

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

The Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America Volume XIII, No. 2 Summer, 1997



❧
*Holy Hierarch Father Innocent
Pray unto God for us*
❧

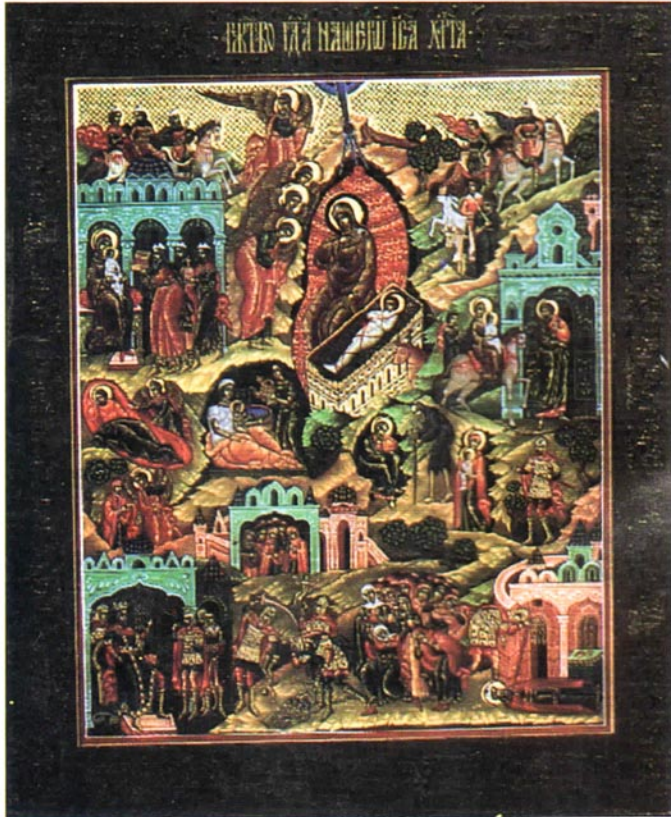
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Archpastoral Letter of Archbishop HERMAN on the Bicentennial of St. Innocent



Last month we at St. Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary were privileged to host the National Church celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Saint Innocent of Alaska. It was truly a fitting tribute to the holy man born John Popov, later renamed John Veniaminov, who became a missionary priest and eventually Bishop in Alaska, who was elevated to Metropolitan of Moscow and has been proclaimed a Saint, the "Equal to the Apostles," and the "Enlightener of North America."

How awesome it was to witness the celebration of the Vigil in the Monastery Church and the Divine Liturgy in the outdoor pavilion where Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, eleven other hierarchs, scores of clergy and hundreds of faithful from all over the continent joined together to give glory to God, share in the Eucharist and venerate the holy relics of the saintly first bishop who actually served the Orthodox Church on American soil. How stirring it was to have His Beatitude reflect on the life of Saint Innocent and his diocese in Alaska, which our Primate himself served in the early days of his own episcopacy. How he challenged us in his lecture to emulate the self-sacrificing love and clear vision of Christ and His Church which the man called by God to become a mis-

sionary truly encapsulated in his life! How our Metropolitan, in his sermon, reminded us, as he has so often, about the need for One Church in America, this time quoting Saint Paul, who condemned the Corinthian Church for being divided with loyalties to Paul, to Apollos, and to Peter — when the Church should belong undividedly to Christ and to Him alone!

My fondest memory was to see so many faithful come forward to bow in reverence and with love venerate the relics of God's instrument in enlightening America in Holy Orthodoxy. There were elderly immigrants and young children alike, with tears in their eyes and smiles of wonder on their faces, pilgrims from eighty to infancy, all sharing the common Faith in Christ that makes us one Orthodox Church — in Alaska — in Russia — in South Canaan — all across America! Indeed, the Church that Saint Innocent worked so hard to help nurture is and will continue to be blossoming to the Glory of our Lord until He comes again!

For those of you who were not with us for this Bicentennial celebration of the birth of Saint Innocent, I invite you to live the experience through the pages of this issue of *Your Diocese Alive in Christ*, where you can see photographs of the Vigil, the processions, and the Liturgy, and read the texts of the lecture and sermon of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius. May they touch your soul with the spirit of Saint Innocent and inspire you to come closer to Christ and to His Holy Church in imitation of this holy hierarch who labored so tirelessly for the building up of Holy Orthodoxy not only in Alaska but throughout America and in our Mother Church in Russia as well!

How well Saint Innocent echoes to us in America, his spiritual children, the words of the Apostle Paul to his spiritual children in Corinth: "For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. I have become your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 4:15). Through the prayers of our Holy Father Innocent, Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and save us!

With Love in Christ
+HERMAN
Archbishop of Philadelphia
and Eastern Pennsylvania

Your Diocese

Alive in Christ

Volume XIII Number 2 Summer 1997
The Official Magazine of the
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America

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Your Diocese Alive

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St. Innocent of Alaska, Missionary and Evangelist

“Divine Call, Kenotic Love, Catholic Vision”

Address by
Metropolitan Theodosius



For the Bicentennial of the
Birth of St. Innocent



August 26, 1997,
St. Tikhon’s Monastery



who possessed apostolic zeal — a missionary spirit. This opportunity provided me, in my archpastoral ministry, with both a vision of the past and a vision of the future of the life of Orthodoxy in America.

Yes, it is a privilege to speak about Saint Innocent. And yet I realized, as I was preparing this talk, that there is a temptation that accompanies such an honor. I will also add that this temptation even accompanies our celebration. The temptation I speak about is what I call historical reductionism — an attempt to relegate the life, work, and vision of Saint Innocent only to the historical past, and not experience his legacy as a part of our living tradition today. This reduction — this confining of apostolic min-

It is a great privilege for me to address you today on the life of our holy Father and Hierarch, Innocent, the first Orthodox bishop of Alaska, Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to America.

Thirty years ago this summer I began my archpastoral ministry in Alaska, the first diocese of our holy hierarch, St. Innocent. Upon my arrival in Alaska, my first task was to undertake the rebuilding of St. Michael’s Cathedral, the church built by St. Innocent which then had only recently been destroyed by fire in 1966. My first episcopal residence was the Mission House, established in 1842 by St. Innocent as the first Orthodox Ecclesiastical Seminary on this continent.

I remember with fondness and thanksgiving literally being surrounded by the presence and legacy of St. Innocent — his vestments, the furniture and clocks crafted by his own hands, the holy icons he prayed before, the precious vessels he used in celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and above all the faithful Orthodox Christians of Alaska.

Where I lived, where I prayed, and where I ministered were all intimately connected to the life and vision of a man

Continued on the next page.



Clergy procession from the pavilion church

St. Innocent of Alaska, Missionary and Evangelist

Continued from page 3.

istry to the past — would ultimately render our ministry barren, having no impact on the vision and mission of the Church in America today.

Too often the priceless legacies of the Church are seen and understood from a distance. In the case of the missionary labors and accomplishments of Saint Innocent, there has been the tendency to locate and admire them in the context of the past. Consequently, the legacy of Saint Innocent is woven into a story that falls under the category of the “Golden Age” of missionary and evangelical activity in North America. And, as we all know, the various “Golden Ages” of the Church’s two thousand year history have the ability, if misunderstood or misused, to draw us away from the present work that needs to be done in our time.

I am convinced that the life and labors of Saint Innocent are not simply a reminder of some “Golden Age” of the past that remains distant and alien from the present. I am also convinced that the missionary and evangelical labors of Saint Innocent, particularly in Alaska, bear witness to the ongoing activity of the Holy Spirit — the same Holy Spirit Who continues to make present for us today the event of Pentecost which draws all people into the living body of Christ.

When placed in the context of Pentecost, the evangelical quality of Saint Innocent’s life becomes an immediate challenge for the entire Church in North America. Who can deny that there is the need on the parochial, diocesan and national levels for self-examination and self-evaluation? We need to look within ourselves to see whether and how the evangelical mandate of the Lord is being obeyed.

The life and work of Saint Innocent provide a unified guide for how the Church today can properly maintain and develop its missionary and evangelical vision. Thus, I will now focus my remarks on aspects of Saint Innocent’s life

or methods for evangelization may vary during the course of history, there nevertheless remain certain constants that bear witness to the integrity and lifesaving power of Christ “who is the same yesterday, today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

First and foremost, we need to see that it is God’s call which established Saint Innocent as a missionary and evangelist. The divine call to preach the Gospel in America was, in no uncertain terms, a disruption for the entire Veniaminov family. Like the great patriarch Abraham, Saint Innocent was to take his family away from all that was familiar and from all that provided physical and emotional

security. Initially there was resistance on the part of Saint Innocent to leave his native Irkutsk and move to Unalaska. Let us listen to his own words:

“No matter what stories [I was told] about America in general or about the Aleuts, in particular, no matter how [I was] being persuaded to go to Unalaska, I remained deaf . . . How could I? — Why should I? (humanly speaking) —



Prayers of intercession at
monastery church

which are fundamental for proclaiming and explaining the Gospel of Christ. It is my hope that, as I refer to the life of Saint Innocent, we will see that he shares common traits with all who preceded and all who follow him in spreading the Gospel. This implies that while techniques



Pilgrims’ procession around monastery church

St. Innocent of Alaska, Missionary and Evangelist



Vigil for St. Innocent

have traveled God knows where — when I had one of the best parishes in the city, when I enjoyed the love of my parishioners and the good graces of the authorities, when I already owned my own home and had a larger income than the salary being offered to whomever was assigned to Unalaska?” (This and most of the quotes I will make use of are from Paul Garrett’s book on St. Innocent).

These words clearly reveal that the Veniaminovs were well established in Irkutsk. Like so many of us, they were quite satisfied with the *status quo*. What changed Saint Innocent’s mind and heart is not something that can be articulated in detail. Yet, again, judging from his own words, he appears to have had a kind

of sudden conversion. Waiting to see Bishop Michael at the diocesan chancery, Saint Innocent had the occasion to hear, perhaps for the last time, John Kriukov speak about the desire of the Aleuts to pray and to embrace the Gospel.

As a footnote, let me just say that John Kriukov, a Russian adventurer who traded in Alaska and Eastern Siberia, had spent about forty years in America among the Aleuts. While staying in Irkutsk, Saint Innocent (then Father John) became John Kriukov’s spiritual father. I like to think of John Kriukov as God’s messenger who was sent to Saint Innocent in order to unsettle his life.

And, of all places, it is in the bishop’s chancery that Saint Innocent’s life was

dramatically changed. Listen to how this change or conversion took place in the winter of 1823:

“Later . . . [Kriukov and I] met again at the bishop’s residence; Kriukov had come to say good-bye to the bishop. I happened to be there by coincidence (indeed, it was the first time that I had ever been in the bishop’s drawing room) and Kriukov again began to tell me of the Aleuts’ zeal in prayer and hearing the Word of God (I doubtless had heard these same things from him many times before) when suddenly, blessed by the name of the Lord, I began to burn with desire to go to such a people! Even today I recall vividly the tortures I endured while waiting impatiently to inform the bishop of my wish. He was truly amazed and said simply: ‘We shall see!’ (Garrett p. 34).

My main purpose for sharing this brief account of Saint Innocent’s “conversion” is to emphasize that missionary and evangelical activity is a vocation — a calling — and therefore a special charisma of the Holy Spirit. I am afraid that many today think that as long as the Church provides the proper techniques and training there will be no shortage of people sent out to proclaim the Gospel.

The first lesson we learn from the life of Saint Innocent, and indeed from the lives of all who were true missionaries and evangelists, is that they were not cre-

Continued on the next page.



Lecture on St. Innocent



Hierarchs, clergy, and laity listen attentively

St. Innocent of Alaska, Missionary and Evangelist

Continued from page 5.

ated or manufactured by various departments and programs of mission and outreach. The missionaries and evangelists of the Church have been, and must continue to be people called by God Himself.

This leads me to point out two dimensions regarding the understanding of evangelism in the Orthodox Church. On the one hand, all who hear the name of Christ are obliged to know the Faith. All who because of their baptism and chrismation gather around the Lord's table must live out the Faith. In this sense, each Orthodox Christian is an evangelist inasmuch as the Gospel is being reflected in one's life. Saint Gregory the Theologian teaches that God requires three things from all the baptized: "right faith in the heart, truth on the tongue, temperance in the body" (Ward p. 38). We can say that these three characteristics provide a common evangelical witness expected of all Christians.

Yet, on the other hand, there is another dimension which I have pointed out in the life of Saint Innocent. This dimension is the personal call, the unique vocation for one to go out in order to teach, to baptize, and to found churches. As Saint Gregory the Theologian stresses, all of us must know the faith. Yet the living Tradition of the Church has consistently revealed to us that no one is qualified to be sent out as a missionary and evangelist unless such a person consents to obey God's call. It is the call — it is the unique vocation — to evangelical ministry that needs to be the very foundation of all our missionary and outreach efforts. Only when God's call is the basis of our evangelism can there be a discernment of how the Church can utilize the culture to offer the Gospel to a restless and yearning people whose search for meaning and peace can only be found in the living Christ.

