sports Tournament. Any questions can be referred to the FOCA National Sports Tournament Director at the address and phone number stated below.

Q: WHAT IS THE F.O.C.A. "NATIONAL SPORTS TOURNAMENT?"

A: The tournament is a week-long summer camp in which Orthodox Youth from across the United States enjoy fellowship and participate in a variety of events both sporting and non-sporting. The competitions are held in an atmosphere of support and encouragement.

Q: WHAT ARE THE AGE GROUPS THAT ATTEND?

A: All youth ages 10-17 are welcome to attend camp. For tournament activities participants are divided into appropriate age groups.

Q: WHERE IS THE F.O.C.A. NATIONAL SPORTS TOURNAMENT HELD?

A: The event is held at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Camp and Conference Center. The campgrounds are located in Farmdale, Ohio near Warren and Youngstown.

Q: DO I HAVE TO BE AN F.O.C.A. MEMBER TO ATTEND THE EVENT?

A: No. The Annual Sports Tournament is a national gathering of Orthodox youth, and all Orthodox Youth are welcome to attend.

Q: ARE THE ATHLETIC EVENTS HIGHLY COMPETITIVE?

A: No. All competitive events are performed and played in a supportive atmosphere. Participants receive encouragement from fellow participants and from the tournament staff.

Q: DO ONLY "GOOD ATHLETES" ATTEND?

A: No. The participants have a wide range of athletic skill and interest. Although awards are given for each individual competition, no particular skill level is demanded or expected. Participants are encouraged to compete at their own level of comfort and interest.

Q: ARE ALL THE SPORTING EVENTS "INDIVIDUAL COMPETITIONS"?

A: Although there are individual competitions there are also many organized team-sporting events throughout the week. Participants are encouraged to participate in the sports of their liking and to the level of their skill and interest.

Q: ARE THERE ALSO "NON-SPORTING EVENTS HELD?"

A: Yes. In addition to the athletic events, there are the usual "summer camp favorites". These include nightly campfires, hay rides, scavenger hunts, counselor hunts, swimming pool games, and other group activities. The camp has a variety of activities including basketball courts, hiking trails, swimming pool, ball field, tennis courts, table games, board games and other activities of general interest. The camp week is also highlighted by a Talent Show and Friday Night Dance.

Q: ARE THERE ANY RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES DURING THE TOURNAMENT WEEK?

A: Yes. Each day begins and ends with Morning Prayers or Matins Services in the St. Vladimir's Chapel located on the grounds. Those who attend also participate in daily choir practice in preparation for Great Vespers and Divine Liturgy celebrated at an Orthodox Feast Day during the week. All campers are encouraged to read and/or sing during the Chapel and Liturgical Services. The schedule for each day includes a session with the Orthodox Priest/Chaplain. This session has become known as "Fun with Father". Here the children learn more about the Orthodox Faith and Orthodox Traditions. The Orthodox Chaplain stays on the grounds and participates with the participants in all aspects of the daily life. Those who attend look forward to the annual visit and discussions with His Eminence, Archbishop Job of Chicago and the OCA Diocese of the Midwest.

Q: IS THE NATIONAL SPORTS TOURNAMENT DAILY SCHEDULE HIGHLY STRUCTURED?

A: Each day of tournament has a nice balance of scheduled events and free time allowing fellowship between those who attend.

Q: HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION OR RECEIVE AN APPLICATION FOR THE 2006 NATIONAL SPORTS TOURNAMENT?

A: Simply call or write Neena Malinich, our FOCA (South District) Governor at 2837 Sunlake Loop #205, Lake Mary, Florida 32746 (e-mail neena71@netzero.net) or Reader Ron Tucci, the Orthodox Youth Director from St. Mary's Cathedral in Minneapolis at 2109 Fifth Street, North East, Minneapolis, MN 55418 at ron@stmarysoca.org

3rd Richard J. Miskiv Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser

On Saturday evening June 10th, the beefsteak fundraising dinner for the Richard J. Miskiv Memorial Scholarship fund will be held at the Cultural Center of SS. Peter and Paul's R.O. Church at the corner of Third and Monroe Streets in Passaic, New Jersey. To date over \$35,000 has been raised through the dinners as well as donations from friends of Richie who are unable to attend the dinner. Proceeds have been used for FOCA scholarships for New Jersey District members as well as awarded at Garfield High School, from which Richard graduated in 1970 and was a member of its athletic Hall of Fame.

