

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory Be To Jesus Christ!

This past year has been very challenging in my office as chancellor, especially continuing to facilitate and support the transition of leadership in our diocese. I have been blessed with the opportunity to work under the direction of Archbishop Melchisedek and our newly-installed Diocesan Bishop Mark. Under the leadership of his Grace, Bishop Mark, more responsibility and empowerment has been given to the deans on the local deanery level.

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I take this opportunity to thank Fr. Victor Gorodenchuk and Larry Skvir as Co-Chairs of the Enthronement Committee who worked very conscientiously and meticulously with our Deans in making this historical event a joyful reality in the life of our Diocese. The installation ceremonies began on Friday, May 9th with Vespers at St. Stephen's Cathedral and reception immediately followed. Kudos to Fr. Victor and St. Stephen's Cathedral for hosting the reception. The Enthronement Liturgy was held on Saturday, May 10th at St. Stephen's Cathedral. Metropolitan Tikhon, Archbishop Melchisedek, and Bishop Michael concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with Bishop Mark, the diocesan and visiting clergy. The festive "*Enthronement Reception*" took place following the Hierarchal Divine Liturgy at the Radisson Hotel in Philadelphia. I had the privilege of serving as the Toast-Master for this historical and most-significant spiritual event in our Diocese.

One of the great hall marks of the leadership style of Bishop Mark is his pursuit of continuing education seminars and retreats for the clergy of our diocese. These seminars are well-attended and provide opportunities for personal healing and spiritual growth for us and the parishes we serve. On Thursday, May 15th, I was blessed to host a continuing education seminar at St. Michael's Center in Jermyn, Pennsylvania, for the clergy of our diocese. The speaker for the day was Fr. Leonid Kishkovsky.

- On Monday, May 26th, I organized a luncheon, hosted by Bishop Mark at a reception at the Diocesan Center for the visiting Hierarchs and guest clergy on the occasion of the 110th Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery. The visiting hierarchs who attended the luncheon were Metropolitan Tikhon, Bishops Michael, David and Archbishop Justinian.
- With the blessing and under the direction of Bishop Mark, scheduled meetings with potential clergy to fill vacant parishes within the diocese.
- Participated in a follow-up on parishes who were not in compliance with the OCA Sexual Misconduct polices.
- Visited and held a meeting with Fr. Mircea Airinei at Holy Trinity Church in McAdoo and met with the Church Committee, also present and participating in the meeting were Fr. Michael Hatrak and Fr. Timothy Hojnicky.

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- Visited and held meetings with Fr. Benjamin Johnson and the Church Committee of St. Basil's Church in Simpson, Pennsylvania on the progress and development of their parish By-laws and other related matters.
- Visited the Church Committee at the Holy Resurrection Cathedral together with Fr. Nicholas Solak on the transition to new leadership in the Cathedral.
- Held regular meetings with His Grace Bishop Mark, on the life and development of our diocese and especially pursuing the mandate of our diocesan council motion to receive a clean title and legal ownership of the Diocesan Center. Attorney John Krisa continues to make significant progress in completing in this arduous work.
- Attended deanery meetings and gave reports at Diocesan Council Meetings.

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In addition, some of my other highlighted events include the following:

- Key-note speaker at St. Tikhon's Seminary for the continuing education symposium on June 17th
- Continue to organize the Orthodox participation in the Annual March for Life in Washington D.C on January 22nd.
- Accompanied Bishop Mark on January 19 at a Christian Unity Dinner hosted by Bishop Joseph Bambara of Scranton.
- Attended the OCPM Board Meeting this summer with Bishop Mark in White Plains, New York, serving as the Secretary of the Board of Directors.
- Addressed the Greek Orthodox Clergy Congress in Philadelphia in July on the work of OCPM.

As a result of the severe weather conditions, the Annual Diocesan Chancellors and Treasurers meeting at the Chancery of the O.C.A. was postponed until Tuesday, February 3rd. At this meeting we hope to strengthen our relationship with the Central Church Administration and to explore ways to support our National and Diocesan level.

