

The Orthodox Church

VOL 44/NO 2 ■ PASCHA/PENTECOST 2008 ■ THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA ■ www.oca.org

**Keeping the light of faith alive
from Pascha to
Pentecost**



Official

No. 486 ■ JANUARY 2008

■ ORDINATIONS

FRIESEN, G. Daniel was ordained to the Holy Diaconate on December 23, 2007 by Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa and Canada at St. Herman of Alaska Sobor, Edmonton, AB, Canada. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Seraphim and attached to the Archdiocese of Canada.

GULIN, Nikolai was ordained to the Holy Diaconate on January 19, 2008 by Metropolitan Herman at Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, NY. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman and attached to the Diocese of Washington and New York.

STOICA, Deacon Narcis was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on December 30, 2007 by Bishop Varsanufie of the Romanian Orthodox Church on behalf of Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate at Radu Voda Monastery, Romania. He is under the omophorion of Archbishop Nathaniel and attached to the Romanian Episcopate.

WASIELEWSKI, Deacon Terenti was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on January 27, 2008 by Metropolitan Herman at St. Nicholas Church, Cohoes, NY. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman and attached to the Diocese of Washington and New York.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

BINGHAM, The Rev. John is released from duties at St. Nicholas Church, Langley, BC, Canada and attached to St. Herman of Alaska Church, Langley, BC, Canada. His duties in the Yukon Territory remain the same/ January 3, 2008.

BRUNER, Deacon Gregory is released from duties at St. John the Forerunner Church, Indianapolis, IN and attached to Holy Ascension Church, Albion, MI/ January 28, 2008.

FRIESEN, Deacon G. Daniel is attached to St. Herman of Alaska Sobor, Edmonton, AB, Canada/ December 23, 2007.

GULIN, Deacon Nikolai is attached to Holy Trinity Church, Brooklyn, NY/ January 19, 2008.

KALUZHNYI, The Rev. Alexei is released from duties at Holy Resurrection Church, Claremont, NH, and from his on-loan status to the Diocese of New England and returned to the omophorion of Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa. He remains attached to the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada/ January 8, 2008.

KLUCHKO, The V. Rev. John is released from duties at Holy Resurrection Church, Belle Vernon, PA and granted retirement/ January 7, 2008.

SMOLCIC, The V. Rev. Samuel is released from duties at Holy Resurrection Church, West Brownsville, PA and appointed rector of Holy Resurrection Church, Belle Vernon, PA/ January 20, 2008.

STOICA, The Rev. Narcis awaits assignment/ December 30, 2007.

WASIELEWSKI, The Rev. Terenti is appointed acting rector of St. Nicholas Church, Cohoes, NY/ January 27, 2008.

■ RETIRED

KLUCHKO, The V. Rev. John is granted retirement. He is attached to St. Basil Chapel, Cranberry Town-

ship, PA/ January 7, 2008.

■ DEATHS

[EYKALOVICH], Hegumen Gennady died in retirement on January 10, 2008. May his memory be eternal!

SZYRYNSKI, The V. Rev. Gregory, rector of Holy Myrrhbearing Women Church, West Sacramento, CA, died on January 15, 2008. May his memory be eternal!

No. 487 ■ FEBRUARY 2008

■ ORDINATIONS

BUCK, Theophan was ordained to the Holy Diaconate on February 3, 2008 by Metropolitan Herman at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

BUCK, Deacon Theophan is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA. February 3, 2008.

FILIPOVICH, The Rev. John is released from duties at St. Michael the Archangel Mission, Houston, TX and attached to St. Seraphim of Sarov Cathedral, Dallas, TX/ February 18, 2008.

GOETTING, Deacon Timothy is released from duties at St. Anthony the Great Church, San Antonio, and from the omophorion of Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the Diocese of the South. He is transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to the Diocese of the Midwest/ February 8, 2008. He is attached to Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, IL/ February 15, 2008.

KARBO, The V. Rev. Anthony is released from his duties as chaplain at the Protection of the Holy Virgin Monastery, Lake George, CO. He remains Rector of SS. Constantine and Helen Church, Colorado Springs, CO/ February 17, 2008.

KATSILAS, The Rev. Constantine, who was acting rector, is appointed rector of St. John the Divine Church, Windsor, ON, Canada/ February 11, 2008.

KRETA, Deacon Joseph, who was awaiting assignment, is attached to Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC/ February 20, 2008.

MILLER, Deacon Kevin, who was attached, is assigned to All Saints of Alaska [St. Arseny of Konevits] Church, Victoria, BC, Canada/ January 23, 2008.

POGREBNIAC, The V. Rev. Vadim, who was awaiting attachment in retirement, is appointed pastor emeritus of St. Spiridon Cathedral, Seattle, WA/ February 11, 2008.

POWELL, The Rev. Barnabas, in addition to duties at St. Michael Church, Pueblo, CO, is appointed chaplain at the Protection of the Holy Virgin Monastery, Lake George, CO/ February 17, 2008.

RESIGA, The V. Rev. Michael is released from duties at St. Andrew the Apostle Mission, Brooksville, FL and granted retirement/ January 1, 2008.

STOICA, The Rev. Narcis, who was awaiting assignment, is appointed pastor of Nativity of the Ever-Virgin Mary Mission, Cambridge, MA/ March 2, 2008.

■ LEAVES OF ABSENCE

DIEHL, The Rev. Andrew, who was priest-in-charge of Holy Resurrection Mission, Aiken, SC and attached to Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC, is released

from these assignments and granted a leave of absence for six months. He is attached to St. Seraphim of Sarov Cathedral, Dallas, TX/ February 21, 2008.

■ RELEASED

KUCHTA, The V. Rev. Waldemar is released from duties at the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada and from the omophorion of Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa; transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman; and granted a canonical release to the omophorion of Metropolitan Joseph of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada, and Australia/ February 27, 2008.

TEFFT, Deacon Alexander is released from duties at the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada and from the omophorion of Archbishop Seraphim of Ottawa. He is transferred to the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman/ February 27, 2008. He is granted a canonical release to the Patriarchate of Antioch/ February 29, 2008.

■ RETIRED

RESIGA, The V. Rev. Michael is granted retirement, effective January 1, 2008. He awaits assignment.

■ SUSPENDED

DIEHL, The Rev. Andrew, who was priest-in-charge of Holy Resurrection Mission, Aiken, SC and attached to Holy Apostles Church, Columbia, SC, is suspended from all priestly functions, effective February 21, 2008.

■ DEATHS

DIMITROFF, The V. Rev. Venseslav, attached in retirement to St. George Cathedral, Rossford, OH, died on February 27, 2008. *May his memory be eternal!*

KULIK, The Rev. Miroslaw, who was awaiting assignment, died on February 28, 2008. *May his memory be eternal!*

RADU, The V. Rev. Romulus, attached in retirement to Holy Trinity Church, Miramar, FL, died on February 11, 2008. *May his memory be eternal!*

■ PARISHES

DIOCESE OF THE WEST/ New Name. The Orthodox Mission, Helena, MT is renamed St. Moses the Strong Mission/ January 31, 2008.

No. 488 ■ MARCH 2008

■ ORDINATIONS

KONTOS, Deacon Philip was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on March 25, 2008 by Metropolitan Herman at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman.

KSINYUK, Igor was ordained to the Holy Diaconate on March 8, 2008 by Metropolitan Herman at St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman.

URBANOWICZ, Deacon Maximus R. was ordained to the Holy Priesthood on March 16, 2008 by Metropolitan Herman at St. Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, DC. He is under the omophorion of Metropolitan Herman.

■ ASSIGNMENTS

GRIGGS, The Rev. James, who is on loan to the

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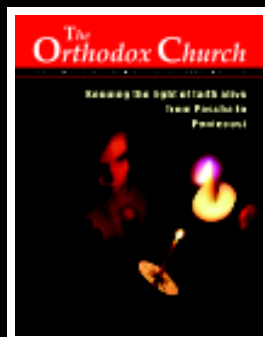
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Our Cover

FROM
PASCHA TO
PENTECOST
Keeping the
flame of
faith alive!

Photo/Nathan
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The Pittsburgh Hilton,
15th All-American Council site.

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Pope addresses challenges to Christian faith

During his recent visit to the United States in April 2008, Pope Benedict XVI met with leaders and representatives of US Christian churches, communities, and organizations. The setting was an ecumenical prayer service at Saint Joseph's, a parish church in Manhattan founded in the 19th century for German Catholic immigrants. The simple yet dignified ceremony included an address by the Pope.

A central theme in the address was the current challenge to Christian faith in secularism and relativism. The passages below offer examples of the main thoughts conveyed by the Pope.

"...Of grave concern is the spread of secularist ideology that undermines or even rejects transcendent truth. The very possibility of divine revelation, and therefore of Christian faith, is often placed into question by cultural trends widely present in academia, the mass media and public debate. For these reasons, a faithful witness to the Gospel is as urgent as ever. Christians are challenged to give a clear account of the hope that they hold [cf. 1 Peter 3:15].

"Too often those who are not Christians, as they observe the splintering of Christian communities, are understandably confused about the Gospel message itself.... We must first recall that the unity of the Church flows from the perfect oneness of the triune God. In Saint John's Gospel, we are told that Jesus prayed to His Father that His disciples might be one, 'just as You are in e and I am in You' [John 17:21]. This passage reflects the unwavering conviction of the early Christian community that its unity

was both caused by, and is reflective of, the unity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Only by 'holding fast' to sound teaching [2 Thessalonians 2:15; cf. Revelation 2:12-29] will we be able to respond to the challenges that confront us in an evolving world. Only in this way will we give unambiguous testimony to the truth of the Gospel and its moral teaching."

At the beginning of his address, Pope Benedict acknowledged the ecumenical work of the National Council of Churches, Christian Churches Together, the Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, and many others.

After the conclusion of the ecumenical prayer service, the leader of one of the major Protestant churches in the US noted in a conversation with me that, notwithstanding significant differences between the Catholic Church and other Christian churches and communities, only the Pope can convene the broad spectrum of Christians to an ecumenical prayer service. In attendance were Orthodox (Eastern and Oriental) hierarchs; "main line" Anglican, Protestant, Pentecostal, and conservative Evangelical leaders; representatives of the great diversity of Protestant organizations and communities; and representatives of ecumenical organizations.

For the Orthodox Churches, the message of Pope Benedict was welcome. The Pope's assessment of the present challenges to Christians in mission and in the quest for Christian unity is deeply shared by the Orthodox. And the Pope's articulation of the ways in which these challenges must be met is in harmony with the Orthodox understanding and vision. ■

Metropolitan Herman: "Believe and we will see Him!"

The Gospel of Saint John tells of Saint Mary Magdalene's encounter with the Risen Christ at the empty tomb. Mary weeps, believing that someone had taken away the Lord's body. Christ approaches her and asks, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom do you seek?" Not recognizing the Lord at first, she asks Him if He knows where the body of her Master had been taken. Jesus replies, "Mary!" and immediately she recognizes Him.

In this passage, we witness a profound encounter between the Lord and His servant. Simply by saying her name, Christ transformed her lamentation into joy. What a difference even one word, spoken at a critical moment, can make in one's life.

Writing on this passage, Saint Ambrose of Milan offers an important insight into the nature of faith. He states that by asking Mary, "Whom do you seek?" the Lord was in effect saying, "You are the cause of your own weeping; you are the author of your own lamentation, because you are disbelieving of Christ. Believe and you will see Him."

Looking at the world from the perspective of belief makes a profound difference in what we see. The homeless person that we pass on the street, through the eyes of faith, is recognized as a living icon of the Living God. The crying child in our arms, through eyes of faith, is embraced as a sacred trust that God has given us to raise according to His Way. The struggles and toils of daily life, through eyes of faith, are known to be the Cross which we are called to take up as disciples of the Lord.

For most in our society, "Easter" is long gone this year. For faithful

Orthodox Christians, we have only just arrived at the celebration of Pascha. Our fasting, our prayer, our lenten journey is only now fulfilled.

"Believe and you will see Him." The reality of the resurrection, witnessed through eyes of faith, changes everything. No longer do we need to be subject to sorrow or fear. Christ is risen, and nothing can take His victorious gift of everlasting life away from us. The holy confessors and martyrs were well aware of this. This awareness gave them the courage to stay the course of their faith, under the greatest of hardships. Even facing the threat of death, through eyes of faith, they were acutely aware of the Victor over death strengthening and comforting them. It is only through our belief that we behold the full splendor and beauty of Pascha. With eyes of faith, on Pascha we become witnesses to the complete and ultimate victory of life over death, of freedom over captivity, of God over the evil one. "Trampling down death by death," our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ grants new life to all who believe in Him as King and as God.

I greet all of you on this radiant feast. May we celebrate the most holy day of Pascha "with faith and with love." May the triumphant brilliance of Christ's resurrection fill our lives with joy and peace. "Believe and we will see Him."

With love in the Risen Lord,

+ HERMAN

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

Pascha 2008

WISDOM

from the Fathers

St. Cyril of Jerusalem

The root of all good works is the hope of the Resurrection; for the expectation of the recompense prompts the soul to good works. For every laborer is ready to endure the toils, if they see their reward in prospect; but when men weary themselves for nought, their hearts soon sink, as well as their bodies.

St. Romanos the Melodist

The women, with mingled joy and fear, joy and sorrow, turned away from the tomb, as Scripture teaches, to meet the apostles; and they said, "Why are you disheartened? Why do you hide your faces? Lift up your hearts! Christ is risen! Form choruses and say along with us, 'The Lord is risen!' He has shone forth, He Who was created before the dawn. Do not be downcast, but take courage! Spring has appeared; come to bloom, ye branches, producing fruit and not misery. He offers resurrection to the fallen."



St. Philaret of Moscow

The Apostles call themselves "witnesses of the resurrection" of Christ, though their ministry was to bear witness not of His resurrection alone, but also of His whole doctrine, so important do they deem the truth of the resurrection to be. And indeed, as soon as this truth is confirmed, so soon is also confirmed thereby the truth of all that which Our Lord did and taught. But inasmuch as the truth of Christ's resurrection is important to faith, the truth of our resurrection is important to our life. When this truth is confirmed, all the rules of a holy and godly life become firmly established in us. ■

That's the Spirit

Father Vladimir Berzonsky

A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you.

John 12:35

When the light goes out

Jesus is calling His listeners to action. "Walk," in the passage above, is best translated as "keep on walking." Those who were on the way with Him must keep on going wherever He was moving, because He is the Light of the world. To walk away is to stray into darkness. If it was confusing to follow Him, it was worse to forsake Him. He was addressing His own people, who couldn't decide Who or What He was; however, time was running out. It wouldn't be long before others would make up their minds that He was a threat to their style of life, and they had to be rid of Him.

For us today, it means that the light of faith can be extinguished when we no longer walk with Christ. That reality comes to me especially on Holy Saturday and Pascha. Those who have made the lenten journey approach the "finish line" with radiant faces, filled with inner joy, glorious in the presence of the risen and living Lord. They listen with rapt attention to the ultimate sermon, that from Saint John Chrysostom, inviting all to the Feast of Feasts. So you started at the dawn of Great Lent and stumbled along the way. It's OK. Come anyway. Or maybe you were away until Cross Sunday, but picked up from there. Perhaps something came barging into your routine and thwarted your intentions to pray, meditate, and fast, and you couldn't do so until Palm Sunday. Never mind. If your intentions were pure, then your heart followed suit. Don't be shy; you are welcome.

In melancholy contrast are those who appear with their baskets to be blessed, but have no interest in the services.