The divine call was the starting point of Saint Innocent's missionary and evangelical work in America. This call was received and lived out in the spirit of a self-emptying love. It is this unselfish love of serving God by serving others

that characterizes Saint Innocent as one of the great architects of Orthodoxy in America. It is this unselfish love to which I now wish to draw our attention.

As a man of unselfish love, Saint Innocent was one who "became less, so Christ would become more" (cf. John 3:30). This is borne out in Bishop Michael's description of his newly assigned missionary. Contrasting Saint Innocent with those who turned their backs on missionary work, he writes the following to his consistory:

"By their answers they have revealed their shameful coldness towards the holy work of their heavenly calling, and their lack of pure Christian love and faith — a lack of true guilelessness and burning zeal for the salvation of souls entrusted to their care . . . They have forgotten the fear of God and my pastoral admonition

them into the divine embrace. It is this kenotic love that took Saint Innocent from Irkutsk to Unalaska, to the shores of the Bering Sea (Bristol Bay Region), to Sitka, to Kodiak, to Atka, to Kamchatka and to Siberia. In America he was missionary and evangelizer to the Aleuts, Eskimos and Tlingit Indians. And it is this kenotic love that allowed Saint Innocent to carry out his ministry as Metropolitan of Moscow even though he was, by that time, almost completely blind and plagued by painful rheumatism. These handicaps neither kept him away from his administrative responsibilities nor limited his missionary zeal. As Metropolitan, Saint Innocent founded the Moscow Missionary Society whose work he oversaw for nine years. Through this Society many Orthodox Russians rediscovered the meaning and impor-



Carrying St. Innocent's relic

sent to all of them in 1821 in a printed letter. Of the many who were called, only one, a Son of Obedience, has — to my spiritual joy — been found chosen, the priest of the local Church of the Annunciation, John Veniaminov-Popov" (Garrett p. 36).

Contained in this excerpt are words that support and complement what I have referred to as self-emptying love. Guilelessness, burning zeal, fear of God and obedience to His will flow from a life that extends itself to others and draws

tance of the Church's missionary work in and for the entire world.

The self-emptying love Saint Innocent manifested enabled him to be all things to all people. As missionary and evangelist he was a man whose mind and heart were open to the truth of Christ. Being a man without pretense or vanity, he sought to convey the truth by word and deed. This meant that neither coercion nor hypocrisy had any place in proclaiming the Gospel. In his instructions to missionary priests in Alaska, Saint

Innocent stressed that in no way should they “assume an overbearing [and] didactic manner . . .” I must say that these are refreshing words in contrast to much of the so-called evangelical material we read today.

If the divine call is the starting point of missionary and evangelical work, then self-emptying love is its natural response. As I have indicated, this response from Saint Innocent did not come easily nor immediately. But once the response was made — once the call was heeded — there followed what I would refer to as the ongoing spiritual renewal of his mind and heart. The manner in which he embraced all people, including those who refused baptism, was matched by the fervor with which he embraced his surroundings. This interest in nature produced his “Notes on the Islands of the

Sectarianism has always been a temptation for the Church. In present-day America we are inundated by a pseudo-prophetic orthodoxy that claims to be evangelical, though void of kenotic love and a catholic vision.

Saint Innocent teaches us that it is not enough to know the scriptures and to quote the Fathers. One must live the Gospel. This was and remains the canon of the Orthodox Church. Like the great Fathers of the Church, Saint Innocent was attuned to everyone and everything around him. For the Fathers of the Church, science, philosophy, medicine, politics and literature were utilized to articulate the unchanging truth of Christ and His Gospel. Saint Innocent clearly followed their example. We must do the same. Thorough and critical Orthodox missionary and evangelical work will

rooted in the Faith. “It is the binding duty of every Christian, when he reaches maturity, to know his faith thoroughly, because anyone who does not have a solid knowledge of his faith is cold and indifferent to it and frequently falls either into superstition or unbelief.”

We can add to his urging that the one called to proclaim and teach the word of life is responsible for seeing that every possible measure is taken to allow a Christian to mature in the faith. Every possible measure must be taken to ensure that self-emptying love and catholic consciousness provide a context in which the quest for understanding overcomes ignorance, and the struggle to love God and neighbor overcomes the hardness of unbelief.

At the very core of Saint Innocent’s life is the activity of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who sustained his calling. It is the Holy Spirit who nurtured his love and illuminated his consciousness. There exists no formal treatise, nor are there any detailed references or meditations by Saint Innocent on the Holy Spirit. Yet there is a verse from Psalm 37 that forms a lens through which we come to see him as one who, throughout his life, sought to acquire the Holy Spirit. I refer to the verse: “The footsteps of a man are from the Lord” (vs. 23). It is a verse that is echoed in his decision to come to America:

“May my own example serve as a new proof of the truth that the ‘Lord guides a man safely in the way he should go,’ and that each of us servants of His Church is no more than an instrument in His hands. He saw fit to establish my field of ministry in America — and that, despite my opposition” (Garrett p. 36).

It is the verse Saint Innocent prescribed to be used as the basis for the sermon preached at his funeral. Here I would like to quote from that sermon delivered by Bishop Ambrosia on Bright Wednesday, April 5, 1879, at the Annunciation Cathedral in Moscow:

“Once as we were departing for Saint Petersburg in order to attend the sessions



Icon and relic of St. Innocent with his antimins

Unalaska District.” It was a work that included his anthropological, sociological, geographical and meteorological observations. This work gained Saint Innocent admission to the prestigious Academy of Sciences of the Russian Empire as a corresponding member.

Self-emptying love and its corresponding vision make up the second lesson offered to us by Saint Innocent. Unless our missionary and evangelical work expresses this love and universal catholicity, we risk becoming a Christian sect.

overcome the fear of the world. Without this thorough and critical approach the Gospel message of the new and transfigured life will become empty words to be rejected and scorned by those seeking illumination.

Kenotic love and a catholic vision enable the missionary and evangelist to implant the Word of life in the minds and hearts of all who have ears to hear and eyes to see. In his *Indication of the Way into the Heavenly Kingdom*, Saint Innocent exhorts the reader to be deeply

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St. Innocent of Alaska, Missionary and Evangelist

Continued from page 7.

of the Holy Synod, the departed in God, Innocent, expressed to me in his unique way the following: 'I am leaving. Maybe I will come back myself and maybe I will be brought back. In the last event, let it be known that during my funeral there should be no eulogies, since they contain many praises. Instead, let a sermon be preached. It can be helpful for others. And here is the text of the sermon: "The footsteps of a man are from the Lord!"' He confirmed the same desire to me a few days before his death. And so it is, by the will and testament of the departed himself, that we are given the subject and direction of the present sermon and its goal. The subject points towards the many-sided life of Innocent and the ways in which God's providence was shown to him. Its goal is to teach by his example of faith the great truth of Christian life: that God leads the ways of men, and that without hesitation we must humbly accept His holy will in all circumstances of our life" (Afonsky pp. 34-35).

To discern, accept, and follow God's will is ultimately the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. It was Saint Seraphim of Sarov who, a generation before Saint Innocent, taught that the goal of the Christian life was the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. The humble and self-sacrificing life of Saint Innocent affirmed the truth of this fundamental teaching of the Church. All that he was — husband, father, priest, missionary, evangelist, translator, natural scientist, architect, and engineer — became permeated by the Holy Spirit. All that he was, in this world, became the expression of an integrated life sustained and guided by the Holy Spirit. Thus, as I come to the conclusion of my talk, we are left with the all-embracing aspect of Saint Innocent's life that becomes his most profound lesson for us and for the Church in America. That lesson challenges us to see that the Holy Spirit must be at the beginning and end of all we are called to be and do — personally, and corporately as the Church. As for the missionary and evangelical activity of the Church, it should be very

clear to us that there can be no substitute for the Holy Spirit. What is said and done to extend the Gospel must be blessed by the Spirit. And if we should lose sight of this, let us know in advance that all which we will say and do will ultimately succumb to ignorance and unbelief.

The challenge of Saint Innocent's missionary and evangelical work continues to confront us while his vision of one local Church in North America remains to be realized. Yet I am convinced that

the more we come to know Saint Innocent — his life and his manner of proclaiming the Gospel — the more we will recognize that the *status quo* of Orthodox Christianity in North America is unacceptable. I am also convinced that when the Church's missionary and evangelical work is expressed by self-emptying love and a catholic consciousness, the Holy Spirit will live and reign in one local Church in North America.



Iliodor Phileminof presents oil painting of St. Innocent to Archbishop Herman

Annual Founders Day Dinner

October 12, 1997
St. Tikhon's Seminary

Schedule of Events

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 9:30 a.m. | Greeting the Archbishop, Reading of Hours |
| 10:00 a.m. | Hierarchical Divine Liturgy |
| 12:30 p.m. | Founders Day Dinner / Seminary Auditorium |

Call the Seminary at **937-4411** for tickets

Summer Youth Camp '97



Once again boys and girls from all over the diocese and as far away as New York, Ohio, and Georgia gathered for a week of fun and friendship at St. Tikhon's Summer Youth Camp, held on the seminary grounds June 30-July 5. The children reveled in the wonders of nature, learned to get along with one another in dormitory living, and heard stories about animals and saints. They swam, they fished, they hiked, and they ran. They laughed, they shouted, they played, and they prayed. For all 160 campers, including counselors, not even rain or thunder dampened their spirits.

This year's theme was "Living Things Both Small and Great" (Psalm 104), emphasizing the glory of God's creation and the inter-connectedness of all living things: plants, animals, and humans. In workshops, art projects, and related activities, we hoped to give the children the experience of the wonders of God's handiwork and to enhance their awareness of their unique place in cre-

ation as human beings made in the image and likeness of God.

With so many campers again this year, the children were divided according to ages and were given visors to help identify their group: green for the 7- and 8-year-olds; red for the 9- and 10-year-olds; and blue for those 11 years old and up.

Many teen campers returned this year to work as camp assistants. The adult counselors, veterans of many years of camp experience, returned also to work hard with Martin Paluch, camp director. This is one of the special things about camp: the anticipation of seeing old friends, the happiness in being together, the expectation of new friendships that continue through the years. This holds true for the children and for the adult counselors and staff, too.

Each day the campers said morning and evening prayers under the guidance of Mrs. Laurie Nescott, music coordinator, and Mr. John M. Black, who coordi-

nated and trained the children for chanting the prayers and reading the epistles. Each morning the children heard a Gospel reading related to the camp theme and a sermon by the camp chaplains, Fr. Leo Poore and Fr. Alexander Golubov. On Monday, Fr. David Shewczyk was visiting the camp and graciously offered his service for morning prayers. Fr. David gave a sermon on the opening Gospel reading of the parable of the mustard seed (Mark 4:30-34), which likens that tiny seed to the Kingdom of God. The mustard seed, though *small*, grows into a *great* tree. Like that tiny seed, the Kingdom of God can grow and flourish throughout the world, spreading the message of Christ's saving Resurrection.

On Monday, the workshop theme was "God Is King of Creation." The children heard about the special relationship Adam and Eve enjoyed with God in the Garden of Eden in "Animals and Adam," a presentation given by Mrs. Anna Marie

Continued on the next page.

Summer Youth Camp '97

Continued from page 9.

Black, program coordinator. Several campers assisted with chanting lines from Psalm 104 and from the Genesis story of creation.

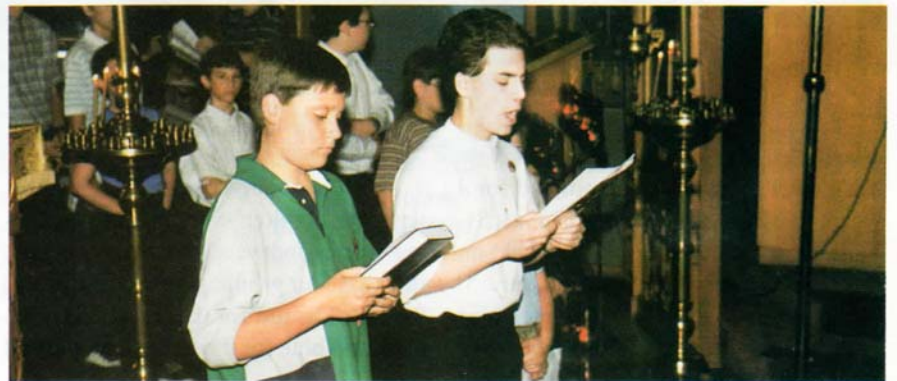
Mrs. Black told stories about various saints who had remarkable relationships with animals, attesting to the sanctity which those humans enjoyed even here on earth. (When mosquitoes bothered us during evening prayers that night and the next, some campers later admitted they remembered St. Seraphim of Sarov who welcomed mosquitoes. Some of us had a hard time being saintly as we swatted away at the pesky bugs.)

