

WINTER/SPRING 2006/07 The Steward

The Lord said, "Well done, good and faithful servant: You have been faithful over a little, I will set you over many things; enter into the joy of your Lord." Matthew 25:21

A message from FATHER EUGENE

I greet you and all members of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards as we begin the New Year. May the Lord extend His blessing upon us all and continue to guide our work as The Orthodox Church in America.

The joint session of the Holy Synod of Bishops and Metropolitan Council, held on December 21-22, 2006, approved a new budget for 2007 as prepared by the Metropolitan Council Finance Committee. The budgeted income for FOS, in 2007, is lower than the budget for 2006. How will the new budget impact on the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards?

Each issue of the **TOC** provides articles describing the ongoing work of the programs and activities of the OCA's Church Ministries. It is important for our FOS members, potential members and our loyal OCA constituency, to know that, all voluntary gifts received through FOS go directly to funding the program work of the Church.

Without the additional voluntary gifts our current programs will be curtailed and any new programs will have to be placed on hold until new gifts are realized.

FOS ended the 2006 year receiving over \$138,000.00. This figure is far less than the amount budgeted and adopted at the 14th AAC, but more than expected given the events of the past year.

During the last quarter of the year FOS saw an increase in voluntary gifts, hopefully reflecting a trend that the faithful in the OCA want to see the programs continue and expand to fulfill the mission of the Orthodox Church in America.

For the coming year the aim of FOS is to exceed our budgeted goal. With your help and loving support I am confident we will succeed.

I offer my thanks for your continued support. Have a blessed year

Archpriest Eugene Vansuch



◀ Valerie Zahirsky of the Department of Liturgical Music, addresses participants on the importance of teaching children about Christ's Church during the Skills Conference.

Department of Christian Education holds successful Skills Conference at St. Tikhon's Seminary

The beautiful campus of St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan, PA was the setting for a day long conference coordinated by the Orthodox Church in America's Department of Christian Education. His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman, His Grace Bishop Tikhon of Eastern PA, Seminary faculty and staff, along with almost one hundred seminarians, their wives, and parishioners from Orthodox Churches in the eastern and southwest United States, gathered for an education skills conference, entitled, *"Equipping the Saints."*

The Conference, focusing exclusively on Orthodox Christian Education, was a new experience for many. The purpose of such a conference is to strengthen communication between the national department and those working in Orthodox Christian education in parishes and to study and develop practical teaching and communicating skills for use in our Church School classrooms.

Keynote speakers included the Very Rev. John Matusiak, Director of the OCA's Department of Communications and rector of St. Joseph's Church in Wheaton, IL; Matushka Valerie Zahirsky, co-chair of the DCE, and the Very Rev. David Mahaffey, rector of St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Old Forge, PA.

Following the opening presentations, the assembly broke into various workshops. The workshop leaders and topics included: Deacon Joseph Matusiak, *"Bringing the Youth Back"* to the Church; Matushka Myra Kovalak and Daria Petrokowsky provided guidance for *"Lesson Planning."* Matushka Christine Zebrun and Matushka Deborah Cowan presented important information for creating, *"The Welcoming Classroom."* Matushka Valerie Zahirsky, Victoria Jones, and Veronica Blas led a discussion on *"What is Good Teaching?"*

The conference enabled the department members to share the work

of the department with those doing that work in parishes and to gain feedback on the challenges and needs of those working in the field.

As a result of this conference and discussions with educators, parents and clergy the department would like to focus future workshops on teaching Scripture. Most participants expressed a desire to include more Holy Scripture in the curriculum, thus eliminating the need to use materials developed outside the Orthodox Church.

With the approval of the Holy Synod and the blessing of specific Diocesan Bishops more Education Conferences are being planned in various cities throughout the United States for the year 2007.

For more information one may contact members of the DCE or watch for announcements on the OCA website, oca.org, or in *The Orthodox Church* news-magazine.

RENEW YOUR FOS MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2007 AND HELP US REACH
OUR BUDGETED GOAL: \$96,500

Thank you!

A Spotlight on the work of our FOS-Sponsored OCA Departments!

The Department of Chaplaincies

Fr. Theodore Boback reports on the following developments in his department:

* Two individuals have been recommended for the military chaplain candidate program. Ecclesiastical endorsements have been signed by His Beatitude and forwarded to the Office of Chief of Chaplains.

* Frequent discussions are held with His Beatitude with respect to deployment of Orthodox priests to the Middle East.

The Department of Christian Education

sponsored a successful mini-Skills Conference in September with nearly 100 participants attending. Future Conferences are being planned for the Midwest, West and South in the summer of 2007; Regular monthly articles are provided for the *TOC* news magazine; In their final stage of completion are The Activity Book and the unit on Monasticism.

A major focus of attention for 2007 will be revising and reprinting "The Orthodox Faith" series by Fr. Thomas Hopko.

The Department of Christian Witness and Service

July 25- 28 are the tentative dates announced for the 2007 Parish Ministries Conference to be held at Marymount University in Arlington, VA. **CWS** is working with the **Department of Pastoral Life and Ministry** as a possible partner with the Conference. **CWS** has been invited to host the June 13 segment of the June 12-14, 2007 OTSA meeting at St. Vladimir's Seminary on the topic of bioethics.