Orthodoxy is only nostalgia – for them it's a time to recall their childhood and the Paschal traditions of their parents. They remember the past, but what they recall is a jumble of long prayers, mostly in a strange language, scents of incense and sounds of unfamiliar chanting to which they were required to bow and make some motion before their faces with their right hands. I sprinkle their baskets with Holy Water and search in their eyes for some flicker of light, but I find either sadness or nothing at all. I look down at their children and grandchildren, wondering and hoping that maybe they will be led by the Living Light to examine their spiritual heritage one day.

The irony of our times is that many in search of a life in Christ have found their way to the Orthodox Church. Those who have embraced the true faith exhibit a gusto that invigorates us born into the faith with their enthusiasm, and the light that shines from their passion glows and radiates throughout the Church. One need but notice the many converts who are in our clergy, even to the rank of episcopacy. Those who entered Orthodoxy as adults in America almost exclusively populate our monasteries here. It seems that we have more success in gaining members from the non-Orthodox than we do in rekindling the faith in those who had been baptized in infancy. Christ the Light of the world is also the sword Who divides family members between the believers and the former believers. Holidays are the worst of times, when those who share the blessed food from the Paschal baskets are not all the same ones who have partaken of the true Bread of Life in the Holy Eucharist. ■

Archbishop Gregory [Afonsky]

Christ and the Church

“This *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven” [Genesis 28:17].

Since the foundation of the Church, theological minds have tried to define her essence and essential qualities. The aim has not been to discern the innermost mystery of the Church, but to examine the divine origin and nature of the Body of Christ as revealed through Holy Scripture and Church Tradition. As Orthodox Christians, we believe that the Holy Scriptures are inspired by God Himself and that they reveal to us the way to salvation.

We also believe that the truth about God as the Orthodox Church teaches it and the truth about God as revealed in the Scriptures are one and the same; for the Source of truth, both in the Scriptures and in the Church, is the one Holy Spirit. Our knowledge of that truth, then, is provided both by the Scriptures and by the Church.

An individual who interprets the Holy Scriptures in light of his own subjective understanding can err, be deceived, or sim-

ply exercise wrong judgment. The one, holy, catholic, apostolic Orthodox Church, however, can never err, be deceived, or be wrong in her judgment, since the Church is infallible and forever the same in her nature as founded by God.

The first and most significant dogma of the Orthodox Church concerns the Holy Trinity. Two unique qualities distinguish this dogma – its absolute necessity for the existence of the Church and the absolute incomprehensibility of its essence.

The quality of “absolute necessity” lies in the fact that the dogma of the Holy Trinity contains within itself the whole essence of Christian faith, as well as the foundation for all teaching of and about Jesus Christ. As such the whole of Christian faith, as well as particular doctrinal teachings, depends upon and derives from the dogma of the Holy Trinity. This fact has special significance for Orthodox ecclesiology.

The quality of “absolute incomprehensibility” lies in the fact that the dogma of the Holy Trinity insists that the essence of the Holy Trinity – God’s self-knowledge – is revealed to us neither in the Old nor the New Testament. We know that God exists and that He is the Creator [Genesis 1:31]; but what God is in His essence is not, and indeed, cannot be explained. We also know the Holy Trinity to be the divine life of one divine being [Matthew 28:19], but the full mystery of the Trinity is inexplicable. Nevertheless, the human intellect tries constantly to fathom this dogma, in order to understand and eventually explain these mysteries as far as the human mind is capable.

Thus, just as we cannot speak of the essence of the Holy Trinity, which is the foundation of the Church, so we cannot speak of our knowledge of the essence of the Church – its deepest inner meaning. Although we can never know the true essence of the Church, we can perceive much about its nature through the revealed qualities of the Church itself made known to us through the Holy Scriptures, Holy Tradition, and in the teachings of the Church Fathers.

The doctrine of the Church is not the same as the “self-consciousness” or “self-expression” of the Church. Rather, it explains and describes the origin, nature, and life of the Church – her goal, purpose, and the means by which her purpose is fulfilled. The dogma also reveals how the Church differs from all that is *not* the Church, since the Church is not of natural, earthly origin. According to the clear teaching of our Savior Jesus Christ, the deep and mysterious life of the Church is permanently and unalterably animated by the divine life of Christ Himself and of the Holy Spirit. This divine, mysterious life of the Church cannot be logically defined. To understand the reality of the Church and her life, one must actually *participate* in that life as a member of the living organism, which is the Body of Christ.

In the Church’s early history, various heresies, such as Gnosticism, Montanism, Novatianism, and Donatism, tried to pervert and distort a true understanding of the inner reality of the Church. Similarly, in our own day, schismatic or heretical groups are trying to present false understandings of the Church. Secularism, relativism, and neo-Donatism bring confusion and falsehoods to the minds even of Orthodox Christians. Neo-Donatists go so far as to speak of the Church as deprived of grace or as being “impure.” The Church is being replaced by notions of a “Christian society” or “Christianity-in-general,” which subvert the image of the Church as the source of the written Word of God. It is as though the gates of hell were rising up against the Church, seeking to separate her from Jesus Christ and impeding her task of promoting salvation, a task entrusted to her by her Founder.

Alexander Khomiakov wrote, “the Church cannot teach against her own dogma; she cannot teach against her own

Classics to 26

Archbishop Gregory [Afonsky] fell asleep in the Lord on April 15, 2008. From 1973 until his retirement in 1995, he served as ruling hierarch of the Orthodox Church in America’s “Mother Diocese” of Sitka and Alaska. He also engaged in a variety of scholarly pursuits and was the author of several books and numerous articles on theology and American Church history.

This article is adapted from his book, *Christ and the Church in Orthodox Teaching and Tradition*, published in 2001 by Saint Vladimir’s Seminary Press.



Priestmonk Calinic [Berger]



The Cross & Pentecost

The Cross and Pentecost are inseparable in Orthodox Christianity. The connection between these two events forms the foundation – the entire paradigm – of our spirituality, liturgical life and theological reflection, and most especially, our theology of deification.

It is only through this relationship that we can understand the many antinomies and even paradoxes of the spiritual life. This means that when God sends us a cross in our lives, it is to prepare us to receive the Holy Spirit; and likewise, when He sends us the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, it will be accompanied by a cross. This is so because God wishes us to be *inspired*, but not *exalted* [2 Corinthians 12:7].

The inseparable connection between the Cross and Pentecost in Orthodoxy is based on both the eternal relationship of the Son and the Spirit, and their inseparability in the economy – that is, in the incarnation, ministry, death, and resurrection of the Son of God. For all eternity, as we say in the Creed, the Son is “begotten of the Father,” and the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father.” The Holy Fathers further clarified that the Spirit proceeds *from* the Father *to* the Son, and *rests* in the Son, and is *manifested* from the Son to the Father. The Son and the Spirit dwell in one another from all eternity, and are always found together.

This eternal inseparability of the Son and the Spirit is manifested in the entire earthly life of the Son of God: the Spirit

is present at Jesus’ incarnation, overshadowing the Virgin Mary [Luke 1:35]; leads the child Jesus to the temple [Luke 2:40]; is upon Him as He reads in the synagogue [Luke 4:18]; descends and rests on Him at His Baptism [Luke 3:22]; leads Him to the wilderness to be tempted [Luke 4:1]; casts out devils [Matthew 12:28]; is present at His death on the Cross, at which Jesus “breathed forth the Spirit” [John 19:30]; and brings about His resurrection from the dead [Romans 8:11]. Conversely, the Spirit is sent into the world by the Son; Jesus prays that the Comforter will come to continue His work and bring His words into remembrance, teaching the disciples directly [John 14:16,17,26; 15:26]. The Spirit in turn is given by the risen Christ: “When He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” [John 20:22]. The Son and the Spirit work together at all times; they are, says Saint Irenaeus, the “two hands” of the Father.

Thus it is that in Orthodoxy, we stress not only the inseparability of the Cross and the Resurrection, but of the Cross and Pentecost. True, the Cross – as well as all of Jesus’ unique claims

Pentecost to 8

Pentecost from 7

about Himself and His teaching – can only be understood in light of the resurrection, which confirmed Who Jesus was and all the claims He made about Himself. If there was no resurrection from the dead, Jesus' teaching and His death on the Cross would have been shrouded in ambiguity. But the resurrection did not answer everything: even though Jesus appeared to His disciples for 40 days after His resurrection, the disciples still could not preach about it. Only after the descent of the Spirit on Pentecost did they

The Spirit is present at Jesus' incarnation, overshadowing the Virgin; leads the child Jesus to the temple; is upon Him as He reads in the synagogue; descends upon Him at His baptism; leads Him to the wilderness to be tempted; is present at His death on the Cross, at which Jesus "breathed forth the Spirit;" and brings about His resurrection from the dead.

have the power to preach the resurrection and baptize. Only after they had the Holy Spirit poured out on them did they continue Christ's work. Without the Holy Spirit, there is no Gospel.

In Orthodox Christianity, we expect all the blessings and good things and gifts of God – gifts which come through obedience and love. But we do not expect them without qualification. The one, all-encompassing Gift of God is His Son in the Spirit – and this gift cannot come without the Cross. Hence, the glory of Orthodoxy can never be a "get rich Gospel," nor that of any other worldly qualification; rather, the glory of Orthodoxy is a mature and grounded glory, a glory which transcends but does not avoid the misfortunes, disappointments, trials, and tribulations of this life, but transforms them. It accepts the Cross; it does not flee from it. Neither did Christ avoid it. This is a spiritual truth: only in accepting the Cross are we filled with God's power, and the result is resurrection unto life.

The light of the resurrection, the glory and gifts of God, restore to humanity its authentic beauty. For this we prepare through asceticism and fasting for 40 days, a period of self-denial, purification, and the death of the old man. But this is not done without the power of the Spirit and the light of the resurrection. Thus we hear the Church sing, "Let us keep the fast with joy." Asceticism, joy, and beauty are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they necessitate each other. This is the unique balance of our Tradition: the Cross, the Resurrection, and Pentecost, inseparable, as God's great gift for the renewal of man. Thus, on the glorious Feast of Pascha, Saint Gregory the Theologian exclaimed, "May He Who rose again from the dead recreate me by the Spirit."

May we also be so recreated. ■

Priestmonk Calinic is pastor of Holy Cross Church, Hermitage, PA.

Tom Ehrich

Time to tighten the belt

Making the best of the recession

Belt-tightening comes hard to churches. For most congregations, the belt is already tight, with spending so low as to be self-defeating. How much more can be trimmed from budgets that are barely maintenance-level now?

The burden of tightening usually falls unfairly on clergy and lay staff. What's the easiest way to compensate for lagging stewardship by members? Cut staff, cut hours, but never, of course, cut expectations of performance and availability.

Charting a fresh financial course usually brings our junk to the surface: festering wounds, unresolved arguments, distrust of clergy, conflicting visions of purpose, and control battles. Who will have the heart to consider the plunging American economy – not even the experts can avoid the word "recession" now – and make a responsible, faithful response? Churches can deal with wars, racial unrest, changing cultural mores, new constituencies, hurricanes and death. But they flail and sputter when talk turns to money. They become paralyzed when the need to reconsider operational basics becomes inescapable.

Recession exposes our fundamental dysfunction. Speaking broadly, we don't get along. Put another way, we don't "play well together." Clergy and laity are at odds. Lay leadership tends to be weaker than we require. Most members see church as a voluntary society that meets their needs, or else they walk. We tend to please people, rather than guide them across wilderness. We cling to old ways. Except in a few traditions, we tend to accept marginal giving, rather than lead people, as Jesus did, to self-sacrifice and gratitude. And now a recession looms – a recession that probably will cut deeper and last longer precisely because politicians have worked so hard to deny it and corporate leadership has been scrambling to hoard cash and lavish one last wad on itself.

What should congregations do?

First, let's say the word: "recession."

That means worsening unemployment, sagging consumer confidence, cutbacks in capital spending, paralysis in debt markets, unsold houses, declining economic activity, corporate and personal bankruptcies, and tough decisions at home.

Second, let's accept that recession is a spiritual and pastoral

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Father Lawrence Farley

A return to Tradition

We've got a lot to think about

As I was laid up in bed recently following eye surgery, I found myself listening to tapes of Father Alexander Schmemmann's classroom lectures I had recorded in 1983. While his words about the ordination and functions of bishops and presbyters helped bring together much of what I had been reading in the past, they also seemed to contain a prescription that could help our beloved Orthodox Church in America today.

One of the earliest functions of a bishop was that of *sumpresbyteros*, or *co-presbyter*. The title, used by Saint Peter in his first epistle 5:1, reflects the consistent and early apostolic tradition that bishops do not rule their churches as pastors *in isolation* from the presbyters – much less as rulers *over* them – but *alongside* them. The presbyters, in fact, formed a single group – the *presbyterium* of the bishop, his *council*, apart from whose wisdom and guidance he would do nothing.

We see this reality reflected in the letters of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, who was martyred about 107 AD. In his day, the bishop was the local pastor of the community. All the Christians in a given city or locality met together on Sunday, ideally in the same place, sharing the one Eucharist, with the bishop as celebrant and preacher. As the local pastor, it was the bishop who baptized all the Christians of that city, or who authorized their baptisms. It was the bishop who excommunicated grievous offenders when they sinned, and who reconciled them, when repentant, to the communion and fellowship of the Church. Each person in the local community knew his bishop well – not surprisingly, since it was the local faithful who chose and elected one of their own to be their bishop. The letters of Saint Ignatius presuppose this warm and close relationship shared by the bishop, as the local pastor, and his flock. When Saint Ignatius counsels the faithful to submit to their bishop, he is not counselling blind submission to

a distant authority, but godly acceptance of the local pastoral leadership. Saint Ignatius always speaks of priests – *presbyters*, to give their earliest and most accurate title – in the plural, since they formed a united council in the local church. They shared the rule with the bishop, advising him and handling the day-to-day administration.

What is particularly interesting in the letters of Saint Ignatius is the relationship of the presbyters with their bishop. That is, the presbyters, with the deacons, formed a single harmonious whole. In his letter to the Philadelphians, Saint Ignatius tells the faithful, “Give heed to the bishop, and the presbytery [note that they form a single council], and the deacons.” To the Trallians, he writes the same thing: “Let all men respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, even as they respect the bishop as a type of the Father, and the presbyters as the council of God and as the college of the apostles.”

This unity of the “college of presbyters” with their bishop is seen even more clearly in Saint Ignatius’ letter to the Ephesians, to whom he writes, “It becomes you to run in harmony with the mind of the bishop. For your honorable presbytery is attuned to the bishop, even as its strings are attuned to a lyre.” The presbyters are joined to their bishop, he says, just as strings are joined to the lyre – that is, the presbyters, along with the bishop, form a single instrument, a single united whole.

This continued to be the practice throughout the entire pre-Nicene period. In his book, *Jurisdiction in the Early Church*, Gregory Dix makes some illuminating points about the nature of the early episcopate and its relationship to the presbyterate, examining their respective functions as found in the prayers of ordination. In the prayers of ordination to the episcopacy, as found in Hippolytus’ *Apostolic Tradition*, the bishop is still the local pastor of his community. His function is to “liturgize” (i.e., to preside at the Liturgy), to “bind and loose” (i.e., to excommunicate and reconcile penitents to the Church), to “give lots” (i.e., to ordain), to “loose every bond” (i.e. to exorcise). In all this we see that the bishop’s function is that of the local pastor.