In individual workshops, the younger campers drew their favorite animals and categorized them according to habitat to be placed on a Web of Life in order to illustrate the various life forms, including human. As always, we could count on the ingenuity of the teen and young adult camp assistants who improvised with an old volleyball net to create the Web of Life that was hung in the pavilion. The five youngest campers searched for animals nearby. Though they saw no chipmunks, deer, or beavers, they found four different varieties of butterflies which they chased gleefully through the fields.

That evening, His Eminence, Archbishop Herman joined us for supper and then we walked over to his residence where he treated everyone to chips, pretzels, and sodas.

On Tuesday, the emphasis was God Takes Care of His Creation, with a Gospel reading from Luke 12:22-31 about the lilies of the field and a reminder from Fr. Alexander Golubov about "Don't worry — God will take care of you." Mr. Anthony Santoli, district forester for Pennsylvania, guided three groups of campers on hikes through the forest around the seminary grounds while giving a talk, "The Forest is a Community of Living Things." He also showed the children the kinds of tools he uses in forestry work. The older children especially had numerous questions for him.

Each camper was given the opportunity to make a terrarium, and the younger campers planted mustard seeds as a reminder of Monday's Gospel reading





about the parable of the mustard seed. The children were reminded that they were responsible all week for taking care of their terrariums and seed plantings, and many could be seen wandering to the alcove in the pavilion, checking on their plants.

The weather held for the forestry hikes but not for the afternoon. By evening the weather had cleared and Martin Paluch decided that we could have a bonfire. Staff counselors gathered the necessary wood and marshmallows, and the campers were off to the grounds at the back end of the dormitory for a relaxing evening in front of a roaring fire in the misty night air.

On Wednesday the workshop theme was "God Asks Us to Take Care of His Creation." Mrs. Black spoke with the children, asking them to consider the Gospel reading they'd heard that morning: God so loved the world that He gave his only-begotten Son . . . and why we need to take care of what God has given us. She asked the boys and girls to start with themselves and to be the best people they can be so they in turn can be good to others. The children were eager to share stories about ways they've already helped with school projects to take care of their environment.

Later, in individual workshops the children completed their "Pledge to Take Care," listing five specific ways they could take care of people around them or care for their immediate surroundings when they go home. Instead of affixing some kind of stamp or seal on their pledges, the boys and girls were asked by Mrs. Black to put their fingerprint on their pledge as a sign of their unique personhood as people created in the image and likeness of God.

Wednesday's supper was made by Fr. Andrew Shuga, who again this year lovingly provided pizza for the entire camp. Fr. Andrew's pizza, along with the evening war ball games in the gym, the hike, and the hayride, have become traditions at St. Tikhon's Summer Camp. And who can forget the kitchen staff who prepare the food and Fr. John Onofrey gesturing and saying, "You can come up for seconds"! By suppertime, Deacon Michael Anderson, youth coordinator for

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Summer Youth Camp '97

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the O.C.A., had arrived for a visit and was able to spend a few days with the campers and teen camp assistants.

Bad weather had meant changing the schedule some, but the campers did get to hike to Flat Rock, led by Martin, their fearless leader. They found an underground cave that had once been used by monks, and each camper and counselor went down inside the rock formation and out again on the other side. The long trek did not stop the campers who returned for swimming and recreation.

On Thursday, the workshop theme was "God Asks Us to Love One Another." Mrs. Black read a short story, "Adam, Where Are You?" written by our Metropolitan Theodosius many years ago when he was Bishop Theodosius. The story tells of a conversation that Adam, in his blue business suit and maroon tie, has with God while sitting outside the Garden of Eden. Then the campers formed small groups to figure out answers to questions from real kids about how to handle problems with friends — from a Christian perspective, of course.

Each camper made a wooden cross decorated with sphagnum moss and dried flowers which he or she could take home as a remembrance of camp. Archbishop Herman blessed the crosses at Vespers on Friday.

At supper on Thursday night, the campers were treated to a cookout of hamburgers, hot dogs, and the usual "bug juice." The weather was glorious, so the campers bounded onto the camp wagon for a hayride into the surrounding countryside and a stop at a nearby dairy farm for a look at the cows and the latest litter of kittens. Sitting on bales of hay is fine for a hayride, but every camper knows hay is better when shredded and stuffed into Martin's shirt. So every camper worth his salt (or, rather, his hay) set to work afterward to make sure that Martin became the biggest scarecrow known around these parts.

Campers had a truly special opportunity to meet with Debbie Evens, who brought her horse for them to see and to mount. Ms. Evens rides crowd control as part of her professional responsibilities so the animal she brought was com-



fortable around children. Each boy and girl who chose to visit the makeshift stable at the seminary grounds was happy to pet the horse or “ride” it for a few minutes. Some wanted another turn to sit on the horse. Here was an opportunity to come face-to-face with yet another of God’s creatures.

Campers can thank Joseph Bussard for making the contact to have Ms. Evens join the campers. Campers Taisia Perich and Tatiana Bohush, who are skilled equestrians, helped to prepare the stable.

On Friday, July 4, after morning prayers, the campers recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag and sang “The Star Spangled Banner” in honor of our country’s Independence Day. During Friday’s workshop, Mrs. Black gave a short talk about the day’s theme, “God Asks Us to Bless His Name.” Later, the campers had a chance to make bookmarks with words showing scriptural praises to God.

After lunch, His Eminence, Archbishop Herman, joined us for a walk along the Beatitude Trail which the campers helped to create last summer. This time, everyone walked the entire length of the trail far into the forest as staff and campers helped nail the signboards listing each Beatitude to its respective cross. Last summer, some of the campers lettered the Beatitude phrases onto the signboards, prepared the nine tall wooden crosses, and planted five of them on the trail. This summer, groups of campers carried the remaining four crosses out onto the trail and planted them. The 7- and 8-year-olds (officially the youngest campers) carried one of the heavy wooden crosses by themselves (though counselors were there to assist if needed). Older campers helped place blue ribbons to mark the trail route.

Walking the Beatitude Trail with Archbishop Herman was an especially important happening. For many years the Archbishop had wanted to create such a trail on the seminary grounds. Now, because of the children, the trail has been marked. The children, in turn, have left their mark for posterity. Those boys and girls who prepared the crosses signed their names on the back of them last year. In years to come, they may return and recall their days at camp when they wrote



their names on a wooden cross.

After Vespers and confessions on Friday, the campers met one last time in the pavilion. The oldest campers — the Blues — had worked during the day to present The Song of the Three Holy Youths, which the church designates as the last of the fifteen Old Testament readings at the Holy Saturday Divine Liturgy. First, Mr. Black explained the Bible story of King Nebuchadnezzar and the three holy youths. Then the campers chanted the Song of the Three Holy Youths while the others, conducted by Mrs. Anna Marie Jarlson, sang the refrain. The children’s voices, sweet and lilting, blessed God, singing, “Praise the Lord,

sing and exalt Him throughout all the ages!”

Then it was off to the dorms and time for campers to pack, to have some last-minute, heartfelt conversation with friends, and to prepare for Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning.

The monastery church was filled with children, counselors, staff, and parents, as Archbishop Herman began to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. The boys and girls sang the responses with Mrs. Nescott, who directed them. When it was time for communion, each child or teen walked forward toward the chalice to receive the precious Body and Blood of Christ, as living members of his Church.

One of the most remarkable aspects of camp is the bond of love and friendship that everyone feels towards everyone else. It is evident in the hellos and hugs when campers arrive and in the good-byes and hugs when they depart. Next year’s theme is “Best Friends.”

We cannot know what the camp experience may mean to each and every child, but we do know that the children want to return year after year to be together with their friends, to play outdoors, to work on craft projects, and yes, even to hear about “church” and to worship together. The children are our hope for the future of our life in Christ, and they look to us for opportunities to come together, to gather in the community of the Church.

— Anna Marie Black,
Program Coordinator
St. Tikhon’s Summer Youth Camp

Archpriest Paul P. Borick Celebrates Silver Anniversary

"Thou Art a Priest Forever After the Order of Melchizedek"
—Hebrews 5:6



Archpriest Paul Borick addresses the guests

With gratitude to Almighty God, the parishioners of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos Russian Orthodox Church in Coaldale honored their pastor, the Very Rev. Archpriest Paul P. Borick on Sunday, June 22, 1997. A testimonial was held in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Father's ordination to the Holy Priesthood and the awarding of the right to wear the jeweled cross.

His Eminence, Archbishop HERMAN was greeted at the parish rectory by the church choir, clergy, and altar boys who processed to the church. In the vestibule of the church, the Archbishop was greeted by Douglas Rudenko, Parish

Council president, with the traditional Slavic bread and salt, symbolizing the Bread of Life, and by Father Paul, the pastor of St. Mary's, with the hand cross. His Eminence was the main celebrant at the hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Concelebrating were Protodeacon Keith Russin and guest clergy: V. Rev. Archpriest Daniel Ressetar, Dean of the Frackville Deanery, V. Rev. Archpriest Michael Evans, V. Rev. Archpriest Michael Lepa and the jubilarian, Father Paul.

Following the Little Entrance with the Gospel, His Eminence, Archbishop Herman awarded Father Paul the right to wear the jeweled cross in an impres-

sive presentation, placing the beautiful cross (a gift from a family member) around Father's neck as the Archbishop, clergy and choir proclaimed *Axios!* (He is worthy). The award was presented in recognition of Father's twenty-five years of service to the Church. The cross is worn outside the priest's robe as a reminder that he should not merely carry Christ in his heart, but also confess him before the face of all men, and that he must be a preacher of the faith of Christ.

The responses to the Divine Liturgy were sung by the church choir, under the direction of Michael Polansky. The children of the Church School of the parish, directed by Matushka Irene, sang the

Lord's Prayer and, at the end of the Liturgy, the hymn of greeting for the Archbishop.

Following the Divine Liturgy a jubilee banquet was held in Father's honor at Stefanisko's, in Hazleton, Pa. A hand bouquet of red roses was presented to the Archbishop by Richard and Nicole Chwastiak and Nicholas Rudenko, children of the parish Church School.

Mr. Douglas Rudenko, president of the Church Council, offered these words of welcome: "Your Eminence, Archbishop Herman, Reverend Fathers, Matushki, parishioners, guests, friends and family from near and far, it is truly a great privilege and honor for me to welcome you to the celebration of the 25th anniversary of Father Paul's ordination to the Holy Priesthood. Whether you have known Father since he was a child or only since yesterday, we are here to acknowledge a milestone in Father's life through his commitment to Christ's Church. Please join me in toasting Father Paul . . .

"To our humble Father, our brother in Christ, a tireless laborer and ardent supporter, a thoughtful listener and prudent counsel, an eloquent example of faith, yet a simple man—to Father Paul, many more happy and prosperous years at St. Mary's."

Mr. Rudenko continued with brief greeting remarks: "On behalf of the parish, I wish to express the joy and happiness we all feel in our hearts today for Father Paul. I am told that in 1982, when the parish approached the Bishop about a new pastor, they asked him for a parish priest. A parish priest by the Coaldale definition was one whose heart and soul belong to tending his people. And tend Father does. He laughs with us. He cries with us, and many times has to scold us. But through all this, Father Paul and Matushka Irene have made St. Mary's a church family. Father and Matushka, you have been at St. Mary's more than half of your twenty-five years. We hope that God allows us to share many more years with you as the head of our spiritual family. God bless you always — MNOHAYA E BLAHAYA LETA!!"

V. Rev. Michael Hatrak, a classmate of Father's, Assistant Dean of the Deanery and Pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Or-

thodox Church, Minersville, and St. Mary's Orthodox Church, St. Clair was the master of ceremonies. V. Rev. Daniel Ressetar, Dean of the Frackville Deanery, offered greetings from the deanery. Archbishop Herman gave the main address, expressing his joy at being present

To our humble Father, our brother in Christ, a tireless laborer and ardent supporter, a thoughtful listener and prudent counsel, an eloquent example of faith, yet a simple man—to Father Paul, many more happy and prosperous years at St. Mary's.

for this momentous occasion. He also stressed the integral part Matushka Irene has held in Father's life.

Many congratulatory messages and tributes were paid to Father, among them a proclamation from the Schuylkill County commissioners. The parishioners

presented Father with a monetary gift as a token of their love and gratitude.

Honored guests included Father's and Matushka's family and friends. Clergy in attendance were Fathers Michael Evans, Paul Ropitsky, Eli Krenitsky, and Rodion Laskowsky, Monsignor John Bura, Fathers Michael Shear, Nicholas Palun, Daniel Ressetar, and Michael Lepa, and Protodeacon Keith Russin.