Prison Ministry Consultant Dennis Dunn is available to visit parishes and

diocesan events to present various levels of "Ministry to Inmates and their Families" that are possible for parish undertaking on a short or long term basis.

The Parish Survey for Handicapped Accessibility is ongoing with results being forwarded to the Chancery for updating parish information on the OCA web site.

Department members communicate regularly via email and conference calls.

The Department of Evangelization

Fr. Eric Tosi, Department Co-Chairman reported that Fr. Chad Hatfield, fellow Department Co-Chairman, has resigned his position to become the new Provost at St. Vladimir's Seminary. His resignation has been accepted by Metropolitan Herman.

The following parishes have been awarded grants for the 2007 Church Planting Grant Program: **Charleston, SC** (entering its third year in the Program) and first-time recipients: **Fairbanks, AK, Fremont, CA, Mechanicsburg, PA, and Stafford, VA**. The grant to the parish in Stafford, VA is on hold until a resident full-time priest is assigned.

A project receiving much attention is the Parish Revitalization Program. Frs. Daniel Kovalak and Jonathan Ivanoff remain active collecting information and posting articles on the Department's site on the OCA web site.

Fr. Eric will be visiting and speaking on missions and evangelism at both St. Tikhon's and St. Vladimir's Seminary in early February.

The Department of History and Archives

continues to assist individuals who come to the Chancery to view the Archives and offer assistance to researchers with valuable information on research projects. Assistance is provided with translating correspondence and documents for the Holy Synod of Bishops, Chancery staff and other administrative bodies of the Church.

The Department of Institutional

Chaplains participated in the comprehensive Chaplains Conference held on November 2-4, 2006 at St. Tikhon's. Fr. Steven Voytovich stated that a Mission Statement of the Department has received approval and a listing of Institutional Chaplains has been posted on the on-line OCA Sourcebook. Several projects emanating from the Chaplains Conference are still in process: the development of a Commissioning Service, a pin for institutional chaplains, and connecting with seminaries for greater pastoral care and counseling. Two requests for endorsement have been received and will be processed in January.

The Department of Liturgical Music and

Translations continues to provide valuable resources for clergy, choir directors, readers and lay leaders as seen in the following summary:

- ✓ A total of 17 musical settings of Troparia and Kontakia for the month of December have been offered.
- ✓ "Pointed" texts for singing at Vespers and Divine Liturgy (Nativity Royal Hours and Compline) for 13 services in December including the Nativity of Christ cycle: Royal Hours and Vespers following the Liturgy.
- ✓ Two Chat Room sessions were held in December closing out a successful year since its inception in September, 2006. The Winter/Spring 2007 schedule of topical discussions is available on the OCA's website. Any church musician or interested person may enter the chatroom and participate in a discussion relating to Church music, hymnology, vocal technique, rubrics, etc. on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 8:30 PM [EST].
- ✓ Prof. David Drillock announced the appearance of a new section on the OCA web site during the second week of January 2007. "Outlines for Liturgical Services" details the fixed order of services with liturgical and rubrical comments on specific portions of each service. In addition, "Outlines" offers information on the variable portions of Vespers and an informative section on the use of the Psalter in Orthodox worship. Primarily, the work of Department member Igumen Juvenaly of Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA, "Outlines" will be especially useful to pastors, choir directors, readers, and anyone interested in learning more about the Church's liturgical services.



▲ Deacon Joseph Matusiak, YYA Director, addressing the September 2006 Skills Conference at St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, Pennsylvania.

The Department of Pastoral Life and Ministry

Fr. Andrew Morbey, chairperson, provides the following update on projects reported in the previous issue:

1) **An OCA Pastoral Ministries Internet Group, OCA Connect**, is up and running. **OCA Connect** serves as an intranet for the clergy and faithful of The Orthodox Church in America.

2) **Pastoral Life Workshops**. A Retreat on Christian Leadership was held at St. Mary's Cathedral, Minneapolis, MN, in December for 45 participants, with Fr. Sergius Halvorsen. In addition, a Homiletics workshop for 10 Deanery Clergy was held.

3) **Pastoral Audit Program**, is in the early stages of development.

4) Articles are being prepared for a February, 2007 issue of the **Pastor-to-Pastor** newsletter.

The Department is responsible for a series of pastoral reflections called "**Life in Christ**," edited by the V. Rev. John Breck. The series is posted to The Orthodox Church in America's web site twice a month, featuring articles discussing timely topics.

The Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry

Deacon Joseph Matusiak has been carrying on the work of the Department through emails, conference calls, attending meetings and conducting personal meetings with participants of OCA programs. He reports on the following Department activities:

- ✓ The **YYA** website continues to be updated with resources, news and events as they are received;
- ✓ **YoMail** will be relaunched in late January or early February after undergoing a redesign;
- ✓ The **YYA** will be working with the Pro-Orb organization to provide icons for the Orthodox Church in Mexico. In February, Deacon Joseph will lead a group of faithful from St. Joseph's in Wheaton, IL to participate in the Pro-Orb program.