The ordination prayer for presbyters omits all this. This prayer asks God to “fill [the candidate] with the Spirit of grace and counsel, that he may share in the presbyterate and govern [God’s] people with a pure heart.” The emphasis here is on governing, ruling, and administrating – functions crucial in the day-to-day life of the Church. By “counsel,” the prayer meant “effective decision-making,” actually ruling in the Church. The presbyters, functioning as a college, gave or withheld their consensus for all that went on. This is seen clearly, Dix says, in such works as the *Apostolic Church Order*. The *presbyterium* was responsible to “give praise and blame for whatever needs it,” to “have the care of the Church,” to “punish wrongdoers.” They did not function simply as a rubber-stamp for the bishop; it was they who made the decisions. To be sure, the bishop, as the local pastor, possessed great moral authority among his flock, and it was this moral authority, derived from his function as pastor and “president of the Eucharistic assembly,” that allowed him to exercise effective leadership. But in all this, he needed the assent of his council of presbyters; he did not function *in isolation* from them, but *in unity* with them.

NOTES

from the Chancellor's desk

Father Alexander Garklavs

Not for pastors only

The recent republication of *The Orthodox Pastor* by Archbishop John [Shahovskoy] is a notable event. The book – one of the very first publications from Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press over 30 years ago – has long been out of print. It is still one of the very few works in the English language in the specializes field known as *pastoralia*, that is, *works devoted to issues that face parish priests*.

Originally, *The Orthodox Pastor* was published in the Russian language in Europe during the 1930s. It was written by a young priestmonk who realized that his clerical colleagues, deprived of access to books about pastoral theology, were in desperate need of such resources to help them in their ministries. The book is a “quiet classic,” not a world-renowned best-seller, but a sincerely thought out and compelling text that cannot fail to inspire a sincere reader. Despite its being written with a particular place and time in mind, the book is really amazing because, as Father Alexander Schmemmann notes in the book's introduction, pastoral work, “dependent as it is on ever-changing ‘situations’ and ‘cultures,’ remains essentially the same in all of them, for its only real object is the human soul and its eternal destiny.”

The book stands by itself as an exceptional achievement, but the author is a person of note who has been neither recognized nor appreciated as he should be. Archbishop John [Shahovskoy] belongs to that small but outstanding group of European-born bishops who came to the US after World War II and became influential ecclesiastical leaders in what then was called “the Metropolia” and would become the Orthodox Church in America. Archbishop John's background is quite extraordinary. He was born into Russian

nobility as Prince Dmitri Shahovskoy in Saint Petersburg in 1902. The Russian Revolution forced his family to flee westward, while young Dmitri served in the White Army during the Russian Civil War. Eventually settling in France, he studied at Louvain University in Belgium and was a budding writer of poems and articles. In 1926, he went to Mount Athos and was tonsured to monastic rank with the name John. For a while he studied theology at Saint Sergius Institute in Paris. He was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Evlogy and sent to serve in Belaya Tserkov, Yugoslavia. After several years, he was assigned to Berlin and, in 1937, was raised to the rank of archimandrite.

During the war years, Father John assisted many needy Orthodox refugees who came through Berlin, providing whatever help his resources permitted. He arrived in the US shortly after the war. After a brief assignment in Los Angeles, he was elected Bishop of Brooklyn in 1947. For three years he served as dean of Saint Vladimir's Seminary. In 1950, he was elected to the See of San Francisco, where he remained for almost 30 years. In 1963, he was elevated to the rank of archbishop. Retiring in 1979, he passed away ten years later.

Archbishop John was the Church's representative at ecumenical gatherings

he stands out among the OCA's past hierarchs, although Metropolitan Leonty also distinguished himself as a writer.

Archbishop John's writing was varied – literary, theological, critical, and autobiographical. He himself would probably want to be remembered as a poet, as he had written several volumes of poetry under the Russian pseudonym “Strannik,” which means *pilgrim*. After the fall of communism, his writings were republished and enjoyed popularity in Russia. Regrettably, very few of his works have been translated into English. One notable exception is *The Orthodox Pastor*.

Although the book is meant to be a work of pastoral theology, it is in many ways not for pastors only. In fact, it is recommended reading for everyone who takes seriously their life in the Church because it outlines the features of what a “normal” Orthodox Christian parish community should be like. The features that delineate a normal parish are the products of cooperative efforts by both priest and parishioners. “Holy is the beauty of the Orthodox Church, of the icons, the architecture, the singing,” he wrote. “But it is not so much by this beauty as by the prayerfulness of the celebrants and by the pious reverence of the worshippers that a man is attracted to the Church and made faithful to it.” Holiness is only present

A ccording to Archbishop John, “the pastor, the church warden, the parish council should be like a closely knit family, completely trusting one another and united by the same purpose – to bring holiness into people's lives.”

for a significant period of time. While participating in the work of the Central Committee of the World Council of Church, he established contacts with representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and was instrumental in initiating the dialogue between the Metropolia and Moscow Patriarchate that led to the reestablishment of canonical relations with the Russian Church. This resulted in the granting of autocephaly and the establishment of the Orthodox Church in America in 1970. His legacy is preserved today in his extensive writings. In this

within the context of community. The “pastor, the church warden, the parish council should be like a closely knit family, completely trusting one another and united by the same purpose – to bring holiness into people's lives.”

In addition to the quality of holiness, Archbishop John noted that a vibrant parish will always manifest the “apostolic zeal to attract new souls.” With prophetic insight for American Orthodoxy, he envisioned that parish councils must “give a part of their time to discussing the most

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OCA News Notes Notices

Holy Synod addresses crisis in Alaskan Diocese

As this issue of *The Orthodox Church* went to press, members of the Holy Synod of Bishops are making final preparations to attend their regular spring session the OCA Chancery, Syosset, NY, on May 13-15, 2008.

Topping the spring sessions' agenda will be a final resolution to the crisis in the Diocese of Alaska, the OCA's oldest, that led His Grace, Bishop Nikolai of Sitka, Anchorage, and Alaska to accept a voluntary leave of absence at the end of April.

A brief statement, issued by the Holy Synod after its April 17 special session, acknowledged the report of His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace, Bishop Tikhon detailing their week-long visit to Alaska, during which they interviewed numerous clergy and lay persons. The report revealed that Bishop Nikolai had "agreed to take a voluntary leave of absence, to be reviewed at the May 2008 session of the Holy Synod of Bishops, [and that] His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman takes the responsibility of administrator of the Diocese of Alaska, effective April 17, 2008. His Grace, Bishop Benjamin is named to assist Metropolitan Herman in the administration of the Diocese of Alaska."

Earlier, on March 4, the Lesser Synod met to address the mounting complaints and concerns filed by Alaskan clergy and lay persons. The other members of the Holy Synod took part in the meeting by telephone. Subsequently, His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim, secretary of the Holy Synod, addressed a letter to Bishop Nikolai, informing him that "[the members of the Holy Synod] received many letters of serious complaint from deaneries, clergy, and faithful of the Diocese of Alaska.... Not relying on hearsay, yet acknowledging the seriousness of these letters, at your suggestion, all your brother bishops were contacted, and they unanimously agreed that the best course of action for you is that you be placed on a temporary leave of

A report on the May 2008 Holy Synod spring session appears on the OCA web site at www.oca.org. It also will be published in the summer 2008 issue of *The Orthodox Church*.

absence...."

The letter went on to inform Bishop Nikolai that, while on leave, he "will, according to the direction of Metropolitan Herman, absent [himself] from the territory of the Diocese of Alaska;" that the diocese's daily affairs would be conducted by an administrator appointed by Metropolitan Herman; and that a committee would be appointed to investigate complaints and accusations filed against Bishop Nikolai.

The following day, Bishop Nikolai addressed a letter to Metropolitan Herman, formally requesting that "if charges are being brought against me, then canonical standards be followed," while stating that for canonical reasons he had no intention of taking a leave of absence or permitting an examination by committee.

On March 7, Metropolitan Herman responded by assuring Bishop Nikolai that the members of the Holy Synod "are not [your] adversaries; we are brothers, and it is with that spirit that you have asked for our help and we have given our guidance.

"I think you know very well that the complaints about your conduct within the diocese are not about your leadership style, bad press, or anything that may be published on the internet," Metropolitan Herman continued. "The letters of complaint have been brought by reputable priests and laity alike."

Metropolitan Herman concluded by noting that "there are no formal charges and our preliminary investigation into the character of the complains should not be viewed as taking the place of any statutory

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IN DEPTH

- ✓ **READ** the full text of **Bishop Seraphim's March 4 letter to Bishop Nikolai** at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-0307-alaska/archbishop-seraphim-letter-to-bishop%20nikolai.pdf.
- ✓ **READ** the full text of **Bishop Nikolai's March 5 response to Metropolitan Herman** at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-0307-alaska/bishop-nikolai-letter-to-metropolitan-herman.pdf.
- ✓ **READ** the full text of **Metropolitan Herman's March 7 response to Bishop Nikolai** at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-0307-alaska/metropolitan-herman-letter-to-bishop-nikolai.pdf.
- ✓ **READ** the full text of **Metropolitan Herman's March 7 letter to the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Alaska** at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-0307-alaska/metropolitan-herman-letter-to-alaska.pdf.
- ✓ **READ** about the **appointment of Fr. Alexander Garklavs** as administrator of the Diocese of Alaska at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-0308-alaska/metropolitan-herman-letter-re-fr-garklavs.pdf.
- ✓ **READ** the **March 11 letter of Fr. Garklavs to the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Alaska** at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1493&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the **April 17 statement of the Holy Synod** at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1528&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the **letter of Metropolitan Herman to the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Alaska** at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1529&SID=19. ■

Metropolitan Council tackles numerous issues

Father Andrew Jarmus

Members of the Orthodox Church in America's Metropolitan Council tackled a number of critical issues at their spring session at the Chancery, Syosset, NY, March 31-April 2, 2008.

In his opening address, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman noted that "the eyes of many look to the leadership of the Orthodox Church in America at this time. Some look expecting to see failure, fault, and 'business as usual.' Others look hopefully, giving us the opportunity to demonstrate the sincerity of our desire to turn a corner in our Church's life. It is our actions that will show the sincerity and authenticity of our efforts."

Concern for Alaska. In lengthy plenary and executive sessions, Metropolitan Council members discussed the crises the OCA continues to face. While much attention was given to the Diocese of Alaska, council members affirmed that the Alaskan situation was only one part of a larger struggle the Church is facing. Although there were divergent and opposing views on other aspects of the OCA's crises, council members were of one mind in their concerns related to the Diocese of Alaska.

In response, council members passed a motion supporting the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, OCA chancellor, "for the obvious sensitivity and rapport he exhibited in dealing with the people of the Church in Alaska, and his heartfelt letter to the clergy in Alaska following the decision last week of the Holy Synod to release Bishop Nikolai from his leave of absence." Father Alexander recently had returned from a week-long visit to Alaska, during which he met with the majority of the diocese's clergy and many laypersons.

In a statement on the crisis in Alaska addressed to the Holy Synod, council members expressed disappointment in the manner in which the hierarchs handled the crisis. The text reads as follows.

"After long and heartfelt discussion during our meeting March 31 to April 2, 2008, the Metropolitan Council recognizes

IN DEPTH

- ✓ **LOG ON** to www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-mc-spring-meeting-minutes.pdf to read the **minutes of the March 31-April 2, 2008 Metropolitan Council minutes.**
- ✓ **LOG ON** to www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-mc-spring-meeting-attached-documents.pdf to read **documents distributed at the Metropolitan Council meeting, including Metropolitan Herman's opening address, the Amendment to the OCA pension plan, the treasurer's report for January and February 2008, the communications protocol re: the Metropolitan Council and Chancery personnel, and other documents.**
- ✓ **READ** the **treasurer's preliminary financial statements for 2007** at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1496&SID=19.
- ✓ **READ** the **2006-2007 financial report and related financial links** at www.oca.org/PDF/NEWS/2008/2008-0313-financialstatements/OCA-FinancialReportfor2007.pdf.
- ✓ **READ** the **Metropolitan Council's endorsement of the V. Rev. Eric Tosi** as OCA secretary at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1516&SID=19. ■

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that the current crisis in Alaska is a source of paralyzing dysfunction in our whole Church. This problem requires careful investigation and consideration of fact, and we fully understand that the competency to take such action rests with the Holy Synod, to bring it to a decisive outcome without delay.

"Taking account of the anxieties, fears, and pain of the Orthodox faithful of Alaska,

and the deep concern expressed by all the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, the Metropolitan Council is profoundly disappointed by the Holy Synod's decision to lift the leave of absence of His Grace, Bishop Nikolai before a proper solution has been determined, and respectfully asks our hierarchs – in faith, hope, and love – to immediately reverse this decision."

Council members also passed a motion to provide financial assistance to Alaskan clergy wishing to meet with His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate and His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania during their on-site investigation on behalf of the Holy Synod.

Finances. The Rev. Michael Tassos, OCA treasurer, reported that revenues in 2007 exceeded budget by \$133,787.00, while expenses fell below the \$149,214.00 budgeted for the year. Despite an anticipated loss of \$68,050.00 for 2007, the OCA actually ended the year with a surplus of \$612,648.00, which included \$384,496.00 realized from the sale of Church-owned former chancellor's home. The 2007 surplus was used primarily to reduce the debt owed to the Honesdale National Bank and to settle outstanding bills.

Father Michael reported that expenses for the first two months of 2008 were under budget by over \$32,000.00. In explaining procedural changes designed to increase accuracy and efficiency, he recommended that the certified public accounting firm of Weiser LLP be engaged to audit the OCA's books and records for the year ending December 31, 2007. His recommendation was endorsed by the Metropolitan Council.

In related financial matters, council members approved the disbursement of a number of restricted funds for their stated purposes. They also decided to begin making payments to the 9/11 Emergency Fund by approving a payment of \$25,000.00 for 2008 of the outstanding \$176,000.00 yet to be unaccounted for.

The Very Rev. Michael Westerberg, pension board group leader, reported that the OCA pension plan has been submitted for an IRS Determination of its compliance to tax laws. He noted that, while mandatory, determinations are periodically done on a voluntary basis as part of IRS regula-

tions. A letter from the IRS was sent to pension plan members informing them of this process.

Ministries and communications. In updating council members of on the activities of the OCA's departments, the Very Rev. Andrew Jarmus, director of ministries and communications, stated that the departments, whose ministries had been frozen during the second half of 2007, were once again functioning. A revised protocol aimed at improving communications between Chancery personnel and Metropolitan Council members was approved.

Legal issues, ethics committee. Attorney John Ward, who represents the OCA in the lawsuit filed by Mrs. Elizabeth Kondratyck, updated council members on the status of the suit. In January 2008, an ad hoc legal committee was formed to work on the Kondratyck lawsuit with the central administration. The Metropolitan Council formed a standing legal committee to work with the OCA's administration in such matters.

Council members also heard a report from Mr. Gregory Nescott on the search for general legal counsel for the OCA. He reported that the search committee unanimously had recommended Thaddeus Wojcik of the law firm Eaton & Van Winkle LLP. A member of the OCA, he has extensive experience in not-for-profit law, corporate governance and compliance with best practices guidelines. Members of the Metropolitan Council endorsed the recommendation to engage Mr. Wojcik as general legal counsel, pending approval by the Holy Synod of Bishops.

Council members approved draft procedures for the work of the OCA's ethics committee, which was presented by the Rev. Mark Sherman, committee chair. Father Mark also presented a report on the issue of the appointment and release of Mr. Paul Bodnar as OCA secretary. Council members expressed their gratitude to ethic committee members for their work.

In other matters, Mrs. Carol Wetmore reported that the organizational task force continues to function primarily in a consultative role. A draft of a human resources policy manual was circulated among council members. The draft is being reviewed by a labor attorney.

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Preparations for 15th All-American Council underway

At the Metropolitan Council's March 31-April 1, 2008 meeting, the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs reported that plans for the 15th All-American Council, slated to convene in Pittsburgh, PA November 10-13, 2008, were progressing positively under the direction of the Preconciliar Commission.