Father Paul is the son of the late Eva and Steve Borick, of Lopez, Pa. He married the former Irene Orinick of Simpson. He is a graduate of St. Tikhon's Seminary. Fr. Paul was tonsured a reader on February 12, 1970, and was ordained a deacon on October 11, 1970, serving one year as deacon and one year as protodeacon. Ordained to the Holy Priesthood by the late Archbishop Kiprian on March 4, 1972, at St. Tikhon's Monastery, Father served the parishes of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Philadelphia and St. Michael's Orthodox Church, St. Clair. Assigned as pastor of St. Mary's Orthodox Church, Coaldale in September 1982, Fr. Paul has served this parish for the past fifteen years.

In a short message, Father Paul thanked the Archbishop for the honor bestowed upon him and stated that His

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Father Paul receives jeweled cross

Archpriest Paul P. Borick

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Eminence has been a very special part of his life since entering the seminary in 1967. He thanked him for his guidance, support, and foresight in his seminary and parish life. Father also thanked his family and friends who traveled to be with him on this special day. To his parishioners he expressed thanks for their support during his fifteen years in Coaldale and for just being warm, generous, understanding, cooperative, and good spiritual children. And special heartfelt thanks were expressed to Matushka for her support and help, sharing good times and hard times. Fr. Paul concluded by asking God to bless him with continued good health so that he and the congregation may continue working with one another for the betterment of our parish here in Coaldale.



Archbishop with Father Paul and Matushka

Following the jubilee banquet everyone was invited back to the parish social hall for open house.

To Father Paul and Matushka Irene from all of us at St. Mary's, we offer our sincere congratulations for this achievement. Many, many years for your continued good health! Our love and gratitude for your spiritual uplifting and kindness when most needed by us all. MNOHAYA LETA! AXIOS!

—Stephanie Chmel



Church School children



St. Silouan of Mount Athos:

see back cover for lecture series devoted to his teachings.



Group photo

Marriage as a Sacrament

Editor's note: The talk which follows was delivered by Dr. David C. Ford at the Women's Retreat held at St. Tikhon's Seminary, August 9, 1997

Thank you for coming! It is a joy and an honor for us to be with you today, to share some of the riches of our Holy Orthodox Faith concerning the particular glory of the holy estate of matrimony. But we stand before you fully aware of our deficiencies, of our failings in trying to live the holy lives that our Lord calls us to live. And we realize how little we actually know, let alone put into practice, about marriage as a path to holiness. We are sure that many of you know and put into practice much more than we do — especially those of you who have been married longer than we have (we are still rather like novices in this art of married life, having only been married a little longer than nine years!).

But we are very blessed to be here at St. Tikhon's, where we teach about things we love, things with eternal worth and importance, and where part of our

professional responsibilities is to read uplifting spiritual literature, and to do research in the writings of the Church Fathers, in the wealth of liturgical texts of our Church, and in the Lives of the Saints. What a blessing it is for us that such a sizable part of our physical livelihood gives us so many direct opportunities to help us in our spiritual livelihood! Of course, we also realize, with a kind of sobering fear, that we will be judged on the Last Day according to all this light that we have been privileged to receive in this life — so please pray for us! And may our All-Merciful Lord have mercy on us all!

So, what we have to share with you all today does not come principally from our own experience, or from our own ideas and reflections, but from some of the infinitely rich spiritual resources of our Holy Orthodox Faith — in particular, from the text of the Orthodox wedding service, from the sacramental theology of our Church, from the writings of the Church Fathers and Saints of our Church, and from the Lives of the Mar-

ried Saints. We hope and pray that what we talk about today not only will increase our knowledge about the Married Saints — the title of this retreat — but also will spiritually enrich us, since each of us is called to be a saint. And indeed, for those of us who are married, our calling is to become married saints!

First, we would like to invite you to consider, to reflect upon, to ponder what it really means that marriage is a sacrament, and how a stronger awareness and appreciation of this fact can help to strengthen and enrich our own marriages. As Orthodox Christians, we are all very familiar with the seven principal sacraments — baptism, chrismation, the Eucharist, confession, healing (the unction service), ordination, and marriage. One reason these are often singled out as the major sacraments is that each one of them is directly linked with the Kingdom of God — both here on earth in Christ's holy Church, and in Heaven. I will speak about marriage as linked with the Kingdom of God presently.

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Marriage as a Sacrament

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But before getting to that idea, I would like to consider a second very important aspect of the sacraments. In the Orthodox Tradition, thinking in a more general sense, a sacrament can be understood as any liturgical action wherein God specifically touches and changes the lives of people. In every case, there is some kind of change, some sort of transformation, that takes place in the one receiving the touch of God — “Behold, I make all things new,” the Lord declares in the book of Revelation (21:5). In the case of the three sacraments, or mysteries, most central to our Faith — baptism, chrismation, and the Eucharist (which, as we know, are really considered to be an indivisible whole in our Tradition) — there is also a dramatic change, or transformation, in the very elements used in these sacraments (the water and the oil become filled with the cleansing, vivifying power of the Holy Spirit; and the bread and wine become the very Body and Blood of Christ). God then uses these transformed elements to fill the believer with His very own power and life, as He gives Himself to us through His uncreated Energies in these central sacraments of His Holy Church.

Something similar happens in the sacrament of marriage. But here, as in the sacrament of holy ordination, the ones receiving the sacramental action are also in a way the “elements” offered to God to be transformed — to be fundamentally and profoundly changed — by His holy touch. In the case of marriage, the man and woman — the bridegroom and the bride — have to some degree already been changed before they come to the Church and offer themselves to be married; their love has already worked in their hearts and minds, so that now they are ready to spend the rest of their lives together. But so far, everything has transpired primarily at only the human level. In the first part of the Orthodox wedding service, called the Betrothal (which traditionally takes place at the back of the church), this human love and commitment is received, accepted, and blessed by God in His Holy Church.

But more needs to happen. In the second part of the wedding service, called

the Crowning, the couple is led to the front of the church, where God Himself pours His life, His energy, His love into them, knitting them together with each other, and both of them in Him. As an analogy, we can say that, at least in a preliminary way, God takes the iron and the carbon of their human love and forges them into a union of tempered steel, in the fiery furnace of His Love. This is why Christ says concerning marriage, “What God has joined together, let no man put asunder” (Matt. 19:6; Mark 10:9). Immediately before the bridal pair receive



Dr. David Ford

their crowns, there is a prayer said by the celebrant which emphasizes that it is God Himself Who is doing the uniting of the bride and bridegroom:

“O holy God, Who didst form man from the dust, and didst fashion woman from his rib, *and didst join her unto him* . . . Do Thou, the same Lord, stretch out now also Thy hand from Thy holy dwelling-place, and unite this Thy servant _____, and this Thy handmaiden _____; for by *Thee is the husband joined unto the wife. Unite them in one mind; wed them into one flesh*” (my emphasis).

This is also why there are no wedding vows made by the couple to each other during the Orthodox wedding service — unlike in the standard wedding services in Protestantism and Roman Catholicism (wedding vows apparently entered the Western marriage service around the year 1400). For the Orthodox understanding is that only the sacramental action of Almighty God Himself can adequately forge the Christian

marriage bond. The strength of a Christian marriage does not depend only on the human strength, loyalty, good intentions, and promises of the couple — though of course these things are all extremely important. No, the strength of a Christian marriage is founded upon, and is ultimately dependent upon, the unifying action of God Himself.

Now, through the wedding service — the sacrament, the mystery, of marriage — everything indeed is truly new! Assuming that the bride and groom have not belittled the holiness and sublime mystery of marriage by living together before their wedding, they now put their former separateness aside and begin to grow in oneness of mind and flesh, sharing life together in their common household. As St. Paul writes, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and the two shall become one flesh” (Eph. 5:31, quoting Gen. 2:24). St. John Chrysostom, an outstanding Church Father of the late fourth century, and probably the greatest spokesman for marriage among the Church Fathers,¹ remarks,

“Indeed, of all actions, it is a mystery, a great mystery indeed, that a man should leave him who gave life to him and brought him up, and her who suffered in labor and childbirth for him. For a man to leave those who have favored him with so many great blessings, those with whom he has been in such close contact, and be united to one whom he has not always known and who often has nothing in common with him, and should honor her more than all others — this is a mystery indeed. Yet parents are not distressed when marriages take place, but when they don’t! In fact, they are delighted to spend money lavishly on weddings — another great mystery indeed.”²

If I may add a special word at this point for all the younger ladies here today — and it is wonderful to have you here with us — we hope that each of you has already made a firm, ironclad decision not to live with someone before

¹ The second chapter of my book entitled *Women and Men in the Early Church: The Full Views of St. John Chrysostom* is devoted to his theology of marriage. This book has been recently published by St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press.

² St. John Chrysostom, *On Marriage and Family Life*, “Homily 20, on Ephesians 5:22-33,” Catharine P. Roth and David Anderson, trans. (Crestwood, N. Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1986), pp. 52-53.

marriage, and to preserve your virginity until your wedding night. This will show that you have been honoring God and His holy commandments. And this will be a tremendous gift to your husband — it will show among other things that you have been honoring him for all the years before you ever met him (and of course, we would equally hope that he will have preserved his purity, his virginity, for you as well). And you also avoid a lot of problems this way — as you well know. St.

close as that of husband and wife, if they are united as they ought to be.”⁴ Elsewhere he reminds the husbands of his flock, “your partner in life is united with you in the most intimate relations and in the highest degree.”⁵

What are some of the practical benefits of this incredibly sublime and powerful union created between husband and wife by Christ Himself in the Orthodox sacrament of marriage? This unity will sustain the couple wonderfully through

more than all wealth and prosperity, this conducts them to glory on high, this also wins for them favor from God in generous measure.”⁶

St. Gregory the Theologian, another great Church Father from the late fourth century, speaks in a very similar way concerning the power of a Christian marriage:

“In our living together we are one another’s hands, ears, and feet. Marriage redoubles our strength, rejoices our friends, causes grief to our enemies. A common concern makes trials bearable. Common joys are all the happier, and accord makes riches more pleasant; it is even more delightful than riches for those without wealth. Marriage is the key of moderation and the harmony of the desires, the seal of a deep friendship, . . . the unique drink from a fountain enclosed, inaccessible to those outside. United in the flesh, one in spirit, they urge each other on by the goad of their mutual love. For marriage does not remove from God, but brings people all the closer to Him, for it is God Himself who draws us to it.”⁷

And in beautiful imagery which again emphasizes how the sacraments bring transformation to those receiving the grace conveyed through them, St. John Chrysostom states:

“If you drive away the other things [here he is referring to inappropriate revelry all too common at weddings], Christ Himself will come to your wedding, and where Christ goes, the angels’ choir follows. If you ask Him, He will work for you an even greater miracle than He worked in Cana: that is, He will transform the water of your unstable passions into the wine of spiritual unity.”⁸

We remember that Cana is where Christ changed the water into wine at the wedding feast — His first miracle as recorded in St. John’s Gospel. One aspect of the meaning of this miracle is that it is symbolic of the changes that take place in the couple through the sacrament of



Registration

Theophan the Recluse, living in Russia in the late nineteenth century, right near the end of his book called *Raising Them Right*, writes some beautiful words about all the wonderful benefits of preserving one’s virginity until marriage.³

So, assuming the new spouses have not lived together before their wedding, the sacrament of marriage has accomplished a very visible transformation indeed in the way of life of the new husband and wife. But we can go further and say that invisibly, in a certain sense, a new, ontological reality has been forged. Through their union of mind, heart, soul, and body, the husband and wife are now each part of something greater than what they were before. For now the two are one, in a very deep and profound way — and so the Scriptures say “and the two shall become one flesh,” although of course at the same time they still remain two separate persons. St. John Chrysostom, near the beginning of his most famous sermon on marriage, Homily 20 on Ephesians, declares: “There is no relationship between human beings so

all the hardships and vicissitudes of life — if they continue to affirm that their marriage is indeed centered in the One Who knit them together in the first place. The Scriptures suggest that if one who believes in God can put to flight one thousand of the enemy, two united in Him can put to flight ten thousand! (Deut. 32:30). Again we can turn to St. John Chrysostom, as he marvels at the power of Christian marriage:

“Nothing of the affairs of this life, in fact, will succeed any longer in worrying people bound together in this manner, nor in undermining their contentment. You see, wherever there is harmony and peace and a loving relationship between wife and husband, all good things come together there, and the couple will be safe from any stratagem, protected as they are by some wonderful impregnable rampart, namely, their harmony in God’s sight. This renders them stronger than steel, this makes them firmer than iron, this contributes to them

⁴ Roth, p. 43.

⁵ Homily XXVI on I Corinthians, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (first series, vol. XII), “Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians,” Talbot W. Chambers, ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983 [reprint]), pp. 155-156 (translation adapted by me).