Tickets are \$35.00 for adults and \$20.00 for children under the age of 16. The event will start at 6 PM and the dinner will include unlimited slices of filet mignon on French bread, French fries, ziti, dessert, and beer, wine and soda. Raffle prizes, a 50-50 and silent auction items will also be available.

The deadline for ticket purchases is May 20th. If you are interested in attending or would like to make a donation in Richard's memory, please send your check to: Richard J. Miskiv Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Ken Baron, 338 Landi Court, Wyckoff, NJ 07481. If you have any questions, please call Ken Baron at 201-848-1505.

Richard was a member of the Garden State R Club and the Garfield Junior R Club for a combined 35+ years before his untimely passing at the age of 50. Richard was a very active member at the New Jersey District level and attended many National Conventions as well as National Bowling and Basketball Tournaments. May his memory be eternal!



WANTED

CAMP COUNSELORS



National FOCA Sports Tournament

(Formerly Junior Olympics)
St. Vladimir's Camp in Farmdale, Ohio

July 16-22, 2006

Age 24 and older
will receive a \$125 stipend

Age 18-23 for counselor-in-training
\$75 stipend

There will be a Training meeting on
Saturday July 15th
from approximately noon until 3pm.

Please contact
Neena Malinich at (321) 363-6171
or via email neena71@netzero.net

For more information please visit
www.orthodoxfellowship.org

Spring 2006 Transitions

CONGRATULATIONS to Past National President Robert E. Weger, D.M.D., on being awarded a fellowship in the American College of Dentists during the recent American Dental Association Convention in Philadelphia. He was representing dentists from Morris, Sussex and Warren counties (New Jersey). The college was founded in 1920 with the mission of promoting excellence, ethics and professionalism in dentistry. Fellowship into the college is by invitation and based on demonstrated leadership and significant contributions to the dental profession and society. Only 3.5 percent of dentists are fellows. Many years, Dr. Bob!

DEPARTED: Mary (Bihun) Bezbatchesko, wife of the late Past National President John Bezbatchesko, passed away on March 30. Funeral services were held at St. Nicholas Church in Mogadore, OH. Survivors include a brother, George Bihun. Memory eternal.

DEPARTED: Millicent LaBar, 88, mother of Joan Dupkanick, #43, Endicott, NY passed away on March 2. Joan is the editor of the Upper New York State district newsletter, an excellent and informative publication, and her husband, William, is the district lt. gov. Memory eternal.

DEPARTED: Helen (Pianovich) Tellep, 88, a longtime FROC/FOCA member of #43, Endicott, NY, passed away on March 20. Survivors include her husband, William, also a longtime member of #43, brothers Fr. Eugene Pianovich and Dr. Alex Pianovich, and nieces including Mat. Myra Kovalak and Mat. Eugenia Perich. Memory eternal.

DEPARTED: Matushka Margaret (Tomcho) Ressetar, wife



of the late Rt. Rev. Dimitri Ressetar, fell asleep in the Lord at Staten Island, NY on February 17, just two days shy of her 101st birthday. For many years, she and her husband

ministered to parishes in PA, NJ and Connecticut. Known for her special sense of humor and warm hospitality, Matushka Margaret received the Order of St. Innocent (silver class) from the Orthodox Church in America on her 100th birthday in 2005. She was a Fellowship member most of her life in different parishes and all of her children

and most of her 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren are FOCA members. Survivors include her children, V. Rev. Daniel Ressetar, Vera Bortniak and Anne Boyko; a son, Prof. John Ressetar, predeceased her in 2002.

Funeral services were celebrated at St. Tikhon's Monastery Church by Metropolitan Herman, Bishop Tikhon (Philadelphia) and several priests; burial followed in the monastery cemetery. Memory eternal, Baba!