Projected preliminary council expenses total \$195,038.00 – well below previous councils. Parishes continue to submit their special AAC assessments.

Metropolitan Council members reviewed the proposed AAC agenda and offered recommendations for amendments that will be referred to the Preconciliar Commission. They also recommended that follow-up reports on the three initiatives highlighted at the 14th AAC in 2005 – Orthodox unity, missions, and Christian education – be included in the AAC agenda.

In order to engage the Church's membership in presenting concerns and suggestions to the Preconciliar Commission, the Metropolitan Council recommended holding "town hall" meetings in several geographic regions prior to the opening of the AAC. The recommendation was accepted by the Holy Synod of Bishops.

According to the Very Rev. Andrew Jarmus, OCA director of ministries and communications, "commission members will implement input from these meetings into the agenda of the 15th All American Council."

Nine meeting sites, including Washington, DC; New England; Eastern Pennsylvania/New York/New Jersey; Ohio; Dallas; Orlando, FL; West coast location; Edmonton, AB, Canada; and Ottawa, ON, Canada, have been suggested.

On April 7, a consultation was held at the OCA Chancery, at which invited participants "were able to express their concerns, which were at times in opposition to those of others, in a charitable and gracious manner," Father Andrew said. Attending the initial meeting were the Very Rev. Michael Dahulich, dean of Saint Tikhon's Seminary; the Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, director of external affairs and inter-Church relations; Protodeacon Eric Wheeler, former OCA treasurer; Deacon John Zarras, Metropolitan Council member; Dr. Paul Meyendorff, Saint Vladimir's Seminary faculty; and Mark Stokoe, editor of OCAnews.org. A detailed report on this initial gathering may be found on the OCA web site at www.oca.org/news.asp?ID=1517&SID=19. ■

At a meeting at the Pittsburgh Hilton, 15th All-American Council site, Fr. Myron Manzuk, AAC manager; Matushka Myra Oleynik, lay co-chair; Fr. Alexander Garklavs, chancellor; and Fr. William Evansky, clergy co-chair, finalized arrangements with Hilton rep Dana Collins [left].



Other decisions of the Holy Synod of Bishops

At their special session of April 17, 2008, the members of the Holy Synod of Bishops made a number of other important decisions.

The hierarchs blessed the recommendation of the Metropolitan Council to appoint the Very Rev. Eric Tosi as secretary of the Orthodox Church in America. Father Eric, longtime rector of Saint Paul the Apostle Church, Las Vegas, NV, is expected to begin his duties in the summer.

Attorney Thaddeus Wojcik, a member of the OCA with vast legal experience, was named general legal counsel of the Orthodox Church in America.

The Holy Synod also blessed the formation of a standing Metropolitan Council legal committee, consisting of Gregory Nescott, Sergei Givotovsky and Angela Parks.

A report on these decisions may be found on the OCA web site at www.oca.org/News.asp?ID=1528&SID=19. ■

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Alaskan diocese

or canonical procedures, should they even be required.” He added that the investigating committee will be composed of the members of the Holy Synod and emphasized that Bishop Nikolai’s leave of absence “is mandatory,” and that failure to comply could have serious consequences.

Concurrently, Metropolitan Herman addressed a letter to the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Alaska, stating that “effective March 4, 2008, His Grace, Bishop Nikolai was placed on a mandatory leave of absence and is required to leave the diocese, during which time there will be a preliminary investigation into the complaints that were made.” He also announced that the Very Rev. Eugene Vansuch had been

appointed to administer the diocese and that he would be directly responsible to the Primate and the Holy Synod. Subsequently, Father Eugene declined the appointment, at which time the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, OCA chancellor, was named diocesan administrator.

In a March 11 letter to the Alaskan clergy and faithful, Father Alexander noted that Bishop Nikolai had refused to accept the Holy Synod’s decision and had no intention of leaving the diocese, adding that “a committee is in the process of being formed, from the members of the Holy Synod, which will thoroughly investigate the situation in Alaska.” He said that “this method is entirely scriptural and canonical.” Subsequently, Father Alexander visited Alaska and interviewed dozens of concerned clergy and faithful in mid-March.

Subsequently, at a special session of the Holy Synod on March 27, the hierarchs issued a statement that reads as follows.

“The Holy Synod of Bishops is aware of the concerns of clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Alaska. It recognizes the expressed desire of their diocesan hierarchy to address these concerns, and to take whatever action is necessary to restore peace. Therefore, the Holy Synod has designated His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, and His Grace, Bishop Tikhon to enquire into these concerns in the week of March 31, 2008, and to report to the next regular meeting of the Holy Synod in May 2008. The Holy Synod of Bishops, accepting the assurances of His Grace, Bishop Nikolai of full cooperation with the bishops being sent, withdraws the leave of absence previously imposed.”

Bishop Nikolai’s subsequent behavior and negative reaction to the withdrawal of his leave of absence, leading to mounting unrest in the Alaskan Diocese, coupled with the reported findings of Archbishop Nathaniel and Bishop Tikhon after their investigative visit, led to the April 17 special Holy Synod session, at which Bishop Nikolai agreed to a voluntary leave of absence. At the time this issue of *TOC* went to press, Bishop Benjamin and Father Alexander Garklavs were en route to Alaska, while Bishop Nikolai had issued statements indicating that he would be leaving Alaska in mid-May. ■

Hierarchs celebrate Orthodoxy Sunday

Members of the Orthodox Church in America’s Holy Synod of Bishops joined hierarchs of other Orthodox jurisdictions at numerous celebrations of the Sunday of Orthodoxy Sunday across the US and Canada.

An historic Divine Liturgy marked the feast at Saint Seraphim Cathedral, Dallas,

TX, where His Eminence, Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas and the South hosted His Eminence, Metropolitan Isaiah of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Denver and His Grace, Bishop Basil of the Antiochian Orthodox Diocese of Wichita and Mid-America for the concelebration of the Divine Liturgy. Later that evening, the hierarchs joined clergy and hundreds of faithful from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex for the celebration of Orthodoxy Sunday Vespers at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church.

“This is a crowning memory for me to have my dear brothers in Christ and friends celebrate the Divine Liturgy together,” said Archbishop Dmitri. ■

Archbishop Dmitri [center], Metropolitan Isaiah, and Bishop Basil enter St. Seraphim Cathedral, Dallas, TX, for the celebration of the Orthodoxy Liturgy.

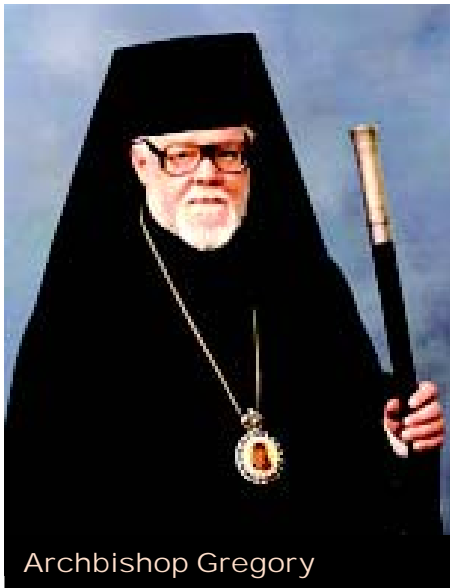


Metropolitan Herman greets Pope Benedict XVI

His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, joined other Orthodox Christian hierarchs at an ecumenical gathering honoring Pope Benedict XVI during his first US visit at Saint Joseph Roman Catholic Church, an historic German parish in New York, NY, on Friday, April 18, 2008.

Accompanying Metropolitan Herman were the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, OCA chancellor; the Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, moderator of Christian Churches Together in the USA and the OCA’s director of external affairs and inter-Church relations; the Rev. John Behr, dean of Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, Crestwood, NY; the Very Rev. Chad Hatfield, chancellor of Saint Vladimir’s Seminary; and the Very Rev. John H. Erickson and Dr. Paul Meyendorff, members of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation.

Pope Benedict, who arrived in the US on April 15, also visited Washington, DC before his return to Rome on April 20. ■



Archbishop Gregory

Funeral services for His Eminence, Archbishop Gregory [Afonsky], retired Archbishop of Sitka and Alaska, were celebrated at the Nativity of the Holy Virgin Church, Jackson, NJ, April 18-19, 2008. Interment followed in the parish cemetery.

His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania, presided at the funeral service, while His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presided at the Divine Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday.

Archbishop Gregory fell asleep in the Lord on the evening of April 15, 2008, just days before his 83rd birthday.

The son and grandson of priests, Archbishop Gregory was born George Afonsky in Kyiv, Ukraine, on April 17, 1925. During World War II, he was taken by the German army to labor camps in Germany while his family remained in the Soviet Union. In 1949, he immigrated to the US, where he served as choir director at parishes in New Jersey and Connecticut.

After completing a degree at the University of Connecticut, he attended Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, from which he graduated in 1965. Later that year, he was ordained to the diaconate and the priesthood by His Beatitude, Metropolitan Ireney and assigned to Saint Sergius Chapel at the Metropolitan's Residence in Syosset, NY (which in 1974 became the OCA Chancery) and served as OCA archivist from 1965 until 1971. He went on to earn a Master of Arts degree from Hofstra University and a Master of Theology degree from Saint Vladimir's Seminary.

In November 1971, he was assigned rector of Saint Nicholas Church, Portland, OR. Shortly thereafter, he was tonsured to mon-

Archbishop Gregory of Alaska falls asleep in the Lord

tastic rank at Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA, receiving the name Gregory. In March 1973, he was elected Bishop of Sitka and Alaska. He was consecrated to the episcopacy at Archangel Michael Cathedral, Sitka, AK, on May 13, 1973.

Bishop Gregory was instrumental in the transformation of Saint Herman's Pastoral School, Kenai, AK, which was established one month before his election to the episcopacy, into a theological seminary. He oversaw the seminary's move to Kodiak, where the campus grew to include classroom buildings, dormitories, a library, and a museum. As professor of Alaskan Church history, dogmatic and moral theology, and canon law, he fully immersed himself into the academic life of the seminary.

Bishop Gregory visited every parish in his geographically far-flung diocese and

delighted in attending annual regional conferences. He oversaw the complete restoration of Sitka's Archangel Michael Cathedral, which was destroyed by a fire in the mid-1960s, and initiated the construction of Saint Innocent Cathedral, Anchorage. He was deeply loved by his flock, especially the diocese's native population.

In 1995, Bishop Gregory was elevated to the rank of archbishop by the Holy Synod of Bishops. Later that year, after 22 years of fruitful archpastoral service in Alaska, he retired due to failing health.

The author of several books, Archbishop avidly researched the history of the Church in North America. He served as episcopal moderator of the OCA Department of History and Archives and chairman of the Canonization Commission.

May Archbishop Gregory's memory be eternal! ■

Scholarship fund established

An initiative to establish a memorial scholarship fund in memory of His Eminence, Archbishop Gregory, was recently developed by the late hierarch's friends.

With the blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, "the intent of the scholarship fund will be to provide assistance to Orthodox residents of Alaska who require financial aid in pursuing a seminary education," said the Very Rev. Alexander Garklavs, OCA chancellor. "The specific details of the scholarship fund will be developed and coordinated by the administration of Saint Herman's Seminary in Kodiak, AK."

Donations to the Archbishop Gregory Memorial Scholarship Fund may be sent to the Orthodox Church in America Chancery, PO Box 675, Syosset, NY 11791. Please make checks payable to "The Orthodox Church in America" and indicate "Archbishop Gregory Memorial Fund" in the memo line. ■

Metropolitan Ireney and Archbishop Gregory, at the time a priest, in the early 1970s with the relics of St. Herman enshrined at St. Sergius Chapel at the Metropolitan's residence.



Official from 2

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, is released from attachment to the Bishop's Chapel of St. Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown, ON, Canada and assigned third priest at Annunciation Cathedral, Ottawa, ON, Canada/ March 9, 2008.

KONTOS, The Rev. Philip is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ March 25, 2008.

KSYNYUK, Deacon Igor is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ March 8, 2008.

MAEV, The Rev. Yuri is released from duties at Holy Virgin Mary Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA and appointed acting rector of St. Spiridon Cathedral, Seattle, WA/ March 1, 2008.

MIKITA, The Rev. John, who was awaiting assignment, is appointed priest-in-charge of St. John of Damascus Mission, Tyler, TX/ March 14, 2008.

PIERCE, The V. Rev. John is released from duties at St. Spiridon Cathedral, Seattle, WA. All his other duties remain the same/ March 11, 2008.

ROWE, The Rev. Christopher, who was attached, is appointed associate priest of Holy Trinity Church, Overland Park, KS/ March 7, 2008.

SCHROEDEL, The Rev. John, who is on-loan to the Diocese of the West from the Diocese of the Midwest, is attached to St. Juvenaly Mission, Kona, HI. He remains under the omophorion of Archbishop Job and attached to Christ the Savior Church, Chicago, IL/ March 11, 2008.

STEFERO, The V. Rev. John is granted retirement from the US Air Force/ February 1, 2008. He is released from the military chaplaincy and attached to St. Sergius of Radonezh Chapel, Oyster Bay Cove, NY/ March 26, 2008.

URBANOWICZ, The Rev. Maximus is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, PA/ March 16, 2008.

WESCHE, The V. Rev. Paul, in addition to duties at St. Herman Church, Minneapolis, MN, is appointed dean of the Minneapolis Deanery/ March 13, 2008.

WOJCIK, The V. Rev. Thaddeus is released from duties at Holy Assumption Church, Lublin, WI and as dean of the Minneapolis Deanery and granted retirement/ March 13, 2008.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

[COOKE], Archimandrite Gabriel, on loan to the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, is released from that assignment and returned to the omophorion of Bishop Benjamin; attached to the Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, Manton, CA; and granted a six month leave of absence/ March 12, 2008.

RETIRED

WOJCIK, The V. Rev. Thaddeus is granted retirement. He is attached to Holy Trinity Church, St. Paul, MN, and granted the title of dean emeritus/ March 13, 2008.

DEATHS

VANSUCH, The V. Rev. Eugene, rector of St. Vladimir Church, Trenton, NJ, died on March 23, 2008. *May his memory be eternal!*

PARISHES

DIOCESE OF THE SOUTH/ New Status. St. John of Damascus Mission Station, Tyler, TX is granted mission status and is now known as St. John of Damascus Mission/ March 14, 2008.

DIOCESE OF THE SOUTH/ New Status. St. Mary Magdalene Mission, Rincon/ Savannah, GA, is granted parish status and is now known as St. Mary Magdalene Church/ March 16, 2008.

DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK/ New Status. St. Catherine the Great Martyr Mission, Hagerstown, MD, is granted parish status and is now known as St. Catherine the Great Martyr Church/ March 1, 2008. ■

NOTE: * indicates non-OCA clergy.

Bishops Nikon, Ilia issue joint centennial encyclical

A joint encyclical commemorating the centennial of Albanian Orthodoxy in North America was issued on March 9, 2008 by His Grace, Bishop Nikon of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America and His Grace, Bishop Ilia of Philomelion of the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

The encyclical opens with a verse from Psalm 122: "I was glad when they said, let us enter into the House of The Lord."

The complete text of the encyclical reads as follows.

"The year 2008 marks a century of ministry of the Albanian Orthodox apostolate in North America. For the first time, divine services were celebrated in Albanian in order to serve Orthodox Christians in their own language as the first parish was organized in Boston. Our first priest and, later hierarch, Theophan Stylian Noli, began an extraordinary and multifaceted ministry in 1908 that served his people here and in the homeland in prodigious ways.