⁶ Homily 38 on Genesis, part 22, *The Fathers of the Church* (vol. 82), “Homilies on Genesis 18-45,” Robert C. Hill, trans. (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), p. 372.

⁷ “Poem in Praise of Virginity,” PG 37.542A-543A; translation in Boniface Ramsey, *Beginning to Read the Fathers* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), pp. 138-139.

⁸ Homily 12 on Colossians, Roth, p. 78; my emphasis.

³ St. Theophan the Recluse, *Raising Them Right: A Saint’s Advice on Raising Children* (Mount Hermon, Cal.: Conciliar Press, 1989), pp. 67-71.

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Marriage as a Sacrament

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marriage.

So far, we have been emphasizing the various ways that transformation occurs through the sacraments. It is also true, as we said near the beginning, that the sacraments of our Church — especially the seven great sacraments — all are intimately linked with the Kingdom of God, both as it exists on this earth in Christ's holy Church, and as the eternal heavenly reality. Both the service for baptism, which brings us into Christ's Body, the Church; and the service of the Holy Eucharist (the Divine Liturgy), which sustains us week by week and year by year with Christ's Body and Blood, the heavenly bread which Jesus spoke about in John 6—both these services begin with the words, "Blessed is the Kingdom, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Interestingly, the marriage service also begins with these words (and it is the only other service which begins in this way). And near the end of the Orthodox wedding service, the priest or bishop takes the crowns off the heads of the newly married couple and prays to the Lord: "Receive their crowns into Thy kingdom, preserving them spotless, blameless, and without reproach, unto ages of ages."

In the early Church, before the wedding service developed which we have today, a couple's civil marriage, which occurred outside the Church, was sealed in the Church by the couple receiving the Holy Eucharist together — sharing the heavenly banquet — in the midst of all the congregation. Today, the couple drinks from the common cup before their crowns are removed; this cup symbolizes the Eucharist.

It is also important to emphasize that all of these references to God's eternal Kingdom indicate in part that our Church understands that the marriage bond is meant to last forever — not just "till death do us part," as in the traditional Western wedding service. In other words, married life is meant to participate in the reality of Christ's Kingdom — both on this earth, and forever in His Heavenly Realm. St. John Chrysostom, in a beautiful long letter of support and encouragement to a young widow, advises her:

"For such is the power of love: it embraces, and unites, and fastens together not only those who are present, and near, and visible, but also those who are far distant. And neither length of time, nor separation in space, nor anything else of that kind, can break up and divide in pieces the affection of the soul. But if you wish to behold him face to face (for this I know is what you especially long for), . . . do your best to manifest a life like his, and then assuredly you will depart one day to join the same com-

It is also important to emphasize that all of these references to God's eternal Kingdom indicate in part that our Church understands that the marriage bond is meant to last forever — not just "till death do us part," as in the traditional Western wedding service.

pany with him, not to dwell with him for five years as you did here, or for twenty or a hundred, or for a thousand years, or twice that number, but for infinite and endless ages."⁹

(We should note that this advice to a young widow not to remarry was Chrysostom's ideal, as it was for St. Paul. But like Paul, Chrysostom also allowed and blessed second marriages, depending on the circumstances, following I Cor. 7:7-9.)

This vivid understanding of the eternity of marriage is also conveyed in the Lives of a number of the married saints. For example, St. Angelis, before his martyrdom at the hands of the Turks in Constantinople, on Sept. 1, 1680, spoke these words to his wife as she wept at the thought of losing him:

"O my wife, let Christ take the place of everything else for you and for me. Today I surrender to Him both you and the children. For Christ I endure with joy

this martyr's death. Therefore you also, my wife, endure my absence, so that in the next life we may meet again and rejoice together eternally. . . . Now then, farewell, my beloved one and dear soul [or 'soulmate']. I will be going at any moment to Christ, Whom I so desire. And soon you will come also, and together we will enjoy the eternal blessedness."¹⁰

This reality of the eternity of marriage, however, is not something automatic. Just as the sacrament of holy baptism does not automatically grant eternal salvation to the one baptized, and just as the sacrament of holy ordination does not seal a man with a priesthood which is indelible (a priest can lose his priesthood through denial of the Faith and being defrocked), so too the sacrament of marriage does not automatically forge the husband and wife together for all their years together on this earth — let alone forever. The Orthodox Church understands that ongoing human effort always must be joined together with God's ongoing work to transform, strengthen, enlighten, sanctify, save, and deify us. (This is the traditional Orthodox doctrine of synergism.) We must willingly appropriate, with His help, what He does for us in His holy sacraments, and in every moment of our lives.

This brings us to another dimension of the sacrament of marriage — the fact that our marriages must be continually renewed. This is similar to the way the sacrament of baptism must be renewed in each of us day by day, or else one day we may discover that we no longer have a living faith in Jesus Christ, and so we may decide it is no longer worth it to keep our relationship with Him and His Holy Church intact. Likewise, if a couple does not constantly work to build up their marriage, it can indeed be broken and lost through neglect. Through discontentedness, resentment, and lack of forgiveness, through sarcasm, scorn and other forms of meanness — and many other kinds of darkness — creeping in, gradually the love and mutual commitment they once had may be eroded away — until one or both of them decide that it is not worth the effort to keep the marriage

⁹ Letter to a Young Widow, part 3, NPNF 1, IX, p. 123 (translation adapted by me)

¹⁰ David and Mary Ford, *Marriage as a Path to Holiness: Lives of Married Saints* (S. Canaan, Pa.: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1994, pp. xxxv-xxxvi).

going. And so the decision is made to break the relationship and put an end to the marriage.

The renewal of baptism happens in many ways — by our efforts to keep the commandments of God; by our ongoing, daily reaffirmation that we are indeed members of His Holy Body, the Church; and by our asking Him every day to help us live for and in Him. This renewal also happens in a special way when we go to the sacrament of confession. This sacrament is specifically spoken of by our Church as a “second baptism,” or a baptism through tears. We have in the sac-

rament of confession, if we take it seriously, a renewal of the purity of baptism through heartfelt repentance, through the confession of sins, and through receiving Christ’s forgiveness and the washing away of our sins through the absolution which is received in this sacrament.

In a similar way, our marriages need to be renewed by a frequent reaffirmation that we have centered our marriages in Christ, and by our daily prayers to Him to help us to be the husbands and wives that He wishes us to be. And when we go to the sacrament of confession, certainly it is very important to confess our

failings in our married life — all the ways we demonstrate stubbornness, impatience, insensitivity, self-centeredness, forgetfulness, impurity, lack of self-sacrificial love, lack of dying to our own wills, lack of obedience to our spouses, lack of tender cherishing and upbuilding of our spouses, and anything else that diminishes our mutual love and commitment in any way. Fr. Alexander Elchaninov, a married Russian priest living in Paris in the 1920s and ’30s, eloquently points out the connection between a healthy marriage and an ongoing effort

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Third Annual Women’s Retreat a Rousing Success!

The Third Annual Women’s Retreat, sponsored by the Department of Religious Education, was held at St. Tikhon’s Seminary on Saturday, August 9. Over 120 participants, ages ten and up, gathered to hear this year’s program, “Married Saints,” presented by Drs. David and Mary Ford. Assistant professors at St. Tikhon’s Seminary, they have recently published their book on this subject, *Marriage as a Path to Holiness: Lives of Married Saints* (St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press).

The day’s events began with registration and continental breakfast. His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN along with Fr. Daniel and Matushka Theodora Rassetar led the participants in opening prayers. Opening remarks and introductions were given by Matushka Frances Vansuch, chairperson of DRE and of this event.

Dr. David Ford led the first morning session, speaking first about marriage. He delved into the theology of marriage, in particular its meaning as a sacrament. Dr. Ford further discussed the history of marriage as illustrated in both the Old and New Testaments. He concluded the session by citing ways our marriages may be enhanced through our love of God and his Church, as well as the love of marriage (see accompanying text of the lecture).

Dr. Mary Ford led the second working session by illustrating what married saints can teach us. Asking our-

selves what we expect to learn when reading about their lives, she asked us to keep in mind that their lives are “transfigured in Christ,” recalling the recent Holy Day on August 6. Dr. Ford further touched upon virtues we may gain from this study and how their lives may be emulated: humility, self-knowledge as well as self-weakness (dependency on God), almsgiving, and hospitality. She then cited various examples of saints bearing these virtues, including those who are not yet glorified as saints but whose lives have shown worthiness to become future saints.

Following the second session an excellent luncheon was served by our women teens under the direction of Frs. Eugene Vansuch and John Onofrey, Matushka Stephanie Onofrey and Seminarians Jason Vansuch and Ronald Tucci. Joining us for this repast were His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius, His Eminence Archbishop Herman, and clergy, and family and friends of the late Metropolitan Vladimir, whose burial had taken place that morning at St. Tikhon’s cemetery. In his short greeting to those gathered, His Beatitude remarked what a joy it was to see so many women, the backbone of the Church, gathered for an event such as this. His Beatitude further stated that this being St. Herman’s Day, we were to remember His Eminence Archbishop Herman in our prayers, and intoned “Many Years” to His Eminence. Following the

luncheon was a photo session and an opportunity to browse in St. Tikhon’s Bookstore.

During the afternoon session Drs. David and Mary cited further statistics on married saints and offered specific examples of these unique holy people. Among those they spoke of were Ss. Timothy and Mavra of Egypt, and Ss. Adrian and Natalia of Asia Minor. They also pointed out that many saints were themselves married and that their wives, husbands, and families often also led saintly lives. The three sessions were met with many questions and favorable comments.

Following the afternoon session there was a tour of the new icon repository/museum, and time to walk the monastery grounds and reflect. The day concluded with Vespers and Matins at St. Tikhon’s Monastery Church.

We wish to thank His Eminence, Archbishop Herman for once again hosting this event. We also wish to thank Matushka Frances Vansuch and members of the DRE Committee for sponsoring this increasingly popular event. A special thanks go to Gregory Hatrak and St. Tikhon’s Bookstore, Matushka Dorothy Sulich, John Paluch, and members of the St. Tikhon’s Monastery community. We hope to continue to increase our numbers next year as we continue to grow in God’s grace.

—Matushka Myra Kovalak

Parish Ministries Conference: Keynote Address



Archbishop Herman welcomes Bishop Job

Editor's note: the talk that follows was presented at the O.C.A.'s Parish Ministries Conference which recently convened at St. Tikhon's Seminary/Monastery.

I would like to believe that this gathering for this Parish Ministries Conference, committed as it is to carefully wrestle with the theme "A People Called to Serve" — is a hopeful sign of a new level of spiritual maturity in our approach to liturgy and life. The religious climate in America today would rather tempt us to distance ourselves from service in a society so profane that as a "remnant" we can only retreat into the sacred, to be saved from this "pagan" world. Indeed, has not this "escape" from the "worshipless Christianity" of our

contemporary culture led to the discovery of Orthodoxy for many — the recovery of the sense of sacred awe and mystery in worship, the sense of unbroken continuity within the Church, the participation in a living spiritual tradition?

Nevertheless, "A People Called to Serve" is not a community being saved "from" the world. It is a parish community called to live *for* the salvation *of* the world. Christ gives us parish ministries not to protect ourselves from our social milieu, but to transform it. Church is not "sacred" space rescued from the "profane," in which holy men (the clergy) perform holy works (sacraments and the liturgical cycles) on behalf of the Faithful (the remnant) in order to save the true believers from the corruption of the world.

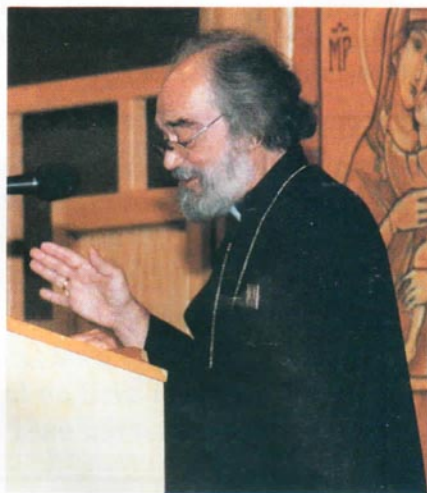
This kind of strange contemporary fundamentalism precisely blunts our sense of mission to and for the world in liturgy and life, in which every prayer, every ministry, every undertaking, is meant to bear witness to the Kingdom in this world if not of it. This "blunting" of our sense of ministry and mission is not an "ethnic" legacy; it is much more American than we realize, fostered in the individualistic approach to worship which is purely American, as is the tendency to form remnant groups of élite Christians separating themselves from the more "worldly."