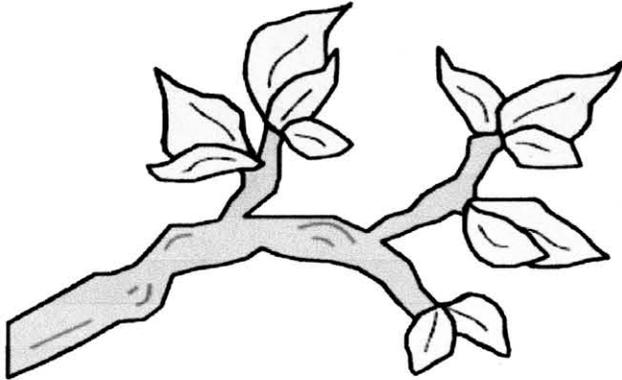
DEPARTED: Matushka Helen Donovan, 83, wife of V. Rev. Daniel Donovan, pastor of St. John the Baptist Church, Philipsburg, PA, passed away on February 20. A longtime active Fellowship member, she most recently was a member of the Pittsburgh District's chapter at large. Matushka Helen faithfully served parishes with her husband and was especially active in religious education. Funeral services were held at her parish followed by burial at St. Tikhon's Monastery cemetery. In addition to her husband, she is survived by three daughters, including Matushka Faith Johnson of Johnstown, and six grandchildren. Memory eternal.

FOCA CALENDAR 2006



- April 28 – 30** National Basketball Tourney (Cleveland, OH)
- June 2 – 4** National Bowling Tournament (Maple Shade, NJ)
- June 11** Pentecost
- July 2 – 8** Ohio Camp Week (St. Vladimir's Camp ~ Ohio)
- July 9 – 15** Ohio Camp Week (St. Vladimir's Camp ~ Ohio)
- July 16 – 22** National Junior Summer Sports Tournament (Junior Olympics) St Vladimir's Camp ~ Ohio
- Aug 30 – 31** National Summer Sports Tournament (Myrtle Beach, SC)
- Aug 31 – Sept 4** 80th National Convention (Myrtle Beach, SC)

Kidz Page



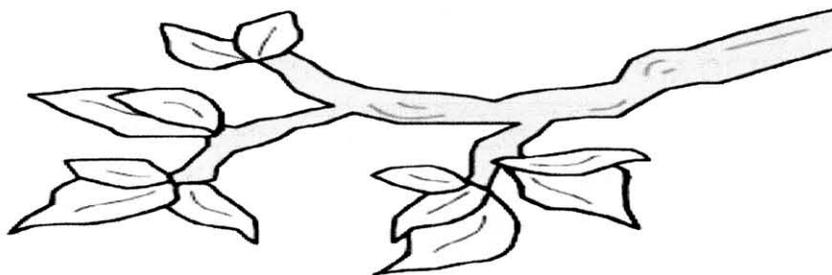
On Sunday, June 11th, the church celebrates Pentecost Sunday — the birthday of the church. On this day the Apostles were given power by the Holy Spirit to speak in many languages and were given the wisdom to preach.

In many of the countries from which are ancestors came this was called “Green Sunday.” It was a custom on this day to decorate homes and churches with green branches. The green branches represent the rebirth of nature and the