"Over the course of the decades that followed, we have witnessed the rise of multiple jurisdictions; the intrusion of secular revolutions abroad as well as their effect on the faithful here; and the intersect of political and patriotic considerations that challenged our communities and often divided them. As with all temporal struggles, we have experienced pain as well as triumphs, losses as well as epiphanies. During the last ten decades, we have learned many lessons, and we have fallen short in embracing one another more fervently. Our separations have been due as much to circumstances as to ourselves. We have shared our experience with others, since we are both singular as well as similar to others. We have been passionate and reasoned, strident and flexible, in seeking ways to overcome differences. Yet times of disunity have never clouded, nor prevented, our predecessors from fulfilling their episcopal roles before Christ to go forth, teach, baptize, and serve those entrusted to us and to our forebears.

"At this time, we remember with prayer our guiding hierarchs, Bishop Theophan [Noli], Bishop Mark [Lipa], Bishop Stefan [Lasko], and the many priests and lay men and women of our shared and faithful flock who have gone before us to their rest. May their memory ever be eternal.

"Despite the many challenges faced by us all, the clergy and faithful have always remained focused on their primary duty: the proclamation of the Gospel and the salvation they attain through the redemptive act of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

"We commemorate and celebrate this centennial moment with humility, recalling all that has gone before with the hope that we remain true to the aspirations and needs of future generations, yet to be saved, nurtured, and nourished.

"As those entrusted by God's Grace to shepherd our communities, we take this opportunity to witness together and to say together with love and hope, that we are one in Our Lord, one in the Eucharist, and one in the sentiment that we leave this day a better place for the generations to come. 'How good it is when brothers dwell together in unity' [Psalm 133]."



Bishops Nikon and Ilia concelebrate the centennial Divine Liturgy, after which their joint encyclical was read.

Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana attends celebration of centennial of Albanian Orthodoxy in US

Boston's Saint George Cathedral was filled to capacity on Sunday, March 9, 2008 as the centennial of the Albanian Orthodox Church in North America was celebrated with a festive hierarchical Divine Liturgy.

His Beatitude, Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and All Albania, attended the Liturgy, concelebrated by His Grace, Bishop Nikon of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese and His Grace, Bishop Ilia of Philomelion of the Albanian Orthodox Diocese of America under the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Bishop Nikon welcomed Archbishop Anastasios on behalf of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America.

In the presence of hundreds of diocesan clergy, lay leaders, and faithful, a joint centennial encyclical by Bishops Nikon and Ilia was read.

It was in March 1908 that the first Divine Liturgy in the Albanian language was celebrated in Boston by the Rev. Theophan [Fan] Stylian Noli.

"This was a significant moment, since

his homeland had been subjugated for five centuries under Ottoman rule, during which time the use of the vernacular had been suppressed," said the Very Rev. Arthur Liolin, archdiocesan chancellor. "The movement in the US helped foster the independence of Albania in 1912 and the formation of an indigenous and autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church in the homeland."

In 1913, one year after he graduated from Harvard, Father Theophan visited Albania for the first time. After his return to the US during World War I, he was appointed head of the Albanian Orthodox Mission by His Eminence, Metropolitan Platon of North America, in 1919. Eventually he returned to Albania, where he was consecrated Bishop of Korca and Durres in 1923. One year later, he was named the nation's first democratic premier.

"A prodigious scholar, he translated many liturgical books and hymnals from Greek into Albanian, and later into English," said Father Arthur. "He also became a noted translator of Shakespeare, Ibsen, Cervantes, and Longfellow into Al-



Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and All Albania communes during centennial Divine Liturgy.

banian after he returned to Boston to oversee his US-based church."

Bishop Theophan's academic works were vast and widely recognized.

"His doctoral thesis at Boston University on Albania's 15th century national hero, George Castrioti Skanderbeg, became a classic, while his scholarly work, *Beethoven and the French Revolution* for the New England Conservatory of Music, was later published and received accolades from George Bernard Shaw, Thomas Mann, and Jan Sibelius," Father Arthur added.

Saint George Cathedral and Bishop Theophan's historic connection to Albania became a symbol for democracy in the homeland when the nation began to shed its communist past in 1990. Father Arthur, who also serves as dean of the cathedral, was the first clergyman to enter the formerly atheist nation in 1988, helping to foster improved relations with the US.

"Today, Albania has emerged from its isolation and is considered one of the staunchest allies of the US in the Balkans, while also seeking membership in the European Union," Father Arthur said.

Following the Divine Liturgy, guests gathered at Anthony's Pier 4 on Boston harbor for a gala centennial banquet. The proceedings were aired on the BBC and the Voice of America's TV.

Ongoing centennial year events, which include an exhibition in Boston that opened on May 4, will conclude with a grand gala at the World Trade Center on September 27, 2008. ■

Boston's impressive St. George Cathedral was filled beyond capacity for the centennial Divine Liturgy.



InMemoriam

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

The Very Rev. Romulus Radu

MIRAMAR, FL – The Very Rev. Romulus Radu fell asleep in the Lord here on February 11, 2008.

Born August 31, 1909 in Ohaba-Forgaci, Timis, Romania, he graduated from the Theological Faculty at the University of Cernauti in 1934. The following year, he married the former Alexandrina Mondoc. In 1938, the couple adopted their only son, Traian.

Father Romulus was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood by His Grace, Bishop Andrei of Arad in May 1936. In addition to his parish assignments, he served as defender at the spiritual court in Timisoara from July 1953 until December 1966, when he and his family immigrated to the US.

After initially serving in the Romanian Patriarchate's Missionary Episcopate in Hollywood, FL, he was received into the Romanian Episcopate of the Orthodox Church in America in 1972. He served as administrator and later rector of Saint Thomas Church, Saint Louis, MO, Missouri, until April 1975, at which time he was reassigned to Saint Andrew Church, Terre Haute, IN. He retired from active ministry on January 1, 1982.

After the repose of his wife, Father Romulus retired to Miramar, FL, and was attached to Holy Trinity Church, where he was deeply respected by the clergy and faithful.

Funeral services were celebrated February 13-14, 2008, at Holy Trinity Church, Miramar, FL, with interment at Saint Mary Cemetery, Vatra Romaneasca, Grass Lake, MI.

May Father Romulus' memory be eternal! ■

The Very Rev. Venseslav Dimitroff

ROSSFORD, OH – The Very Rev. Venseslav Dimitroff, 84, retired rector of Saint George Cathedral here, fell asleep in the Lord on February 28, 2008.

Born in Bourgas, Bulgaria, in 1923, Father Venseslav spent his early childhood in Edirne, Turkey, where his father was principal of the Peter Beron Bulgarian High School. At the age of seven, he and his family moved to Plovdiv, Bulgaria. In 1944, just days before the communist takeover of the country, he and his family returned to Istanbul, Turkey.

After serving in the Turkish military, he married the former Marina Veneziani in 1955. In 1961, he was ordained to the priesthood in the Ecumenical Patriarchate and served Istanbul's Saint John of Rila Church in the Bulgarian Exarchate until July 1975. In 1973, he was elevated to the rank of archpriest by His Holiness, Patriarch Maxim of Bulgaria.

In August 1975, he immigrated to the US and was named rector of Saint George Cathedral, which he served until his retirement in August 1995.

In addition to his wife, Popadia Marina, Father Venseslav is survived by a daughter, Kathy.

Funeral services were celebrated at Saint George Cathedral, Rossford, OH, March 3-4, 2008, with interment at Toledo Memorial Park, Sylvania, OH.

May Father Venseslav's memory be eternal! ■

The Rev. Miroslaw Kulik

PORTAGE, PA – The Rev. Miroslaw Kulik, 46, unexpectedly fell asleep in the Lord at his home here on February 28, 2008.

Born and raised in Poland, where he received his seminary training and was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood, Father Miroslaw and his family immigrated to the US in 1997. After his reception into the Orthodox Church in America, he was assigned rector of Saint Michael Church, Portage, PA, and Saints Peter and Paul Church, Vintondale, PA. He also served as rector of Saint John the Baptist Church, Edwardsville, PA, and the Nativity of Saint Mary Church, Masontown, PA.

Father Miroslaw is survived by his wife, Matushka Eva, and their children Andrew, Anna, and Barbara.

Funeral services were celebrated March 2-3, 2008, at Saint Michael Church, Portage, PA. Interment followed at Holy Transfiguration Monastery Cemetery, Ellwood City, PA.

May Father Miroslaw's memory be eternal! ■



The Very Rev. Eugene Vansuch

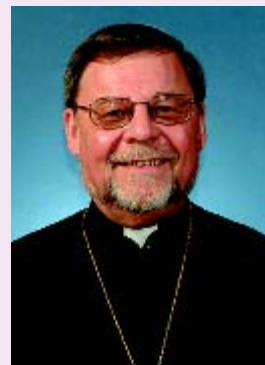
EASTON, PA – The Very Rev. Eugene Vansuch, 66, rector of Saint Vladimir Church, Trenton, NJ, and former executive director of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards, fell asleep in the Lord at his home here on Sunday, March 23, 2008.

Born in Campbell, OH, the son of the late Michael Vansuch and Mary [Racz] Vansuch, who survives him, Father Eugene graduated from Youngstown University in 1965 and Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, in 1967. He was a member of the seminary's cross-country octet.

After his marriage to the former Frances Papaharalambos, he was ordained to the priesthood on March 12, 1967.

Father Eugene served several parishes, including the Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Madison, IL; Saint George Church, Trumbull, CT, where he also served as chaplain for the Trumbull Fire Department; Saint John Chrysostom Church, Philadelphia, PA; Saint John the Baptist Church, Nanticoke, PA; and Saint Nicholas Church, Bethlehem, PA. He also started a parish in the Diocese of the South. In 2005, he was appointed executive director of the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards until his assignment as rector of Saint Vladimir Church, Trenton, NJ, in 2007.

He served the Church in a variety of other capacities during his 41 year ministry. He was the long-time national spiritual advisor for the Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs, today's Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America. He was a member



InMemoriam

and secretary of the board of trustees of Saint Herman's Seminary, Kodiak, AK. At Saint Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA, he served as senior professor of canon law and Church history. He was active in local Orthodox clergy associations and the Lehigh Valley Council of Churches. He also served on numerous committees and diocesan councils, as well as serving as a member of the OCA's Metropolitan Council, administrative committee, and preconciliar commission.

Father Eugene was an avid sports fan, enjoying the Cleveland Indians and Browns as well as Youngstown University and Ohio State University athletics. He particularly enjoyed watching his children play sports and followed their achievements as they were growing up.

Father Eugene will be lovingly remembered by his mother, Mary, Campbell, OH; his beloved Matushka Frances; sons Basil Vansuch and his wife Katherine of Vermont; the Rev. Jason Vansuch and his wife Katia, Norwich, CT; and Damian Vansuch and his wife Anastasia, Allentown, PA. He is also survived by his brother Nicholas Vansuch and his wife Monica, Howland, OH; four grandchildren and fifth to be born soon; and numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Funeral services, at which His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, presided, were celebrated at Saint Nicholas Church, Bethlehem, PA, on March 27, 2008. After the celebration of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts the following morning, interment took place at Union Cemetery, Hellertown, PA.

Memorial contributions may be made in care of the Connell Funeral Home, Inc., 245 E. Broad St., Bethlehem PA 18018 for future distribution to the churches Father Eugene loved and served.

May Father Eugene's memory be eternal! ■

Matushka Alexandra Lukashonak

GLENVIEW, IL – Matushka Alexandra Lukashonak, 70, the wife of the late Rev. Cyril Lukashonak, fell asleep in the Lord at Glenbrook Hospital here on Thursday, January 31, 2008.

Born Alexandra Avvakumovna Hawryluk in Staten Island, NY, the daughter of Ukrainian immigrants, she was a graduate of the Latin American Institute, New York, NY. She was a member of Manhattan's Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral, where she and her husband were married in 1962.

Answering the call to serve in the Church, she worked selflessly to support her young daughter Anthea and husband while he studied at Saint Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY. It was during the Lukashonaks' years at the seminary years that their first son, Andrew, was born.

After Father Cyril's graduation from the seminary, ordination, and assignment as the first full-time rector of established Holy Resurrection Mission, Mt. Prospect, IL [today Holy Resurrection Church, Palatine, IL], Matushka Alexandra gave birth to their second son, Alexander. She took an active role in every parish



assignment by teaching, organizing vacation Church schools, singing the responses at weekday services, and volunteering in various capacities. The center of her life was the Church and her family.

After Father Cyril fell asleep in the Lord while serving as rector of Archangel Michael Church, Burbank, IL in 1985, Matushka Alexandra became an active member of Saint Luke the Evangelist Church, Palos Hills, IL, where she continued to share her talents in many ways. In 2005, she was diagnosed with nonalcoholic cirrhosis of the liver, which had gone undetected for several years. This disease, combined with diabetes, a recent stroke, and a serious infection, weakened her heart and led to her repose.

Matushka Alexandra is survived by her daughter Anthea Catherine, Palos Hills, IL; sons Andrew Avvakum, Lisle, IL, and the Rev. Alexander Cyril and his wife Oksana, Wheeling, IL; her sister, Irene Christensen, Staten Island, NY; her niece and goddaughter, Lydia Christensen, Evergreen Park, IL; and several other nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at Saint Luke Church, Palos Hills, IL, February 3-4, 2008, with interment next to her husband at Evergreen Cemetery, Evergreen Park, IL.

Donations in Matushka Alexandra's memory may be made to Religious Books for Russia, Inc., PO Box 466, LaGrangeville, NY 12540.

May Matushka Alexandra's memory be eternal! ■

Preoteasa Olga Grigorescu

FREMONT, CA – Preoteasa Olga Grigorescu, wife of the late Very Rev. Gheorghe Grigorescu, fell asleep in the Lord here on February 12, 2008.

Born Olga Ionescu in Scurtesti, Romania, on September 1, 1921, she and her husband were married in 1939. After immigrating to the US, her husband was accepted into the Romanian Episcopate of the Orthodox Church in America in 1990 and assigned to Holy Cross Mission, San Jose, CA, which he served until his retirement in 2000.

After Father Gheorghe's death on October 7, 2005, she was cared for by the Very Rev. and Preoteasa Constantin Lapustea.

She was preceded in death by her only child, Gabriel, in 2002. She is survived by her daughter-in-law, Viorica, and grandchildren Mihaela and Lucian.

Funeral services were celebrated at Holy Cross Mission.

May Preoteasa Olga's memory be eternal! ■

Council from 13

Metropolitan Council meets

Issues related to strategic planning, including the pursuit of Orthodox administrative unity and the function and location of the OCA chancery, were discussed. Council members will formulate a process for developing a strategic plan, with the goal of initiating this process at the 15th All-American Council.

Committees were formed to evaluate costs associated with the current location of the OCA Chancery and examine areas of cooperative ministry with other Orthodox jurisdictions and agencies. ■

Alexis Liberovsky

2008 marks anniversaries for OCA seminaries

This year marks the 70th anniversaries of Saint Tikhon's and Saint Vladimir's Seminaries and the 35th anniversary of Saint Herman's Seminary.

The Church in North America had been without a functioning theological school for nearly a decade and a half by the time of the Sixth All-American *Sobor* [Council] in October 1937. Saint Platon's Seminary in Tenaflly, NJ – originally located in Minneapolis, MN – had been forced to close in 1923 due to organizational difficulties and financial turmoil in the North American Church after the Russian Revolution in 1917. At the same time, the steady stream of clergy and theologically educated lay leaders sent from Russia to serve in North America had come to an end. Thus, the need for institutions offering theological formation had become a major concern for the Church during preparations for the 1937 Sobor.