Thus we hear the hue and cry of so many parishes: "Too much to do by too few!" Then engage the people out there! To engage the people is the key to substantive change. We've "reformed" our

selves into a difficult situation. Let reformation be left to sectarians. Orthodox Christianity is never unrelated to the context of the real society and culture in which we find ourselves because — like it or not — it is this society and culture that shape our lives, either as a reaction, or a response. But more: if we are to extend a true missionary endeavor both within the parish and without, we must understand that the context of our Christian lives is precisely this time and place, this society, this culture, this here and now in which God has placed us, in this milieu, to know both the Gospel AND this context in which the Good News must be preached, the Sacraments celebrated, and the Christian life lived in Christ as a ministry for the life of the world.

Let this Conference be a recovery (not just another “reformation” but a recovery) of the biblical model of the priest as the servant within a servant community. “Whoever desires to be first among you, let him be everybody’s slave, just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mt. 20:27-28). In the image of Christ the priest is the servant who enables his parishioners to become fellow-servants. The primary image need for ministry to be recovered is that of a servant working towards the formation of a servant community. Even as “Liturgy” is the common work of the people (“men in black” cannot celebrate wor-

ship “on our behalf”) so is Ministry the common work of all God’s people. If Liturgy is a way of life, then Ministry is a Way of Living, serving one another, reaching out to minister to others, gathering others into a parish community of servants.



Archpriest Sergei Glagolev

I purposely use the phrase “recovery of ministries.” In past generations a parish was a servant community ministering to the real needs of real people in the circumstances of their real lives. Let us look back over the last two hundred years of our American history to see how the Church responded. Unfortunately, American thought, in the main, becomes more and more unhistorical, if not antihistorical. History is of value only to someone who believes the notion that there are patterns in the past which pro-

vide the present with nourishing traditions. But in the absence of historical continuity and context, bits of information cannot be integrated into an intelligent and consistent whole. As Father Schmemmann quipped years ago, most of his students could tell you everything you could possibly want to know about Byzantium in the fifth century; the problem is that these same students are clueless as to knowing anything about Orthodoxy in America fifty years ago. As we integrate Americans (and integrate them we must) into our lives, dear fellow-servants, this is a problem for us to resolve.

What was the Russian Orthodox mission to Alaska all about two hundred years ago? In bringing Christianity to the Native peoples of Alaska, the Russian missionaries “baptized” as well their language, culture, art, and way of life. Please read Father Michael Oleksa’s doctoral dissertation and his books and articles on this extraordinary missionary ministry, which was unlike the Latin and Protestant approach among the natives in the lower ‘48. The ministry of the Russian missionaries carefully, lovingly, painstakingly sought out every possible Native cultural expression and spiritual insight in order to find the areas contiguous to the Orthodox Christian experience. Among all peoples there is a cultural memory that yearns for its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, that these peoples may finally discover their own Orthodox identity. You see, “culture” is a language all of its own. You can’t reach a person if you don’t “speak” his/her “language.”

Now, I ask you, dear friends: do we have the patience and the gift in Christ to find anything remotely “contiguous” in contemporary culture that appears so blatantly pagan? The task is not to retreat and save ourselves from this barbarism. Salvation is a function of service, the saving life of service. We can reach our contemporaries once we break free of the bondage of introversion, which is the exact opposite of what Father Florovsky described as “freedom to be historically human in Christ,” to minister in our own times.

The Russian missionaries to Alaska went much further: in the spirit of St.



Participants register

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Parish Ministries

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Innocent they gave the Native tribes their own written language. They defended the Native peoples against colonial exploitation, injustice, and racism. They contributed European knowledge to help the indigenous peoples improve their own crafts and skills, their hunting and fishing — even experimentation in farming. Encouraging them to keep their own traditions of tribal governance, they nevertheless enriched their culture with Orthodox insights into Byzantine justice and jurisprudence. In a word, the Orthodox mission responded as “historically human” to the real needs of real people in their own time and place.

Much closer to our own times — only one hundred years ago — Russian missionaries responded to peoples from Eastern Europe best described as “Lost in America.” Fleeing from poverty, injustice, religious persecution, and prejudice, they sought a fresh start in America. That we Americans welcome immigrants with open arms is only partially true. In our own time, in order to balance the budget, whose medicare will we cut if not that of the elderly immigrant? And whose children will not be allowed to go to school if they don’t speak English? Seventy years ago I was one of those kids who didn’t speak English! Try to learn the lessons of history.

The Russian Orthodox Church in America threw its missionary and material efforts into helping these thousands of people. Churches were built in their neighborhoods, helping them to expand these neighborhoods into viable parishes. The Church helped them find jobs so

they could stay in the neighborhood. The local merchants extended credit, all networking through the parish. Children were enrolled in the local public schools, these efforts made through the parish’s weekday Russian School. The Russian clergy made every effort to learn the several Slavic dialects of these people, and showed a remarkable tolerance and docility to their culture, customs, and ways.

by the grace of God. Most of us even went on to college after the war. But it was the Church that literally saved most of us.

I became a priest forty-five years ago because I wanted to put something back into the community that had so tenderly nurtured me. You see, growing up in the '20s and '30s, we were taught that some of us who had “made it” on the outside

I was a child of the Great Depression that followed; yet none of us ever felt poor or powerless, thanks to the rich parish culture that was both an anchor and a safety net. We took care of one another. Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods, Russian Federations and Mutual Aid Societies were founded — all within the programs of the Church; homes were saved; foreclosures were forestalled. We survived by the grace of God. Most of us even went on to college after the war. But it was the Church that literally saved most of us.

And when the financial support of the Russian Missionary Society collapsed and the nurture of the American missions by the Russian hierarchy was cut off by the Bolshevik Revolution, St. Tikhon in his wisdom allowed for the Church governance to include the laity, both in the parishes and within the American “Metropolia” itself.

I was a child of the Great Depression that followed; yet none of us ever felt poor or powerless, thanks to the rich parish culture that was both an anchor and a safety net. We took care of one another. Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods, Russian Federations and Mutual Aid Societies were founded — all within the programs of the Church; homes were saved; foreclosures were forestalled. We survived

were honor-bound to put something back into that community (that, too, is part of ministry). So in the early 1950s, when the new wave of immigrants arrived (Displaced Persons — derogatorily referred to by some as the “D.P.’s” — wounded people, many from Nazi death-camps and Soviet gulags) those of us who had “made it” were lovingly obliged to minister to them even as our fathers had been helped before us.

In that same decade, the blessed Metropolitan Leonty pastorally responded to the critical need to send missionaries to minister in the American suburbs! Our college-bred youth (thanks to the G.I. Bill) was moving into the last frontier — with mixed marriages and all — and the ultimate frontier in the fifties was



Conference participants



Fr. Daniel Kovalak delivers lecture on missions

Southern California. Now, a kid who didn't speak English in the 1920s was sent to Southern California to organize an English-speaking ministry. The English vernacular was the ground for the Liturgical Awakening that followed. This was a *bona fide* mission, a ministering outreach to those who had been scattered and estranged. The mission to build parishes in the suburbs surely was to hear the voice of the Lord, saying "Go to My people; tell them that I love them; SHOW them that I love them! Gather them together, and bring them back to Me!

But that was forty-three years ago (well out of the range of what most people remember). That's why at first I declined the invitation to speak at this Conference. What could I possibly say that would be contemporary or relevant? After more than two hundred years of zealous ministry on the North American continent — the Russian Mission to Alaska, the Russian American Mission to three major immigrations, the American Mission to the suburbs — perhaps I am here to ask you, "What now, into the new Millennium?" What is the new shape of ministries? The new waves of immigration (including those from Slavic lands since the collapse of communism) have been largely ignored. The inner cities we have abandoned in our flight to the suburbs are largely ignored (but we are getting better at symbolically working a soup kitchen or marching in a pro-life rally). What about the social milieu of the new parish neighborhoods? Today, typically, the parish and the neighborhood are two unrelated entities; the "American" way is to choose a church to one's liking, and drive to it from somewhere else. And with computers, TV, and all kinds of "Little Leagues," who needs a parish social and cultural life? Again, typically, Americans clearly separate their social lives from Church. So what kind of "ministries" are we talking about? Father Schmemmann remarked that the present generation is "clueless" about the past. But I confess that I am discouraged, to say the least, about the present.

But there are many positive signs of responsible response to real ministries that I see, even as I see myself more or less "out of the loop."

Father Gregory Pelesh, Executive Director of Orthodox Military and Veterans Administration Chaplains deals day by day administering the Armed Forces and VA Hospital Chaplaincies, programs that are the lifeblood of the multi-ministries that deal with military



Archpriest Daniel Ressetar addresses gathering

life in the community of those who serve — and, in the VA hospitals, with those who have served. Recently, I attended an all-day "ministries" parish retreat Father Pelesh conducted at St. Andrew's in Baltimore, and am convinced that people can learn to grow into a parish community of ministering servants.

Father John Kowalczyk over several years here at St. Tikhon's Seminary has created intense fieldwork programs both in Hospital (including Psychiatric) and in Prison Ministries. I am a witness to the difference that makes in a seminarian's understanding of what "pastoring" is all about.

My local brother priest Father Edward Pehanich in Seaford has organized day care and day school programs for children of the neighborhood. This is one of the parishes where neighbors have some clue about the local Orthodox Church.

I am blessed by counting among my friends Dr. Alphonse Calabrese — a one-time orthodox Freudian who is now an all-time Orthodox Christian, and who makes it clear in his clinic for Christian psychotherapy that his practice is an Orthodox ministry.

(That, by the way, is what every "secular" profession is called to be: a Christian practice of a profession, making it a Christian Ministry.)

Other Long Island neighbors and longtime friends, Fr. Leonid and Mimi Kishkovsky of Sea Cliff, have deeply moved me by the time, cost, and effort they personally make — that in turn inspires and enables their parishioners to do incredible feats of love and sacrifice in the ministry programs of the "Gift of Life" — literally saving from death dozens upon dozens of innocent children brought from Eastern Europe, Siberia, the Balkans, and the Middle East, for complex lifesaving cardiac surgery. [See story, page 44—Ed.]

At a time when we lacked the connections and the skills to intercede and improve the plight of the elderly and the infirm who needed housing and care, Father Alexander Warnecke simply would not give up until he had established the SS. Cosmas and Damian Adult Home on Staten Island. Receiving little or no support, he simply winged it. Father Alexander and I went to St. Vladimir's together some fifty years ago, and more than once was I a recipient of his "know-how" when we were fellow students. Let me bear witness that whatever he did, was not for himself. Is this the missing link that disables ministries? Should not ministries in Christ transcend ideologies?

Finally, I want to mention the work of Arlene Kallaur in the development of the ministries programs of the Orthodox Church in America over the last eighteen years. Much of the success of these programs in due to her persistent determination that those ministries should exist. At first there was no money (and little interest). Arlene volunteered her efforts (I know; I was the FOS Director at the time — Arlene and I shared the same notion that stewardship had more to do with ministries than with raising money — not that raising money is not a ministry). Today there are five Church Ministry Units. And Arlene — still broadly involved in each, both resourcing and networking — is the full-time Director of the Office of Humanitarian Aid and Community Outreach, providing local

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Parish Ministries

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and international relief projects, parish to parish programs, and the Orthodox Christian Adoption Referral Service.

Why am I naming names? PEOPLE get things done, and people have names. Christ is not an abstract; neither are those who minister to do His will.

These honorable mentions barely scratch the surface of the unnamed heroes out there. What is it that makes their ministries viable? First, it seems to me, their ministries are related to life. What is really going on around us? Ministries must meet unmet needs, to discover those we need, and those who need us. This renewal of "interdependence" inextricably connects liturgy and life! Can there be an "Orthodoxy" without "Orthopraxis"? What good is right opinion without some sacrificial outreach? Ministry is something other than preaching to the choir.

There is a second aspect of ministry that needs to be defined. We live in reactionary times. Conservatism in all things I respect and admire, and more often than not wholeheartedly espouse. But the reactionary escalation of meanspirited demagoguery has infected even our Orthodox climate — first reacting to the dangers of secularism, pluralism, nominalism, then reacting to humanism, socialism, liberalism — finally seeing nothing but "heresy" surrounding us, reacting to "protect ourselves" from this sin-sick world. This is the exact opposite of the ministerial outreach of Orthodox Christianity in every generation. Have you noticed that I have consistently used the word "respond" rather than "react" when I speak of ministries? The viable ministries I have noted have been responses to needs rather than reactions to dangers; and here is the lesson to be learned.

Let my wrap-up be a response to the input you have given us as ministerial areas of your concern.

Amazingly, too close to the top for comfort is your concern for the lack of openness and communication between episcopacy and clergy, between clergy and laity, between parish and the priest. With all the All-American Councils, Diocesan Assemblies, Workshops and Con-

ferences, Institutes, Task-forces and Study Groups, we still find that we fail to communicate. Two thoughts come to mind. First, beware the isolation of the leadership. Ivory towers exist in the cupolas of our Church as well as in the academia of our learning institutions. And computers are not the solution. Being computer-illiterate, I admit to an anti-computer bias. But trust me, computer information is not the same as knowledge shared by people who know and trust each other.