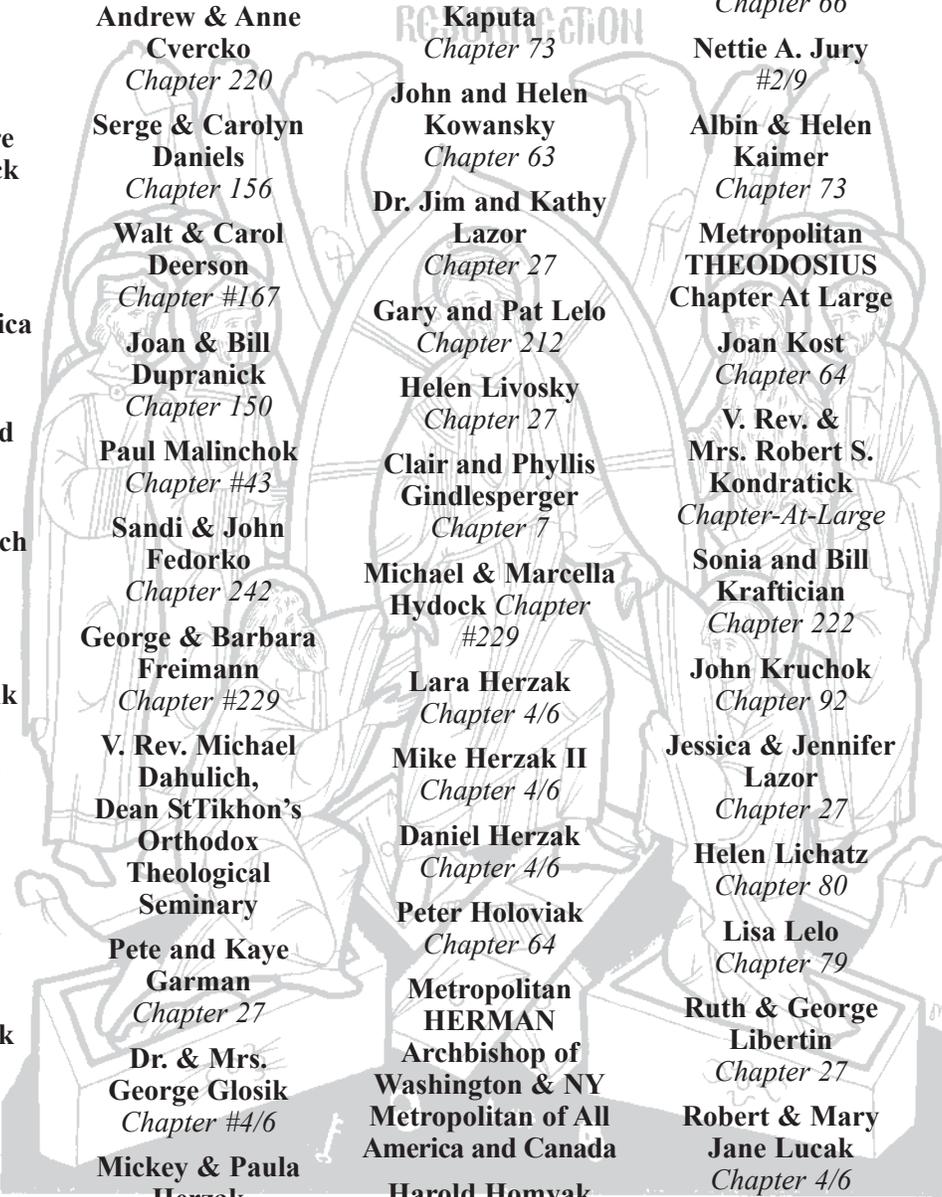
birth of the church. Perhaps you could continue this custom in your own home by having an adult prune some green branches and you can decorate your porch or front door.

A more modern way of celebrating this day is to make cupcakes with an adult supervising and decorate them with green icing, further celebrating Green Sunday. Place a candle in one of them and sing “O Heavenly King” or the Troparian of Pentecost as a way of celebrating the birthday of the church.



OCJ Staff Thanks You...

For Supporting The *Orthodox Christian Journal* Publication, Christ Is Risen! Indeed He Is Risen!



Rev. Michael & Mat. Anderson <i>Chapter #240</i>	Fr. David & Shari Garretson <i>Chapter #167</i>	Dr. Joseph & Barbara Jani <i>Chapter 97</i>	Pat & John Ihnat Chapter #79	George & Faith Malinich <i>Chapter 37</i>
Vera Alesevich <i>Chapter 73</i>	Steve and Marge Cimbolich <i>Chapter 97</i>	Kovach Family <i>Chapter #35</i>	Dave & Laura Johnson <i>Chapter 129</i>	Stephen & Olga Melnick <i>Chapter 221</i>
Walter Alesevich <i>Chapter 79</i>	Andrew & Anne Cvercko <i>Chapter 220</i>	Frank & Carole Kaputa <i>Chapter 73</i>	M/M Ed Junda <i>Chapter 66</i>	John & Pam Petronko <i>Chapter 246</i>
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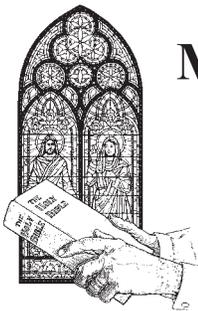
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