The Pre-Sobor Commission asked Dr. Basil Bensin, who had helped to organize the seminary in Minneapolis in 1905 and had taught there for several years, to prepare a report to the Sobor advocating the establishment of an academically-oriented theological school, similar to Russia's theological academies, to educate clergy and lay leaders for the Church's increasingly sophisticated North American flock. Having also heard similar proposals for the establishment of pastoral schools at Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA, and in Chicago, Sobor delegates unanimously decided to accept all three proposals and appointed commissions to explore the feasibility of establishing schools in the three locations.

Saint Vladimir's Seminary. While plans for a theological school in Chicago proved unfeasible, Saint Vladimir's Seminary in New York City opened on October 3, 1938. Three weeks later, on October 24, a pastoral school under the direc-

tion of retired Bishop Arseny [Chahovtsev] opened at Saint Tikhon's Monastery.

Dr. Bensin personally spearheaded the monumental task of making Saint Vladimir's Seminary a reality within a year. Bishop Makary [Ilyinsky], former dean of Saint Platon's Seminary, became the seminary's first dean. Metropolitan Theophilus [Pashkovsky], the Church's Primate, celebrated the seminary's opening service at Brooklyn's Holy Trinity Church on October 3, 1938, while classes began the following day in the parish house of Christ the Savior Church on East 121 Street in Manhattan. Originally, the seminary accepted high school graduates who, while pursuing a five-year course of study at the seminary, also attended Columbia College, with which academic affiliation had been established. In 1939, the seminary moved to temporary quarters at General Theological Seminary. During the tenure of its second dean [1944-47], Archimandrite Dionysius [Diachenko], Saint Vladimir's moved to quarters rented from Union Theological Seminary, where it would remain until the acquisition of its own campus some 15 years later. During the tenure of the seminary's third dean [1947-50], Bishop John [Shahovskoy], a provisional charter was granted by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York on June 18, 1948, officially establishing the seminary as "an institution of higher learning."

The seminary's permanent charter from New York State, granted in 1953, was achieved through the efforts of its fourth dean, Father Georges Florovsky [1950-55], whose leadership reoriented the seminary towards becoming an accredited graduate school. The growing number of faculty members arriving from Europe in the 1950s further elevated the seminary's academic standards and enhanced its reputation.

In 1955, Father Georges was succeeded by Metropolitan Leonty [Turkevich], while Father Alexander Schmemmann, who served as dean from 1962 until 1983, became the dynamic force guiding the seminary's day-to-day life.

In 1961, the seminary acquired a permanent campus in Crestwood, NY. In addition to the expansion of the physical plant, the seminary successively secured state accreditation for the granting of various degrees from the 1960s through the 1980s; obtained provisional and then per-

manent accreditation in 1966 and 1973 respectively through the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada; and nurtured a new American-born generation of faculty. At the same time, the demographics of the student body changed to include an increasing number of converts, women, and married students. SVS Press became one of the leading publishers of English-language Orthodox theological literature, and the seminary's reputation as a leading center of Orthodox thought continued to grow. Building on these significant developments, Saint Vladimir's Seminary continued to prosper and grow under its successive deans: Father John Meyendorff [1984-92], Father Thomas Hopko [1992-2002], and Father John Erickson [2002-2007]. The development of a far-reaching strategic plan and a successful capital campaign financed construction of a new library in 2002 and married student housing. Under the leadership team appointed in 2007 – Father John Behr, dean, and Father Chad Hatfield, chancellor – a new curriculum, carefully developed over several years, was implemented.

Saint Tikhon's Seminary. As a young priest in 1905, Bishop Arseny had been the driving force in realizing the vision of Saint Tikhon, Archbishop of North America, to establish a monastery in South Canaan, PA. More than three decades later, after his retirement from archpastoral ministry in Canada, Bishop Arseny was called to oversee the establishment of a pastoral school at Saint Tikhon's Monastery. His skillful leadership was recognized with his elevation to the rank of Archbishop in 1939, while the school was granted seminary status by the Church's hierarchy in 1942. Archbishop Arseny continued to lead the seminary until his death in 1945.

Throughout its history, Saint Tikhon's Seminary has reaped the unique benefits of its location at the monastery. In its early decades, the school was almost exclusively devoted to priestly formation, and its faculty was staffed primarily by local clergy. There were several outstanding theologians among the faculty, most notably, Saint Nikolai Velimirovic, the Serbian bishop who spent the last five years of his life as a monastic elder, teacher, and seminary rector before his death in 1956. Under the leadership of Archbishop Kiprian [Borisovich] as rector [1961-80], the academic direction of the seminary began to change.

Humble beginnings



Hierarchs, clergy, and seminarians *in procession during the dedication of the new campus of St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, NY, in October 1962.*



The first graduates of St. Tikhon's Seminary, holding diplomas, with [from left] Archbishop Arseny, Metropolitan Theophilus, and Bishop [later Metropolitan] Leonty, faculty members, and other students at commencement ceremonies in 1941.

Bishop Gregory, rector, with Fr. Paul Merculieff, faculty member; Fr. Joseph Kreta, dean; and students of St. Herman's Seminary in the school's first chapel at Wildwood Station, Kenai, AK in 1974.



New buildings were constructed. A charter was received from the State of Pennsylvania in 1967. Academic affiliation was achieved with Kings College in Wilkes-Barre in 1970 and Marywood College (later university) in Scranton in 1975, allowing students to obtain accredited degrees from these schools in conjunction with their seminary studies. In the 1980s and 1990s, a new crop of faculty members with advanced academic degrees made it possible for the seminary to receive accreditation from the State of Pennsylvania to grant the Master of Divinity degree in 1988. Under the current administration, which includes Father Michael Dahulich, dean, and Father Alexander Golubov, academic dean, the seminary received accreditation from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada in 2004, making Saint Tikhon's a full-fledged graduate school of theology. In recent years, the jurisdictional affiliation of the seminary's student body has become far more diverse, and the majority of its students are married. As a result, the seminary is developing plans for married student housing and a new library in the near future.

Saint Herman's Seminary. The five years of archpastoral ministry in Alaska of Bishop Theodosius [Lazor] – 1967 through 1972 – prepared the groundwork for the decision of the 1972 Alaskan diocesan assembly to establish a pastoral school for the training of clergy, lay assistants, educators, and singers. As Bishop Theodosius had already been transferred to the see of Pittsburgh, Father Joseph Kreta, who provisionally administered diocesan affairs in the absence of a ruling bishop, was charged with implementing the assembly's decision. Alaskan clergy and laity serving the Church had not had the opportunity to obtain formal training in Alaska since the early 20th century, when a school in Unalaska closed. Few Alaskans had the means to pursue seminary education in the lower 48 states.

Classes at Saint Herman's Pastoral School began on February 11, 1973, at Wildwood Station, a former military installation in Kenai. Just months later, the school was recognized as a diploma granting institution by the State of Alaska. Later that year, Bishop Gregory [Afonsky] was consecrated as the new hierarch of Alaska. He served as seminary rector and, with

Evangelization

Getting down to basics

Principles of evangelization: Part 1

Over the years, a lot has been written and spoken about evangelization and Church growth. Countless books, pamphlets, articles, seminars, workshops, boot camps, and consultations have appeared since the All-American Councils held in 1983 and 1986 introduced the themes of Church growth and evangelization respectively.

In this and the next few issues of *The Orthodox Church*, we will present a variety of principles gleaned from the writings and gatherings of the past 25 years.

1. Evangelization is Orthodox. We who claim to hold the fullness of the Gospel – the *Evangelion* – and the apostolic faith simply cannot say that evangelization is “something only Protestants do.” Christ charged His disciples – and us – to “teach all nations” long before Protestantism emerged some 1500 years later. As the Church that first received the Gospel, should we not be the first to share it?

2. Evangelization is everybody's “job.” The attitude that claims “evangelization is the job of the clergy” is dead wrong. *Everyone* is called to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and to reach out to others. Simply stated, those who have heard the Gospel are expected to share it. After all, it *is* good news, and as with all good news, it is designed to be shared, not held in secret.

Evangelization and the growth it produces cannot be delegated to “clergy specialists,” like care for the heart can be delegated to cardiologists. Much of the day-to-day to work of evangelization can and must be done by the laity, who far outnumber the clergy and who have far more contacts with the unchurched than the clergy. To claim that evangelization is strictly for the clergy is akin to the 70 disciples claiming that evangelization was solely the “job” of the apostles!

3. Evangelization is not optional. Christ's death and resurrection took place *publicly* because they affected the *public* – so publicly, in fact, that the proclamation of the apostles went out into

“all the earth and their words to the ends of the universe” after Pentecost. Just as we cannot separate Christ from His resurrection, we cannot separate our faith in and experience of the risen Christ from our calling to proclaim them. Our faith is reduced to an intellectual exercise when we fail to share it with those who have yet to discover and experience it in its fullness. The Good News is not “our little secret.”

4. Proselytization and evangelization are not the same thing. Evangelization is the act of proclaiming the Gospel to those who have yet to hear it, either in part or in its entirety. Proselytization focuses on encouraging those of other faiths to reject their traditions, not out of a desire to embrace the fullness of the Gospel and its truth, but for the sake of making converts. Evangelization involves a running *to* Christ; proselytization focuses on running *away from* something. True evangelization involves a commitment to lead others to the fullness of truth not by bashing or demonizing, but by extending the same invitation to “come and see” that Christ extended

when He called His first apostles.

5. It's not about the mortgage! Parishes that see increasing membership as a means by which expenses can be “spread out” amongst a greater number of people aren't evangelizing. And they won't grow!

6. Seeking out those who've moved to the 'burbs is not evangelization. It's outreach, for sure, but not evangelization. Of course, there are always those who, in moving to the suburbs, have lost their ties with the Church and whose faith lies dormant. They need to be evangelized – or *re-evangelized*, so to speak – and should never be overlooked. Evangelization is not limited to the unchurched or non-Orthodox; there are many “lapsed” Orthodox Christians, and they should be invited once again to “come and see.”

Older parishes that abandon their old neighborhoods are not necessarily evangelical-minded. Too often transplanted parishes lack a sense of real mission to their new communities and remain content to serve “our people,” albeit in new surroundings, but not “outsiders.” True evangelization is aimed at reaching the unchurched, not just maintaining the roster.

In the next issue of *The Orthodox Church*, we'll take a look at essential prerequisites that must be in place if evangelization and growth are to take place. ■

Portland site of DCE regional conference

PORTLAND, OR – Members of the OCA Department of Christian Education conducted a regional conference at St. Nicholas Church here April 12, 2008.

Titled “In the Beginning,” the conference considered how the book of Genesis can help students navigate their lives, tips for lesson planning, and related themes. Presentations were given by department members Valerie Zahirsky, Daria Petrykowski, and Victoria Jones.

The fifth in a series of regional DCE conferences, the program was very well received. One participant stated in the end-of-day evaluation, “The conference was wonderful. From the keynote address to the workshops, everything went together beautifully.” ■



"Lecture" isn't a dirty word

Keeping it short, sweet, and simple

Valerie Zahirsky

Every Church school teacher tries to avoid doing the "same old thing" week after week. Teachers work hard to give their lessons variety in order to keep their students interested. There are lots of teaching methods and approaches from which to choose, and a good lesson will usually include several.

But teachers need not and should not abandon that tried-and-true method – the *lecture*. Used properly, a well-planned lecture can be an excellent way of teaching and can offer solid educational opportunities to students.

One advantage of the lecture is that it allows the teacher to highlight key points about a topic. Students could miss these in their independent reading, internet research, or creative projects. If a topic is somewhat complicated, the teacher can choose the best way to "walk through" it with students in a lecture. Left on their own to do research, students might get bogged down in details, become confused by differing explanations or definitions, or have their enthusiasm simply sink under the weight of too much information.

Lectures also give teachers the chance to enhance the information they present with their own personal experiences. The struggles of a saint, for example, may have been inspirational to a teacher, who can share his or her inspiration with students when relating the life of the saint. If a teacher enjoys history, his or her enthusiasm can enliven a lecture on a particular period of time in the Church's life.

Flexibility is another advantage of the lecture method. A teacher can present information in a lecture to the whole class or to small groups. Often in our Church school classes, we find students with varying levels of knowledge about specific topics. A lecture can help one group catch up to another's level of knowledge, while those with more information engage in a related activity.

Lecturing is certainly not a novel method of teaching. And if we look at the account of Pentecost in the Book of Acts, for instance, we'll see that it netted the apostle Peter 3,000 new converts in a single day! Even if the results in our classrooms are not quite that stellar, we can use

the lecture method to generate something positive for our students – and that is result enough. ■

Valerie Zahirsky is a member of the OCA Department of Christian Education.

IMPORTANT POINTS IN LECTURE PLANNING

Length. Five minutes is the max a teacher should lecture to elementary school students. Middle and junior high school students will benefit from lectures of up to ten minutes, while high school students can be attentive for up to 15 minutes. These times refer to uninterrupted lecturing; a lecture can run longer when questions or discussions are included to break up the spoken presentation.

Outlining the topic. Probably the hardest part of deciding *what to say* is deciding *what to leave out*. A lecture should include only information that is critical for students to know. The outline also should indicate the amount of time to be allotted to each point. For middle and junior high school students, copies of the outline can be handed out so that students have a basis for taking notes.

Creating a script and notes. Writing a complete script is helpful to the teacher in thinking through exactly what the lecture will contain. But for the classroom presentation, never, *ever*, read the script! Instead, refer to notes based on the script. Nothing is more deadly than *reading* a less-than-spontaneous lecture.

Deciding on supplements to the lecture. Visuals, such as maps and charts, or the writing of significant words, names, and definitions on a chalkboard or screen, can enhance a lecture and help keep students attentive. These, obviously, must be thought out and prepared in advance.

Finding a "hook" to generate interest. There are many opening "hooks" that can focus the students' attention. Ask a question. Show a video clip or an artifact related to the topic. Make a statement and ask the students to decide as they listen to the lecture whether they agree or disagree. Give the students something to listen for, to decide, or to determine as they listen to the lecture. They will be challenged to accomplish this "job" and focus their attention on what is being said in order to do so.

Checking the students' level of understanding. Teachers should plan, at the end of the lecture, a way of discovering how much their students understood – and whether they have understood correctly. Pose questions to the group. Give a brief quiz. Or divide students into pairs to think about and then answer a question related to the topic of the lecture. ■



Youth & Young Adults

Starting a conversation

Keeping young people engaged in the Church

Seraphim Danckaert

The numbers are astounding. According to a variety of surveys conducted over the last few years, the average American teenager spends more than 72 hours a week using “electronic media.”

But the numbers alone don’t tell the full story of teenage media use, especially

when it comes to the internet, cell phones, iPods, and video games.

All of these forms of media are actually fora. They are an electronic means for teens to interact with each other, form friendships, meet new people, exchange ideas and – yes! – learn about their faith.

According to the Barna Research Group, teens in particular use the internet as a way to explore their own faith and dif-

ferent faith traditions in a private, non-threatening environment.

That’s why it’s vitally important for the Church to engage teens where they spend most of their time.

And, in this new realm of electronic media, it’s not enough to simply speak *to* (or *at*!) young people. Teens are attracted to a form of media that emphasizes participation and community. They don’t just want to watch or listen; they want to join the conversation, comment on the program, and create their own show!

In fact, according to a 2007 survey from the *Pew Internet and American Life Project*, 64 percent of “on-line teenagers”

Striking a balance

There’s nothing like an old-fashioned lock-in or retreat to build friendships – and faith!

Bay area youth enjoy lock-in Teens from parishes of several jurisdictions in Northern California held a two-day lock-in and service project focusing on the great “I AM” statements of Christ in Sacramento, CA, April 11-12.

For two years, Bay Area parishes have hosted youth events on a rotating basis. Lock-ins, retreats, service projects, and a BBQ are held annually. The youth also participate in the regional St. Eugene camp each July.