Why this lack of openness? Leaders have the odd notion that when it comes to their flock, they can control a situation to generate a result. Part of this "control thing" is the unwillingness to share bad news (bad news shows that something is out of control). But people need to know the worst! Accountability is es-

cial support.

Of course, power corrupts. But that is not exclusively a "lay" problem. As President Bush used to say, "It's a control thing."

You have shown concerns for "levels of involvement" in parish ministries: married with children, singles (including single parents), teens, the college crowd (is your parish really college-friendly?), newcomers and converts, new immigrants, seniors, the hospitalized, the shut-ins, to name a few.

By all means, each group has specific needs, requiring specific responses. Nevertheless, liturgy and life, it seems to me, is not only intergenerational, but all-inclusive. "Unite all of us to one another who become partakers of the one Bread and Cup in the Communion of the Holy Spirit" (St. Basil) . . . "One body,



Archpriest Eugene Vansuch with younger group

sential, not something to be avoided, as this decade shows so well.

When I broach the subject of openness and accountability, among some clergy the defensive reaction is "Aha! Again the lay-conspiracy to reinstate 'trusteeism' in the parish!" Yet St. Tikhon himself encouraged lay participation in the administration of parish life. And for good reason. It was the lay brotherhoods that kept Orthodox parishes open in Poland and in the oppressive climate of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. And the lessons there learned did much to rally the laity in America to save parishes from bankruptcy and foreclosure when the stricken Russian Orthodox Church could no longer send the American Mission either administrative direction or finan-

one Spirit, all called in one hope of calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all . . . each of us given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift for the work of ministry, each growing up in all things into Him who is the Head — Christ — from Whom the whole body, joined and knit together *by what every joint supplies*, by which every part does its share for the growth of the Body for the edifying of itself in love . . ." Of course, here I am excerpting from Ephesians 4.

So we experience children effectively ministering to the needs of the aged, and immigrants edifying converts, and converts giving us a sense of their history that enables us to respond better as Americans. The helpless are helped

when they themselves become helpers. As a teacher, preacher, and priest, I have always been leery of "specializing." Perhaps having too many systems is worse than having none. What ever happened to people simply serving one another?

"Levels of involvement" also concerns all levels of the Church life of all Orthodox Christians throughout the world. Parochialism continues to be a problem. The parochial reality is at once the parish, the deanery, the diocese, the national Church, and the Orthodox Church in the world today. This is not an imposition of "outside" burdens. It is the God-given Pauline insight that we are one, and as one, we are responsible for the whole body. (Why is it that the All-American Council resolutions are hardly implemented locally? This in itself is a parish ministry — the ministry of the whole.)

Church School continues to be a ministry issue — for all ages. I mentioned

before the "Russian Schools" of the immigrant parishes of the '20s and '30s. What is missed in American public schools is not the "three R's," but *forms of behavior, sets of influence,*

There will be no church growth, no rebuilding of community, no reversing of the moral chaos, until family life is again a manifest sacrament in Christ.

ethical issues and social manners— called in the immigrant community "common sense" — without which a person's competence and identity are

deeply flawed — because "religious education" in the old sense was not ideational, but a *moral activity*: "Russian School" was not an "ethnic," but a moral environment. Five days a week we met to discuss the ethical issues that bound us together as a Christian community.

Nothing can be more crucial today than the issue of family life in America. When I first began pastoring in 1952, one hardly heard of divorce with its whole web of tragic ramifications. Today single-parenting, separation, and divorce have become commonplace even among the Orthodox. But does not the Orthodox sacrament of marriage call for special witness and ministry?

The wedding crowns are the martyrs' witness. Your marriage is meant to manifest Christ to the world. Surely, there are abusive marriages ill-begotten, and tragic circumstances in tragic times — and the

Continued on the next page.

1997 Parish Ministries Conference: A People Called To Serve

They came from all over the United States. They came from large parishes, and small, from older established parishes, and from missions as well. They traveled by car and plane. They came to be a part of a very special event in the life of our Church. They all came to find ways to better serve their various parishes. They came to listen, to dialogue, and to learn. From Wednesday, July 30, to Saturday, August 2, St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary was the site of the largest gathering of the people of the O.C.A. outside of the All-American Council.

Each day featured workshops and forums on various topics, each led by a moderator. There were two keynote speeches, and each evening a special talk was given by various leaders of the national Church. On Wednesday, it was Fr. Thomas Hopko, who spoke on the theme, "A People Called to Serve." On Thursday, Fr. Sergei Glagolev offered reflections on "Serving God and Neighbor in Witness and Mission" (see his talk elsewhere in this issue).

On Friday, it was Matushka Deborah Belonick speaking on "Ministry in Parish Life," with Archpriest Eugene Vansuch of St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem, as moderator.

It all began with a Molieben on Wednesday afternoon celebrated by His Eminence, Archbishop Herman. Then everyone went to the various workshops, which featured some of the foremost experts in each field, both clergy and laity, from throughout the nation. Many of those considered to be renowned in their various fields came from our own diocese. For workshops on "Nurturing Christian Ministries and Vocations," and "Meeting the needs of Active Seniors" Archpriest John Kowalczyk of Jermyn was called on as one of the speakers. Fr. Eugene Vansuch was called on to address the large group gathered for the workshop on "Parish Basics and Church Growth." At the workshops on "Creative Activities for the Church School" and "Christian Education and Nurture in the Family" Matushka Theodora Resselar shared her experience and knowledge. Matushka Karen

Mahaffey addressed a large group that attended the workshop titled "Organizing the Small Church School." Archpriest Daniel Kovalak was there to offer his wisdom in the workshops on "Building Relationships with Small Groups in the Parish" and "Witness and Mission in the Neighborhood," along with Fr. Neal Carrigan, who also spoke to the workshop on "Reaching out to the Hungry and Homeless."

On Saturday morning, a Divine Liturgy was held in thanksgiving for the successful conference. All those who attended left enriched by their experience: by the words they shared in the various workshops and lectures, by the various divine services held in the Monastery Church that they were able to attend, and by the beautiful grounds on which they talked and prayed and had fellowship with one another. Most of all, they were enriched by the Lord who was truly present in all that was done to His glory! Amen.

—Priest David Mahaffey

Parish Ministries

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Church's compassion recognizes this. But your marriage is a ministry not only to your children, but to your friends and neighbors, and the parish must enable you to provide this ministry. There will be no Church growth, no rebuilding of community, no reversing of the moral chaos, until family life is again a manifest sacrament in Christ. Does your parish enable such a ministry to a society that will drop dead without it?

I have run out of time. I have room for only one more mention of concerns: the leadership of women in the life of the Church. I can just see the hairs of reaction rising on the skins of those who sniff a "feminist agenda" in this — as did some members of our Orthodox Theological Society when Dr. Constance Tarasar dared to bring it up several years ago at our annual meeting. You see, some of us are more equal than others. Exaggeration is the weapon here; for we are not talking about women becoming priests, but of a troubling "clerical" problem in the Church affecting the ministries not only of women, but of the laity in general. I invite you to consider the ministries of women precisely because women typify a kind of underclass status of lay-people: bishops over clergy, clergy over men, men over women. I saw an advertisement for the new blockbuster summer movie "Men in Black" and I thought it was about "Church" — in some parishes a sea of Men in Black — males aged 7 to 70, in black robes, beards (not the seven-year-olds, of course) and prayer-ropes, running to and fro throughout worship, while the woman veiled themselves. Is this the mission of the Orthodox LAOS TOU THEOU [People of God], or some curious disconnection? Clearly, here is a real "disconnect" with the historical continuity of Orthodox worship and practice.

The real issue here is the participatory role of the *entire* Laos — the People of God — not just the clergy, not just the men in black, but God's people, as St. Paul clearly defines it — men, women, and children, all together one and all in Christ. You see, the "orderly function" of liturgical services is not the only objective of parish life. Ultimately, the ob-

jective of worship is the health of the whole body! But the health of the whole body is not to have an "equal opportunity" quantity of "women in black," equally concerned with the letter of the rubrics, but to understand what God's people in Christ is called to do as a ministering parish community.

Elijah's proclamation "to the poor" is the cry of a people in "quiet desperation" in our own times — divorce, unwed childbearing, abuse, alcoholism and drug dependencies, confusion, loneliness, depression and despair, the powerlessness which leads to frustration and

own personal ministry.

"Rejoice!" (we say to her — and in her this is our own calling).

"Rejoice! — for you are in sorrow a joy in oppression a protection for the hungry their food comfort to the estranged help of the lonely and isolated staff to the blind visitation of the sick shelter and comfort to those in pain aid to the orphaned hastening help to those who are fallen . . . "



Deacon Michael Anderson with kids

violence — the loss of any community ethos and connectedness. What shall the response be?


We are called in Christ to live in the image of the Theotokos. Like her, we are called to be by grace what Christ is by nature. Our praise of her is ultimately our

Are these words of Holy Orthodox worship familiar to you? Of course they are. You found them in the rubrics and texts of the *Paraclesis*. Now put the book down and in the name of Christ, go, and do likewise.


— V. Rev. Sergei Glagolev



Delegates from the Anthracite District F.R.O.C. at the National Convention in Minneapolis.



Developing the Discipline of Prayer



Editor's note: The beginning portion of Fr. Sergei Glagolev's lecture appeared in the Winter 1996 issue of Your Diocese Alive in Christ. The conclusion follows.

The first three rungs on the ladder to a life of prayer give us the sure footing for our ascent. The first step is to teach the body to pray. The second is to teach the lips to pray. After these two first steps are taken, we can teach the heart to pray.

Pray With the Body

We will not pray unless the body is taught to pray. Our Mother Church never fails to invite our bodies to participate in salvific prayer. We stand for worship — our bodies showing respect for the holiness of worship. We kneel in fervent prayer. We cross ourselves and bow. We bow to one another. We make reverences and prostrations. We are not disembodied spirits. Our bodies have a stake in our salvation if — unlike our Protestant neighbors — we truly believe and understand the resurrection of the dead. Teach the body to pray. Make the body conscious of prayer and enlist its effort.

When the disciples failed to heal the epileptic boy, they asked, "Lord, why could we not cast it out?" (Mt. 17:19). The summary of our Lord's reply is this: "... This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Mt. 17:21).

Prayer and fasting is a diune discipline, teaching the body to pray — teaching the body priorities, getting the body to pay attention to higher goals (one rarely prays well on a full stomach in a pampered body), enlisting the body to participate in the effort to postpone gratification of needs for the sake of some-

thing more noble — as the casting out of demons — or more holy — as fasting to receive Holy Communion.

The whole point of fasting — *ascesis* — is not to make things difficult, but to make life simpler, more susceptible to prayer. The body is not evil in itself; but unless it participates in the life of prayer, it makes a place for evil. Body and soul are divided by the Fall; this is not natural. We are not Gnostics. Teach the body to pray.

The Five Senses

Our bodies have five senses by which reality is received. (There is a "sixth sense" which I will address later.) Teach the senses to pray. Look around you in the Holy Temple and behold that Orthodox worship is an Icon of the heavenly Kingdom. Teach your eyes to pray. Listen to the holy words, the angelic songs, the sacred hymns; hear Christ Himself speak to us in the proclamation of the Gospel. Teach your ears to pray.

Dare to touch holy things as a child of God. Kiss the precious Cross and the hand that holds it out to you for your salvation. Kiss the holy Icons of the Theotokos and all the Saints, who never fail to pray for you. Touch the precious Relics that God has given as an affirmation of His abiding love for us. Greet one another with a holy kiss (Rom. 16:16); it is a sure sign that Christ is risen, that Christ is in our midst.

I mean it when I say "teach your nose

to pray." Those of you who are older, do you remember coming home from school, walking into the kitchen — and you knew your mother was in church this day because there was the smell of holiness about her? For the incense we offer to Christ as an odor of spiritual fragrance, we receive in return the grace of the Holy Spirit. I know it because my nose knows it. In high school I was not always able to attend Vigil. When my father came home he filled the house with the smell of the holy anointing of the Feast's eve, and he would rub his forehead on mine to impart the fragrance of the blessing. For the Orthodox, one can sense the smell of prayer.

Finally, "Taste and see how good the Lord is!" (Ps. 34:8). Sing with the Saints, "I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord" (Ps. 116:13). "O Lord, how sweet are Thy words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ps. 116:103). What the Church is praying here is literally true. For the spiritually discerning, one prays even with the sense of taste. Albeit, this kind of sensitivity comes by fasting.

I mentioned earlier that there is a "sixth sense." I call it one of "dimension." To the unskilled eye a holy Icon looks two-dimensional. Gaze at it more attentively and you will see you yourself are the missing dimension: the Icon is inviting you to enter into its holiness. This is especially true of the Icons of the Holy Eucharist and the Great Feast days. If you pay attention, the Icons invite you into their reality to partake of the blessing.