✓ In November, Deacon Joseph was appointed as OCA Member to the OCF Executive Board.

- ✓ Deacon Joseph met with Fr. Emil Hutnyan and Fr. John Memorich and discussed YYA and FOCA cooperation especially with regards to the FOCA's Basketball Tournament and Junior Olympics.

Prayer Fellowship

Fellowship members continue to respond to the request to become a spiritual partner in the *FOS Prayer Network*. Requests continue to be received asking to have loved ones remembered in our prayers at the Metropolitan's Chapel in Syosset, NY. The last request resulted with **16 families** providing **235 names**. The names of the living and departed are remembered during the Proskomedia in Syosset or whenever Fr. Eugene celebrates the Divine Liturgy while making a parish FOS visit.

It is very heart-warming to see the faithful take steps to prayerfully remember their loved ones and express prayerful concern for The Orthodox Church in America. Every name commemorated enables Fr. Eugene to personally identify with members of our FOS parish family. Praying for one another strengthens our faith, witness and commitment to the Gospel teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Wouldn't you like to have the names of your loved ones commemorated by Fr. Eugene? Allow him to add names of your loved ones to the Prayer Network list.

Be a good steward of this fine work through your financial and spiritual support. Use the convenient prayer request form at the right and enclose it with your financial support for FOS to:

The Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards / Prayer List

The Orthodox Church in America
PO Box 675
Syosset, NY 11791

May the Lord be with you and your family.

Fr. Eugene Dansuch

*Join the
FOS Prayer Network*

I'm asking for the below named living and departed be remembered during the Proskomedia at all divine liturgies served in the Metropolitan's Chapel during the spring of 2007.

Name

Address

City, State/Province Zip/Postal Code

Email

Phone

For the HEALTH of:

For the REPOSE of the soul of:

Department of Development and Stewardship

Welcome to your resource for charitable gift planning!

It's no secret that the programs of the Orthodox Church in America depend upon your good will. We've created this easy-to-understand Web site to help you dream a little, about our future and yours. There are many easy giving options from which you can choose--strategies that enhance your personal well being, as well as the Orthodox Church in America.

If you're not sure where to begin, try our **Build a Gift planner**. By answering a few

basic questions, this interactive tool steps you through the process of narrowing down your choices. It's fun and easy to use!

If you already have gift options in mind, click on **Compare Gifts** to see how your choices match up or click on **Ebrochures** to request specific information on a planning option. If you get lost, rest assured that we're always here to help.

Simply contact Father John Dresko at jdresko@oca.org with any questions. Happy dreaming!



▲ **The Rev. Jason Vansuch and children** of St. Nicholas Church, Norwich, CT prepare Christmas Stockings.

beanie babies from several donors accompanied the filled stockings as additional gifts. The Christmas gifts were distributed to children in Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine and Mexico.

13th Annual Christmas Stocking Project Yields 15,000 Christmas Gifts!

Almost 500 parishes, FOCA chapters, youth groups and individuals donated a little more than \$53,000 to the Project for 2006. To arrive at the \$75,000 ideally needed for 15,000 Christmas stockings or equivalent gifts, and so as not to disappoint the expectant children, the cost of the gifts was trimmed and reserve funds (used for start up costs in the next year) were applied. Over 700

The Rev. Emil Jarkovsky, Personal Secretary to Archbishop Jan of Slovakia, in a thank you letter, wrote, "We received your financial help to buy Christmas gifts for the children that are in orphanages and hospitals and we are very grateful for it. May Almighty God protect you by the Holy Spirit for your love and support of our children. We pray for you and for all your Holy Orthodox Church in America."

The Christmas stockings were filled this year by clients of the Center for Retarded Children in Freeport, NY.



▲ **The Rev. Antonio Perdomo, Pharr, TX** distributes Christmas stockings to orphans in Reynosa, Mexico

Come meet Fr. Eugene at a future FOS visit

FEBRUARY

February 3 - 4

St. Cyprian of Carthage, Richmond, VA

February 10 - 11

OPEN

February 17 - 18

Sunday of Forgiveness - OCA Chancery

February 24 - 25

1st Sunday of Lent-

St. Nicholas Church, Norwich, CT (Liturgy)

St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Ch. New London, CT (Vespers)

MARCH

March 3 - 4

2nd Sunday of Lent

All Saints of North America, Salisbury, CT

March 10 - 11

3rd Sunday of Lent

St. Stephen's Church, Longwood, FL

March 17 - 18

4th Sunday of Lent

TBA

March 24 - 25

5th Sunday of Lent

St. Andrew's, Mingo Jct. OH (Liturgy)

St. Nicholas Church, Weirton, WV (Vespers)

APRIL

March 31 - April 1

PALM SUNDAY weekend

April 8

PASCHA

April 15

St. Thomas Sunday

April 21 - 22

TBA

April 28 - 29

TBA

Arrange to have Fr. Eugene visit your parish for a presentation on the work of our Church Ministries and how you can support their efforts. He may be reached at the Chancery by phone, 516-922-0550, ext. 124 and by email: evansuch@oca.org

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