In the immediate future, a BBQ will be sponsored by the OCA’s St. Christina of Tyre Mission in Fremont, CA, where Fr. K. Michael Anderson is pastor. ■

Diocesan teens attend pre-lenten retreat

Over 40 teens from the Diocese of Washington and New York enjoyed a pre-lenten retreat titled “Jesus, Others, and Yourself” in Princeton, NJ, February 8-10, 2008.

Besides discussions and services, the youth enjoyed team-building activities, skits, basketball, and *Spiderman 3*!



DC/NY youth *discuss their faith at pre-lenten retreat.*

Parents joined the teens for the Sunday Liturgy.

A summer retreat will be held in East Meadow, NY. ■

Lock-in a first for SC teens For the first time, the Good Seeds youth group of Holy Apostles Church, West Columbia, SC, held their first teen lock-in February 15-16, 2008.

Fr. Thomas Moore, pastor, and Dn. Joseph Kreta led discussions on the meaning of the Cross and Great Lent, services, and fellowship activities. The teens also enjoyed an outing to the South Carolina State Museum, a picnic, and a variety of games during the gathering. ■

California teens *combine faith with service at lenten lock-in.*



South Carolina teens *enjoy their first lock-in.*

engage in at least one type of content creation. They write their own blogs, make and post their own videos, and create their own photo albums.

And, even more significantly, they are looking to be included. The survey discovered that content creation is not just about sharing creative output; it is also about participating in conversations fueled by that content.

With all of this in mind, the Orthodox Christian Network [OCN], a media ministry of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas, has started a new, user-driven on-line program for Orthodox Christian teenagers and young adults.

Called OTTO – Orthodox Teen Talk Online – OCN provides a bi-weekly podcast that features a pan-Orthodox group of teens from around the country who discuss real-life issues in an open and honest manner with at least one Orthodox priest. Recent topics have included drugs, drinking, abortion, dating, and peer pressure.

The teens themselves develop the topics for discussion, contribute their own opinions, and share their own life experiences related to the discussion. This allows young people to find their own voice and to develop their own Orthodox Christian response to some of the most pressing issues of the day.

Given today's on-line culture, that's critical.

And, in line with the internet's tradition of inclusion, all Orthodox Christian teens are welcome to participate! If a young person in your parish would like to join the conversation, just ask; if the members of your youth group would like to produce their own episode, it can be arranged.

When it comes to teenage media consumption, the numbers are astounding – but so too are the opportunities to engage teens in the life of the Church.

Just sign on-line and join the conversation.

To listen to the existing episodes of OTTO visit www.MyOCN.net. ■

Seraphim Danckaert is an OCN staff member. For more info on OTTO and teens and media, contact him at seraphim@myocn.net.



"Come, receive the Light!" Fr. Eugene Lahue passes on the Paschal light during outdoor services in Kabul, Afghanistan [right] while Fr. Peter Baktis blesses familiar Paschal foods marking the end of the lenten fast at Baghdad's Camp Victory [above].



Chaplaincies

"Their proclamation has gone out into all the earth!"

Proclaiming the resurrection in the war zone

As countless Orthodox Christians across North America celebrated Pascha with family and friends in familiar surroundings, Orthodox Christian chaplains were bringing the joy of the Resurrection to military personnel in some of the world's most volatile regions.

Joining the chaplains, members of the US armed forces, and civilians at Paschal services were Orthodox service men and women from a host of countries.

Soldiers and civilians from Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and Australia gathered at Baghdad, Iraq's Camp Victory – the site of Saddam Hussein's former Al Faw Palace – as US Army Chaplain Peter Baktis celebrated the Paschal Matins and Liturgy. By coincidence, Pascha coincided with ANZAC day – the commemoration of soldiers of the Australian and New

Zealand army corps who fought at Gallipoli, Turkey during World War I – which was observed by Australian troops.

Meanwhile, Command Chaplain Eugene Lahue celebrated Paschal services for Orthodox Christian personnel at NATO International Security Assistance Force headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan. The celebration of services on a makeshift outdoor altar in no way diminished the solemnity of the Feast of Feasts.

And, of course, despite the miles that separated the troops from their homes, the traditional breaking of the lenten fast followed services in both locations as the chaplains blessed and shared Paschal food!

In both instances, the light of the Risen Christ transcended time and space as the chaplains' proclamation literally went out "into all the earth!" ■

Chancellor from 10

Not for pastors only

essential work of the Church – attracting new souls to the faith.” Not only priests but “all parish workers must take part in missionary activities.” Now unquestionably understood as a critical component of parish growth, missionary outreach is the cornerstone of a spiritually healthy community whose influence will spread. “A parish that strives for such activity, for true understanding of the purpose and meaning of the earthly Church’s existence, will be a wondrous blessing for the world around it.”

There is that famous saying, “The kind of priest a parish has is the kind of parish a community becomes.” Of course, the parish priest has tremendous influence on the parish. But the community also has great influence on its pastor. In many places, pastors and parishioners constitute true parish families, where bonds of intimacy and trust are as deep as in any biological family. Here it helps to think about the marriage-like relationship that exists between the priest and his parish. Just as today’s marriages are challenged by the stresses of modern life, today’s pastors and parishes deal with stressful issues on many different levels. Today’s North American parish, situated in a complicated modern society with well-educated and sophisticated parishioners, requires an equally sophisticated, well-educated, energetic, multi-tasking, and competent pastor. Both pastor and parish engage each other as they confront the challenges of maintaining centuries-old Orthodox Christian tradition in the context of a rapidly changing society. “What,” asks Archbishop John in his book, “is there to add to this?” Everything has been laid out by the apostles, but proclaiming the apostolic revelation is ongoing and “of many words directed to the good and of expressing the old and the eternal in a new way and applying it to the new conditions under which the Church lives and suffers.”

Archbishop John’s book is notable in that it is thoroughly spiritual and theological, yet fully attuned to the dramatic social changes which were only beginning when the book was written. “Free from all worldly ‘modernity,’ a pastor should know the conditions of modern life,” he writes. “A pastor is not ‘outside life;’ he is merely outside its vanities. His direct task is not to invent new methods of social organization, but to make the most of every given social organization in order to teach men to be faithful to God. He educates men in all conditions of life and on every path of it to be followers of Christ’s spirit. Like the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the priest teaches men not what social forms they should adopt, but in what way they should relate to one another in society.”

The inter-connectedness between pastor and parish and their mutual dependence on each other exists as a spiritual reality – not psychological or physiological, as in a biological family. Spiritual kinship binds “brothers and sisters in Christ” with a greater degree of permanence than any genetic relationship. In a chapter called “The Second Birth” in the second part of *The Orthodox Pastor*, Archbishop John discusses the mysterious properties of spiritual kinship. He indicates that the process of awakening occurs as the conscience becomes “sensitive to good and evil,” while recognizing how in isolation we are “powerless in the struggle with sin and evil.” The qualities needed to overcome that struggle are humility and suffering. “The process of spiritual birth is connected with suffering,” he writes, adding that those who are born in the spirit “do not regard themselves as having ‘attained’ anything; they see their deficiency in everything; they do not notice other people’s failings but, on the contrary, are always struck by

their good qualities.”

The Orthodox Pastor is neither a pastoral handbook, nor is it an outline of liturgical services, a list of topics for homilies, or a legalistic-administrative how-to-do-it handbook. It only sketches out “pastoral problems,” avoiding rigorous and mechanical questions and answers. It is precisely the absence of those things that makes *The Orthodox Pastor* so special and so accessible, even to lay readers. It is a book that reminds us, priests and parishioners alike, that at the heart of Christian community life is joy. “Truth is joyful,” writes Archbishop John. “And its knowledge cannot be but joyful.” The book emanates with radiance and love. It speaks with apostolic vibrancy about life transfigured: “The Apostles had not only wisdom but love and spiritual power as well.” Spiritual life arises out of that power, which priest and parishioners alike are challenged to maintain. The living souls – that is, the people of God who are members of a parish – are “witnesses to Truth,” abiding in the wisdom that stands beyond reason, the ability to love others “in spite of their errors and imperfections.”

Archbishop John reminds us that the Orthodox Christian parish is a microcosm of the heavenly Kingdom. It is the physical and psychological arena in which turmoil, challenges, and battlefields become grace-filled, peaceful camp grounds. It is the spiritual reality of perfection perceived in anticipation of the final things. It is the vantage point from which we can all stand before the Face of the Lord. In an 1947 essay titled “On Prayer,” Archbishop John wrote that, in standing before God, “everything small is perfected; everything imperfect becomes great.” That mysterious purification, which occurs when we approach Our Lord with true humility, is the guarantee that as long as the world exists, there will be true-believing Christians who will gather together in worshipping communities where a designated person will be chosen to lead them in organized and effective prayer. That person is, of course, the priest, a person whose “authority rests not upon his rank but on the practice of his fatherly love for a man’s soul.” Love is mutual by definition; not static and not unfulfilled. This love is the origin and goal of human existence; it is distorted and absent in the world, but made evident in the Church, in each Orthodox Christian community.

The Orthodox Pastor is a small but powerful testimony of those communities that stand as “precious jewels among weeds” and as reminders to pastors and parishioners alike that every parish, while unique and special, is indeed “a ladder to the Kingdom of God.” ■

Classics from 6

Christ and the Church

faith.” We firmly believe that our Orthodox Church of today is the very same Church that was founded by Jesus Christ and His apostles. In the Church we preserve and proclaim basic beliefs and truths of God’s revelation that must never be replaced or deformed, despite whatever pressures contemporary history may bring to bear.

The dogma of the Church is remembered and beautifully expressed in a morning prayer: “First of all, remember, O Lord, Your Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, which You have purchased with Your own blood. Protect and strengthen her, and grant her to grow upon the earth. Preserve Your Church in purity, in peace, and in safety, from the gates of hell, by the divine grace and power of the Holy Spirit.” ■

NorthAmerica

Metropolitan Laurus, ROCOR First Hierarch, falls asleep in the Lord

His Eminence, Metropolitan Laurus, First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, fell asleep in the Lord at Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY, on Orthodoxy Sunday, March 16, 2008.

Born Vassily Skurla in Ladimirovo, Czechoslovakia, on January 1, 1928, he was drawn to monastic life as a young boy. In 1939, with the blessing of his father, he joined the Monastery of Saint Job of Pochaev in Ladimirovo where, five years later at the age of 16, he became a novice.

Facing the approaching German-Soviet front during World War II, he and the other members of the monastic brotherhood fled Czechoslovakia via Germany and Switzerland in 1946, eventually arriving at Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY.

In March 1948, he was tonsured to monastic rank and given the name Laurus. The following year, he took the lesser schema and was ordained to the diaconate. In 1954, he graduated from Holy Trinity Seminary and ordained to the priesthood. He was elevated to the rank of hegumen in 1959. The following year he was appointed dean of the seminary. In 1966, he was elevated to the rank of archimandrite.

Archimandrite Laurus was elected Bishop of Manhattan and appointed secretary of the Synod of Bishops in 1967. Nine years later, he was elected abbot of Holy Trinity Monastery and appointed Bishop of Syracuse and Holy Trinity. In 1981, he was elevated to the dignity of archbishop.

In October 2001, after the retirement of His Eminence, Metropolitan Vitaly, Archbishop Laurus was elected Metropolitan of Eastern America and New York and First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

In 2006, Metropolitan Laurus chaired the ROCOR's fourth All-Diaspora Council, which approved reconciliation and normalization of relations with the Moscow Patriarchate. On May 17, 2007, he participated in the signing of the Act of Canoni-



Metropolitan Laurus

cal Communion in Moscow, Russia, and participated in a joint Liturgy with His Holiness, Patriarch Aleksey II at Moscow's Christ the Savior Cathedral.

Funeral services were celebrated at

Holy Trinity Monastery March 20-21.

Upon learning of Metropolitan Laurus' repose, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, addressed a letter of condolence to His Eminence, Archbishop Hilarion of Sydney and Australia-New Zealand, ROCOR senior hierarch.

"We join you and the hierarchs, clergy, and faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in prayer for the repose of the soul of the newly departed Metropolitan Laurus," Metropolitan Herman wrote. "On behalf of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America, the clergy and faithful, I express our sympathy and condolences.

"The death of Metropolitan Laurus is a great loss for all of us. He labored diligently for long decades – first as a monastic and then as a hierarch. He crowned his service in Christ's Holy Church with his courage in achieving reconciliation within the Russian Orthodox Church," Metropolitan Herman continued. "At every stage of his ministry, he maintained monastic humility, simplicity, and joy. May God in His mercy and love grant that all of us will continue on the way of reconciliation which the late First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia pursued with evangelical hope and faithfulness. May his memory be eternal!" ■

Metropolitan Herman and clergy of the Orthodox Church in America celebrated a panikhida for the repose of ROCOR First Hierarch, Metropolitan Laurus, at Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY, on March 20, 2008.



NorthAmerica

MA museum boasts largest US collection of Russian icons

While today's skyrocketing air fares make a trip to Moscow's Tretyakov Gallery cost prohibitive, a visit to the Museum of Russian Icons in Clin-

ton, MA, will prove to be a most respectable alternative!

Housed in a fully renovated 150-year-old former mill since 2006, the museum

— the only one of its kind in the US — was founded by Gordon Lankton, chairman of Nypro, Inc., who became fascinated with icons during his many visits to his company's Moscow facility. Over 250 icons, tracing the development of iconography from the 15th century right up to the present, are currently on display in the 4,800 square foot facility.

Located at 203 Union St., Clinton, MA, the museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Information on special programs is available on the museum's web site at www.museumofrussianicons.org. ■

Miniature folding iconostasis, circa 1780, from the museum's collection.



Orthodox schools conference to be held August 1-2

With the help of the Virginia H. Farah Foundation, the Orthodox School Association will hold its second annual conference at Hellenic College, Brookline, MA, August 1-2, 2008.

Two plenary addresses — “The Pedagogy of Saint John Chrysostom” and “Classical Education and the Orthodox Mind” — will be delivered by Dr. Anne Bezzerides and the Rev. Dr. Demetrios Constantelos. Individual seminars will explore topics ranging from organizing capital campaigns to methods of teaching various disciplines.

“We invite everyone to join us as we examine the patristic educational counsels that will keep us consistent with our faith and the organizational models and practical skills that will make our schools a solid and attractive option to all Americans,” said Bryan Smith, association director.

The association serves as a resource to North America's growing number of Orthodox schools. It's first conference, held in Fort Worth, TX in 2007, attracted administrators and teachers from over 20 schools.

Registration forms and general information on Orthodox schools may be found on the association's web site at www.orthodoxschools.org, or by contacting the association at 7601 Bellaire Drive South, Fort Worth, TX 76132; 617/850-1315; info@orthodoxschools.org. ■

Pages from 21

Anniversaries

Father Joseph Kreta, the first dean, he guided the school through its formative years. The seminary moved to a site adjacent to Kodiak's Holy Resurrection Church in 1974. Two years later, it was recognized as a theological seminary by the Holy Synod of Bishops. The faculty included graduates of the OCA's other seminaries. Some faculty members, notably Father Michael Oleksa, a renowned Alaskan historian and native cultures expert, remained in Alaska for the long-term. The seminary has played a key role in reviving Church life in Alaska. At the time of the seminary's establishment, the diocese was served by a handful of clergy, many from the lower 48 states. Today, dozens of native clergy pastor Alaska's nearly 100 churches, while seminary-trained lay readers and catechists serve communities without resident priests.