I thank the Deans of our Diocese for the outstanding work they have done and in helping fill our vacant parishes. I thank our Diocesan Treasurer for his continued commitment and tireless work. I especially want to thank Matushka Sandra Kopestonsky for all her efforts in the daily operation of the Diocesan Center and the many hours spent in organizing and preparing the necessary documentation for this Assembly.

Today at this Diocesan Assembly, we will prepare to move ahead and look candidly at some of the difficulties which are facing us. Let us examine and assess our work together as Orthodox Christians, dedicated in spreading the "Good News" of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us continue to pray for our Diocesan Bishop Mark, for his health and salvation and guidance of the Holy Spirit, so we may walk in the direction of mutual forgiveness, with a new-found dedicated zeal to grow our parishes and build up our diocese.

We welcome today Fr. John Jillions, the Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, and the Right Reverend Nathaniel Symeonides of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, Chairperson of the Department of Inter-Orthodox and Ecumenical Relations as well as serving on the Secretariat of the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops in North America.

I ask for your continued prayers and thank you for the support and trust you have placed in me in representing the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania as the Chancellor. *"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but, the things which are not seen are eternal."* (2Cor.4:16-18.)

I remain,

With love in Christ,

Very Rev. John Kowalczyk

Very Rev. John Kowalczyk (Chancellor)

DIOCESAN RECEPTIONS, TRANSFERS AND AWARDS

JANUARY

17 - Fr. Martin Browne assigned from Acting Rector to Rector, St. Mark's Church, Wrightstown

17 - Fr. Stephen Miller assigned from Acting Rector to Rector, St. Nicholas Church, Coatesville

17 - Father James Mason was officially received into our Diocese and is attached to St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem

APRIL

8 - Received Fr. Ignatius Gauvain into Diocese

SYNODAL AWARDS

Fr. Raymond Browne, Gold Cross

Fr. Mathew Cantrell, Gold Cross

Fr. Michael Demko, Gold Cross

Fr. Stephen Gorodenchuk, Gold Cross

Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Gold Cross

Fr. Nichols Solak, Archpriest

MAY

16 – Assigned Fr. Ignatius Gauvain as Acting Rector to St. Mary's Church, Coaldale

JULY

23 – Rev. George Volkovinsky assigned from Acting Rector to Rector at St. John the Baptist Church, Edwardsville

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23- Rev. Paul Schellbach assigned from Acting Rector to Rector at All Saints Church, Olyphant
23 – Rev. Benjamin Johnson assigned from Acting Rector to Rector at St .Basil Church, Simpson
23 – Rev. Ian Shipley assigned from Acting Rector to Rector at St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem

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AUGUST

Received Fr. Nikolai Gulin on loan from the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, and attached to St. Stephen's Cathedral.

OCTOBER

8 – Rev. Mircea Airinei assigned from Acting Rector to Rector at Holy Trinity Church, McAdoo.

NOVEMBER

Received Fr. Timothy Cremeens, Ph.D. and attached to Holy Resurrection Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre.

DECEMBER

1 – Rev. Peter Henry assigned from Acting Rector to Rector at St. Michael's Church, Old Forge.

9 - Rev. Joh Nightingale appointed priest in charge at St. John the Baptist Church, Nanticoke.

ORDINATIONS:

January 26 -Ordination of Deacon John Nightingale to the Holy Priesthood, St Nicholas, Olyphant, Pennsylvania..

November 9 - Ordination of William (Vasil) Dubee to the Holy Diaconate, St. Michael's Church, Jermyn, Pennsylvania.

November 21 – Ordination of James Carpenter to the Holy Diaconate, St. Michael's Church, Wilmington, Delaware.

December 13 - Ordination of Gregory Hubiak to the Holy Diaconate, St. Herman of Alaska, Gradyville, Pennsylvania.

DEATHS:

July 26 - Priest Sergius Willis

August 20 – Matushka Vera Yuschak

November 19 – Matushka Irene Borick

RETIREMENTS

October 31st - Retirement of V. Rev. Joseph Martin