The Orthodox Church in America's seminaries are indispensable in preparing educated hierarchs and clergy and learned lay leaders, teachers, and others devoted to various forms of ministry. The seminaries provide spiritual formation through the integration of academic study, worship, service, and fellowship within the context of the Christian community. May the seminaries continue to lead the entire Church in theological discourse to uncover the revelation of the Church's genuine, timeless, and unchanging Holy Tradition in ways meaningful for contemporary society. ■

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

Recession from 8

Time to tighten the belt

crisis. Those who bought the “prosperity gospel” have some theological rethinking to do. Young capitalists who have known good times will struggle existentially when clicks and cliques don't pay the rent. Families built on “shopping together” will have only each other, plus a stack of bills, to triage. Cult-like devotion to the housing market will yield scant hope or meaning. People need real bread.

Third, it is time to nurture community, opening the doors wide to a troubled world and then engaging new and old in basic Christian gifts: love, hospitality, care-giving, sharing travails, listening. This isn't a time to be perfecting doctrine or polishing institutional brass.

Fourth, this is a time to reconsider operational basics. Cutting to the chase: do we need the inefficient facilities that we have inherited? Do we need to continue being in business only one day a week? The answers aren't necessarily “No,” but nothing, not even a beloved sanctuary, gets a free pass.

Finally, we have got to stop fighting over control. If we can't work together — clergy and laity, conservative and liberal, traditional and conservative, new and old members, male and female, rich and poor — then we have nothing to offer a broken world. Our fights have corrupted most of human history. Enough of these shameful and arrogant conflicts! ■

Tom Ehrich is a writer for Religion News Service.

Bishop tells WCC: “Liberal Christianity will not survive”



Bishop Hilarion

His Grace, Bishop Hilarion [Alfayev], the Moscow Patriarchate’s representative to the European institutions, warned about the “danger of liberal Christianity” at the opening session of the central committee of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland,

land, on February 13, 2008.

“The liberalization of moral standards, initiated by some Protestant and Anglican communities several decades ago and developing with ever-increasing speed, has now brought us to a situation where we can no longer preach one and the same code of moral conduct,” he said. “We can no longer speak about Christian morality, because moral standards promoted by ‘traditional’ and ‘liberal’ Christians are markedly different, and the abyss between these two wings of contemporary Christianity is rapidly growing.

“We are being told by some allegedly Christian leaders, who still bear the titles of Reverends and Most Reverends, that marriage between a woman and a man is no longer the only option for creating a Christian family, that there are other patterns, and that the Church must be ‘inclusive’ enough to recognize alternative life-styles and give them official and solemn blessing,” Bishop Hilarion continued. “We are being told that human life is no longer an unquestionable value, that it can be summarily aborted in the womb, or that one may have the right to interrupt it voluntarily, and that Christian ‘traditionalists’ should reconsider their standpoints in order to be in tune with modern developments. We are being told that abortion is acceptable, contraception is agreeable, and euthanasia is better still, and that the Church must accommodate all these ‘values’ in the name of human rights.

What, then, he asked, is left of Christianity?

“In the confusing and disoriented world in which we live, where is the prophetic voice of Christians? What can we offer, or can we offer anything at all to the secular world, apart from what the secular world will offer to itself as a value system on

Geneva to 30

WorldBriefs

GREECE

Greek Church elects new primate

On February 7, 2008, just one week after the funeral of His Beatitude, Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens and All Greece, members of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece elected His Eminence, Metropolitan Ieronymos of Thebes, 70, as the Church’s new Primate.

Archbishop Christodoulos fell asleep in the Lord on January 28, 2008, after a six-month bout with cancer.

Seventy-four bishops participated in the election of Metropolitan Ieronymos, who received 45 of 74 votes during a second round of balloting.

“I accept this high office and honor to uphold the holy traditions of the Greek Orthodox Church,” he said in accepting the post.

The election was closely watched in Greece, where Orthodox Christianity is recognized as the “prevailing religion” in the constitution. Ninety-seven percent of the country’s native-born population has been baptized in the Orthodox Church.

Born in 1938, the new archbishop pursued postgraduate studies in Austria and Germany after completing studies in philosophy and theology at the University of Athens. He abandoned a promising academic career after entering the ministry.

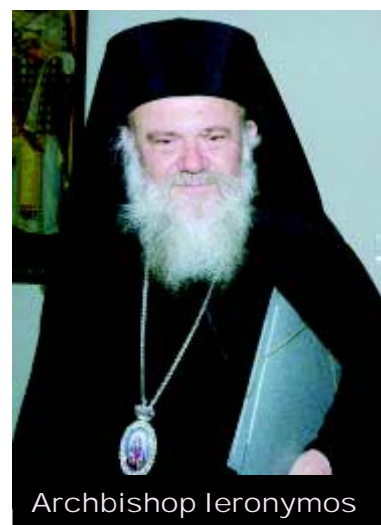
In 1981, he was unanimously elected Metropolitan of Thebes after serving as abbot of two monasteries and as chief secretary of the Church of Greece’s Holy Synod.

As Metropolitan of Thebes, he renovated and revived over 20 monastic communities. In addition to scholarly pursuits on a variety of theological, social, and historical disciplines, he established numerous boarding schools, orphanages, homes for the elderly, rehabilitation centers for the mentally challenged, a drug prevention center, food kitchens for the poor, and a variety of other social and charitable ministries.

Upon learning of the election, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, sent a congratulatory message to Archbishop Ieronymos, the text of which reads as follows.

“It is with great joy that I greet you on the occasion of your election as Archbishop of Athens and All Greece. Although we do not know each other personally, it is clear from your reputation as a churchman, an administrator, and an academic that you are a truly worthy candidate for the office of Primate of the Church of Greece. We are particularly impressed with the work that you accomplished establishing numerous and varied philanthropic and pastoral institutions in your service as Metropolitan of Thebes and Levadeia.

“On behalf of all the hierarchs, clergy, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, I offer prayers that our ever-merciful Lord will continue to bless your work as you apply your talents to this new yoke of service, leading the Orthodox Church in Greece.” ■

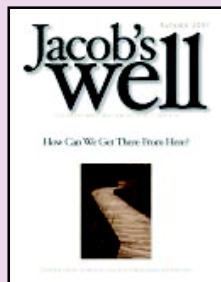


Archbishop Ieronymos

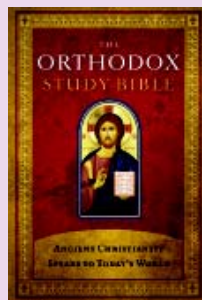
RESOURCES

New Orthodox Study Bible with Old Testament now available

The fruit of over 20 years of labor by many of the best Orthodox Christian theologians of our time, the long awaited **Orthodox Study Bible** combines an original translation of the **Old Testament** from the Septuagint with the popular



New Testament and Psalms published several years ago. The edition is available from most Orthodox vendors and on-line at www.conciliarpress.com.



Jacob's Well back in print

After an absence of several years, **Jacob's Well**, the official publication of the Diocese of Washington and New York is back in print. **Read the latest issue in PDF format at <http://dcnyoca.org>.** ■

Geneva from 29

Liberal Christianity

which society should be built? Do we have our own value system which we should preach, or should we simply applaud every novelty in public morality which becomes fashionable in the secular society?"

Bishop Hilarion also challenged what he called a "'politically correct' Christianity... which not only so easily and readily surrenders itself to secular moral standards, but also participates in promoting value systems alien to Christian tradition.

"We are facing a paradoxical situation," he explained, observing that "British secular politicians who share Christian convictions are concerned about the rising Christianophobia in the UK and initiate a debate on this issue in Parliament, calling for recognition of the country's Christian identity" while, "at the same time, the Primate of the Church of England calls for 'a constructive accommodation with some aspects of Muslim law.'

"I am sure I will be told that Christianity must become more tolerant and all-inclusive, that we Christians should no longer insist on our religion as being the only true faith, that we should learn how to adopt other value systems and standards," Bishop Hilarion continued. "My question, however, is: when are we going to stop making Christianity politically correct and all-inclusive; why do we insist on accommodating every possible alternative to the centuries-old Christian tradition? Where is the limit, or is there no limit at all?"

Observing that "many Christians worldwide look to Christian leaders in the hope that they will defend Christianity

against the challenges that it faces," Bishop Hilarion stated that "it is not our task to defend Sharia law, or to commend alternative life-styles, or to promote secular values. Our holy mission is to preach what Christ preached, to teach what the apostles taught, and to propagate what the Holy Fathers propagated. It is this witness which people are expecting of us.

"I am convinced that liberal Christianity will not survive for a long time," Bishop Hilarion concluded. "A politically correct Christianity will die. We see already how liberal Christianity is falling apart and how the introduction of new moral norms leads to division, discord, and confusion in some Christian communities. This process will continue, while traditional Christians, I believe, will consolidate their forces in order to protect the faith and moral teaching which the Lord gave, the Apostles preached, and the Fathers preserved." ■

Tradition from 9

A return to Tradition

Dix gives two examples of this; I will quote one. Saint Cyprian of Carthage ordained a subdeacon and a reader, but neglected first to secure the assent of his presbyterium. He therefore sent anxious apologies to his presbyters for having done this, excusing himself and saying that this was done in time of emergency [cited as *Epistle 28*]. Dix comments, "Cyprian's excuse that the presbyters had previously agreed to the men's fitness for these orders makes it all the more strange to us that he should think it necessary to excuse himself at all.... In the pre-Nicene Church the

bishop's part is simply the essential sacramental act of laying on hands, but he cannot exercise this power at his own discretion, but only with the consent of his Church." Once again, we see the bishop and his presbyters functioning as a unity, like "a single lyre with its many strings."

Things were soon to change under Constantine. The needs of the Imperial State required a single liaison of local Church with distant Emperor; this liaison was the bishop, and juridical authority came to be concentrated almost solely in him. What was originally the bishop's moral authority among his flock became his legal – and State enforced – jurisdiction. This was natural enough in Byzantium, but it forms no essential part of the bishop's office. And Byzantium is long dead. The American eagle, I notice, has but one head.

The Church in North America might well consider a return to our original Tradition regarding the functioning of the offices of bishop and presbyter – not as an exercise in ecclesiastical archaeology, but as part of our recovery of spiritual health and vitality. It is not a question of "returning artificially to the third century," but of having credibility and fulfilling Christ's will in the 21st century. That is, I suggest that we take our conciliar nature more seriously than we have before, that bishops and their presbyters strive to nourish a close personal relationship, that bishops seek out and utilize the wisdom which God has placed in the presbyters for their guidance and support and for the health of the Church. The bishops' dioceses have expanded far beyond what the pre-Nicene Church ever imagined – one bishop of the OCA has a diocese that spans the continent, while another oversees a diocese of some 16 states. There is no way our bishops can effectively function as the "local pastor" of all the faithful in their vast territories. With such expanded responsibilities, the bishops therefore need our love, support and prayers – even more. Part of this loving support includes the guidance of their presbyterial college. The bishop is not only the father to his diocese; he – like Saint Peter – is also *sumpresbyteros*, or *co-presbyter*, called to act in concert with the other members of his college. If the bishop and his presbyters could function as a unity, like a single lyre with its many strings, what a song of praise might arise to God! ■

Fr. Lawrence Farley is rector of St. Herman Church, Langley, BC, Canada.

Communities

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

Grants available to further the mission of Orthodoxy

WILLIAMSPORT, PA – Financial support is now available from the Ganister Orthodox Foundation for organizations with innovative approaches to advancing the mission of Orthodoxy in the US. The deadline for submitting grant applications is July 31, 2008. Recipients will be announced in the fall.

Founded in 2001, the Ganister Orthodox Foundation is a component of the First Community Foundation of Pennsylvania, located in Williamsport, PA.

Recent grants have been awarded to Ancient Faith Radio, to support the purchase of digital recorders for worldwide distribution; Raphael House, San Francisco, CA, to sponsor internships for resident volunteers; and

St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA, to finance an off-site education program for those pursuing the diaconate.

Favor is given to proposals that address priority needs of the Orthodox Church in America, especially those that do so in catalytic ways. The selection process also weighs leadership experience within each organization, clarity of goals, the presence of a stable funding base, and faithfulness to the teachings and ministry of the Church. Applicants must articulate how their undertaking will have a positive impact on a specific priority need, without duplicating other programs or projects already serving the Church.

Applicants must be qualifying 501c(3) organizations as described under IRS Section 509(a)(1). Grants will not be considered for endowments, ongoing operational support, annual campaigns or event sponsorships, debt reduction, research grants, or support of individuals.

To receive a grant application, contact Julie Adams, First Community Foundation of Pennsylvania, 330 Pine St., Suite 401, Williamsport, PA 17701. Applications will be reviewed and recommendations made by the advisory board of the Ganister Orthodox Foundation, a donor-advised component of the First Community Foundation of Pennsylvania. ■



Choir director's compositions premiered in Joliet, IL

JOLIET, IL – The 25-voice choir of Lewis University, Lockport, IL, performed a concert of Orthodox hymns at St. Nicholas Church here recently.

In addition to featuring classic works by Kedrov, Arkhangelsky, and Tchaikovsky, the choir premiered original compositions by the parish's former choir director, Stephen J. Platko. Twenty-two selections from Mr. Platko's collection, *Orthodox Musical Offering 2008*, are the end result of collaboration with his brother, the late Fr. John Platko of Overland Park, KS, himself a noted composer, who fell asleep in the Lord in 2005. One of the hymns, *The Jesus Prayer*, was composed as a prayer for healing within the Orthodox Church in America.

Fr. John E. Kuchta is rector of St. Nicholas parish.

The collection is available free of charge to parishes and choirs who send a request to splatko@comcast.net; 815/254-4865. ■

Ambassador bids farewell to Moscow Representation church

MOSCOW, RUSSIA – On April 2, 2008, His Excellency, William Burns, Ambassador of the US to the Russian Federation, visited the OCA's Representation Church of St. Catherine the Great Martyr to bid farewell to the parish dean, Archimandrite Zacchaeus.



Fr. Zacchaeus offered sincere thanks for the cooperation that took place between the OCA Representation and the US Embassy during Ambassador Burn's diplomatic service in Russia. The Ambassador avidly supported projects initiated by the parish, including the annual September 11 memorial service for the Innocent victims of terrorism around the world and the annual prayer service for World AIDS Day.

Fr. Zacchaeus presented the Ambassador with an icon of St. Catherine and wished him success in his future diplomatic work at the US Department of State. ■

Communities

Gas tanks recycled into church bells at Canadian parish

LANGLEY, BC, CANADA – What does today's commitment to recycling have to do with the ancient faith of the Orthodox Christian Church?

"Bells!" says Matushka Donna Farley, whose husband is rector of Saint Herman Church here.

And on Sunday, April 6, 2008, the parish's faithful gathered around Fr. Lawrence Farley as he blessed a set of six bells fashioned out of high quality, recycled steel oxygen cylinders donated by Air Liquide.

"A team of parishioners and friends began by cutting the bottoms of the cylinders, grinding each one to a different size to produce a variety of tones," said Matushka Donna. "Sandblasting and painting completed the process. Now, instead of sitting in a landfill, there are six more 'voices' proclaiming the glory of God."

Fr. Lawrence with some of the bell-making and tower-building team admire recycled bells!



Deacon Kurt Jordan cuts each cylinder to a different length to produce a variety of tones.

A modest tower at the church's entrance was built to house the bells, each of which is named in honor of one of the North American saints.

"We thought it fitting that the largest, deepest bell be named in honor of our parish's patron, Saint Herman of Alaska," Matushka Donna added.

At the end of the blessing rite, percussionist Dan Steenburgh struck the bells for the first time with mallets as the faithful entered the church for the Divine Liturgy. He learned how to ring the bells from the monks at Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Gibsons, BC, who also had made bells from recycled cylinders. ■