Pray With the Lips

Having taught the body to pray, we

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Developing the Discipline of Prayer

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must now teach the lips to pray. "O Lord, open Thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise" (Ps. 51:15). It is important that we pray not only with the mind, but that the words of the prayer be on our lips, be it in a whisper, or simply mouthing the words. In so doing, like singing, you are praying twice. Prayer in the Orthodox Church is an oral tradition. Prayers are not merely said aloud: they are sung. We pray by singing; our prayers are the song on our lips. In beginning to pray, pray with your lips.

I know we were taught in grade school not to mouth the words or move our lips when we read. But I am suggesting you do this precisely, and for a good reason. Singing our prayers out loud is a didactic tool our Holy Church has used from the very beginning. Let me give you an example out of my own personal life. Back in the 1940s our Seminary instruction was all in Russian. In class one day, out of the blue, Prof. Dobriensky pointed to me and said, "Glagolev, stand up and recite the Creed." No problem, I thought. I started once, twice, the third time, and each time I stumbled. Finally in desperation, I said, "Professor, may I sing the Creed?" "Of course," he replied. And with that I was able to render the Hymn of Faith flawlessly from beginning to end.

Teach your lips to pray. This is how you make the prayers your own. The words of the prayers you pronounce on your lips will soon be indelibly etched upon your heart.

"Therefore by Him (Jesus Christ) let us continually offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Heb. 13:15).

Prayer of the Heart

Having now taught the body and the lips to pray, we are ready for the prayer of the heart. Teach the heart to pray. For the Orthodox Christian, it is the heart that is the center of one's being: emotional, intellectual, spiritual. Yes, by prayer Christians learn to "think with their hearts, reason with their hearts, speak from their hearts, and in their hearts to

know the truth." It is the heart, then, that must be converted. "Blessed are the poor in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8). It is in the heart that Jesus makes His presence known, by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Remember how our Lord revealed Himself on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection? In the breaking of the bread, as in the Eucharist, their eyes were opened and they knew Him. And what is the confirmation of this testimony? "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32). Their hearts knew, even before their eyes were opened.

But we have turned full circle. For the prayers of a heart are a return to silence — *hesychia*, the practice of quiet, the prayer of silence, the prayer of the heart.

The prayer of the heart as perfect silence is the ideal prayer. But, dear brothers and sisters, the longest journey in life is from the head to the heart. For most of us it takes a lifetime to learn that it is not the mind, and not the desire, but the heart — purified and stilled, that sees God. "For the Lord was not in the wind, neither in the earthquake nor the fire, but the still small voice" (1 Kings 19:11-

12). The still small voice whispered to Elijah's heart, "Elijah! Be still, and know that I am God!"

The practice of inner silence that is free from all stirring of thoughts, visualizations, and emotions — the prayer thus completely docile to the Holy Spirit, alert and open to God — this practice, this condition teaches the heart to pray. But please be warned by all the Holy Fathers that although this *hesychia* is the final achievement of a life of prayer, there comes with it — in the delicate balance — great danger of drifting, of daydreaming, of spiritual slackness, at which point we are warned to rouse our bodies and our lips to prayer, reintroducing the words of prayer — in the words of Metropolitan Anthony Bloom, "until the words of prayer have renewed silence."

So much talk to introduce silence as an ideal. Friend, let this be enough. If you would go on, go and yourself bend the knee before the Lord your God and say:

"Lord, teach me how to pray; Pray Thou Myself in me."

God bless your good and noble efforts!

— Archpriest Sergei Glagolev



Is Our Lord Calling You To The Holy Priesthood?

For further information please call or write the seminary registrar at:

St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary
South Canaan, PA 18459
Phone (717) 937-4411

“This Reality of Orthodoxy in America”

Metropolitan Serafim Addresses Orthodox Clergy of Greater Cleveland



Metropolitan Serafim and Bishop Nathaniel

Editor's note: The talk that follows took place Friday, July 11, 1997, at St. Mary's Romanian Orthodox Church in Cleveland. Bishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America introduced Metropolitan Serafim.

Bishop NATHANIEL:

We are happy to have with us this evening His Eminence Metropolitan SERAPHIM of Germany and Central Europe. He has come to be our guest at our annual diocesan assembly and he was with us for about four days there. He saw how we debate, how we speak about things, our presentations, and he is here also to visit some of the parishes. Perhaps some of you have read his book, which is on hesychasm . . . and he is of course a monastic. His presence among us brings us a great wealth of experience through the years of communism in Romania, through the years of the Church's suffering and her coming out to the light. He has been a pastor not only in his own country but of course to the people where he was sent to be the Archpastor . . . I am going to ask Father Grama to translate. Although His Eminence does understand English and other languages, I think he prefers to speak in Romanian so that it flows . . .

Metropolitan SERAFIM: Beloved Fathers,

It is an honor for me to be this evening together with you and to be able to address a few words to you. My first visit to America was and still is a great revelation. I had not known much about American Orthodoxy other than the little I have read in fact. I knew a little particularly from the time when I studied in Paris, at St. Sergius Theological Seminary, founded by the Russian émigrés, who afterward came also to St. Vladimir's, as you well know.

The experience of these days was entirely extraordinary, for I have discovered here an Orthodoxy which does not regard herself anymore to be a "diaspora." I rejoiced that this has been underlined and confirmed once again [by] Father Hategan, because Orthodoxy in this country, on this continent, has profoundly historical roots, of at least two hundred years. She is well grounded as I have learned from the life of the Romanian Orthodox Eparchy here, but I imagine the same reality could be found in all other jurisdictions: with church buildings, Sunday Schools, ladies' auxiliaries, youth organizations, an intense missionary activity, with monasteries, theological schools — therefore a complete and complex Orthodox life, exactly as we find it in the Orthodox countries. There-

fore I believe that you have the whole freedom and the whole truth on your side when you do not consider yourselves a "diaspora" but a local Orthodox Church.

Unfortunately this reality of Orthodoxy in America is little known or totally ignored by the Mother Churches, who do not yet realize the fact that their daughters are already advanced in age and that they are ready to be married — so to speak. This reality too is relevant about our conservatism and tardiness, which are specific of Orthodoxy as we all know.

In regard to the Orthodox canonical structure in America, I discovered what I had known in fact that here also there are contradictions between the jurisdictions. I believe that what was attempted to be realized through the O.C.A. in 1970s was like a flame of light, a prophecy, a sort of a foretelling of the future — a future with a local Orthodoxy. I do not intend to do the apology of the O.C.A. here. Perhaps I do not even know sufficiently well the positions of the O.C.A. and all other jurisdictions, so as to be able to make here some valuable evaluation. But I consider that the idea of an O.C.A. is in itself prophetic, it is divine and extraordinary. Orthodoxy in America must reach — and I would say as soon as possible — the stage of a lo-

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“This Reality of Orthodoxy in America”

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cal Orthodoxy recognized as such by the entire Orthodox world. It must become an autocephalous Orthodoxy, to be able to organize herself in an unitary manner and thus to unitedly spread the message of the true faith in the world.

This does not mean by far that we deny or devalue our ethnic roots. In fact, we could not undergo a metamorphosis to become American overnight even if we wanted it. We become American in time, after years and generations. This is a natural process which we can neither deny nor prevent from occurring. Everyone remains what we are: Romanian, Russian, Greek, and so on and so forth, but in the end we shall see that we are living here and we are feeling American, although we have various origins.

The general interest of Orthodoxy here is to help each one of us — Ukrainian, Russian, Greeks, etc. — whomever and whatever we are, to overcome the local dimension and to rediscover ourselves in the universal, without negating the local or the national. There is a dialectic tie which we must grasp and admit — between the particular, the local, national — and the universal, which do not exclude but complete each other: the local into the universal and the universal discovers itself into the local.

There is another aspect which we, the Orthodox, do not perceive anymore, because we have the tendency to constantly look to the past, to examine and interpret the old canons, to apply them today. I am alluding to the canons which regard the organization and structure of the Church in various historical periods. Certainly those canons which refer to the dogma, morals, and faith remain valid over the centuries, but those which refer to the organization — and let's keep in mind the historical differences — these change from one century to another and even from one year to another. The Church today must be conscious that she can proclaim as many canons as serve her mission and the purpose she has to accomplish. This is in fact the life of the Church in the Holy Spirit. We must be creative, we must perceive the “signs of the time” and do what we are called to

do in order to save the world, for we are called to save the world, as Christians, as the Church, as Orthodoxy. We should therefore establish those canons which serve us so that the Church can accomplish her divine calling.

Therefore, for the situation in America, I would say it is an urgent imperative that all the Orthodox bishops — and not only they, because they must be helped by clergy and the entire people of God, for the Church is God's people in general, not only the bishops — must reflect together and discover those solutions that recognize the reality of today's Orthodoxy here and assist her to get so well-organized that her mission may be

a few decades, compared to American Orthodoxy which is bicentennial — cannot be solved except according to their particular circumstances and by the people who understand them, and can intervene to resolve them.

In actuality, this has happened throughout Church history. This is how the local, national Orthodox Churches came into being, became autonomous and autocephalous. Only after the fall of Constantinople, Orthodoxy remained somehow stunned. Everything that we do today, it seems to us that we do not have the freedom to do what we need to do but we feel compelled to look back through the canons — let's say the 28th

The general interest of Orthodoxy here is to help each one of us — Ukrainian, Russian, Greeks, etc. — whomever and whatever we are, to overcome the local dimension and to rediscover ourselves in the universal, without negating the local or the national.

fulfilled. It therefore seems to me that an American Patriarchate is absolutely actual here. How you'll organize it, it's up to you. It does not behoove the mother Churches at all [to specify this], because they have no idea what's going on here.

I have said in the past days and I repeat it here, that for a bishop who lives in America, or even for me, living in Germany — much closer to Romania — to belong to a Holy Synod at a distance of thousands of miles, seems to me to be absolutely, entirely unrealistic. For in every national Synod they discuss matters specific to that land. An American bishop, for instance, could not help with the situation there too much, because it is foreign to him; and likewise, matters that are specific to American or European Orthodoxy could not be addressed by a foreign Synod. The specific challenges here — and I, in Germany, where Orthodoxy is much younger, let's say just

canon of the Fourth Ecumenical Council — which we interpret and interpret over again, and we write books about a canon which has no relevancy to today's situation anymore. Yes, we study such matters and theologize over them unnecessarily. If we sincerely want to do something for Orthodoxy, if we feel responsible for the salvation of the world and for the witness which we have to offer to the world, we must keep mindful of today's reality. For it is much more comfortable and easier to encapsulate myself in my little church, to serve in the church and serve in my own ghetto, and it is much harder to become involved in how to unite ourselves and make known our common witness to the world, that the world may become converted and know the Truth.

We need inventiveness, creativity — and this occurs only within the Holy

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Ninety-Third Annual Pilgrimage



This year, on Friday, May 23, during the season of Pascha, the Ninety-Third Annual Memorial Day Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery formally opened at 4:00 p.m. with the services of Vespers and Matins being celebrated in the Monastery Church. A procession around the Monastery Church followed, with an Akathist sung to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, the patron saint of the Monastery, followed by the veneration of his relics.

The Brotherhood of the Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk hosted the Pilgrimage over the Memorial Day weekend. It was on Memorial Day in 1906, at the second Pilgrimage to the Monastery, that St. Patriarch Tikhon, accompanied by Bishop Raphael, solemnly dedicated

the new monastery church as a place for the monks to conduct their worship, which is the chief activity of their life as a community. Ever since then thousands of devoted pilgrims have journeyed to South Canaan, Pennsylvania to worship our Lord Jesus Christ and to join with the monks in prayer at this, the oldest Orthodox monastery in the United States. This year, the sacred event was also leading up to, and preparing us for, another major event — the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of St. Innocent, Apostle to America, the official celebration of which was also to be held at St. Tikhon's Monastery on August 26 of this year.

At the Pilgrimage this year the many hundreds of pilgrims who came to ven-

erate the relics of St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre and to ask for his holy intercessions found that the relics had been placed in a beautiful new receptacle, a carved wood reliquary, which was designed to be a fit resting place for the saint to honor his memory. The large, new reliquary, which was delivered just a few days before the Pilgrimage, was situated on the right clerics. With its ornate wooden pillars, canopy, and cupola, it reaches nearly to the ceiling of the clerics.

On Saturday, May 24, a hierarchical Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the Monastery Church. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America led the

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worship, being joined by His Eminence, Archbishop Herman of Philadelphia and Eastern Pa., Bishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate, and area clergy. The responses were sung by St. Tikhon's Seminary Choir. Afterwards, there was a procession with icons, relics, and banners to the Monastery well, where the Hierarchs blessed the water. This was followed by the blessing of graves at the monastery cemetery. The new Mausoleum was also blessed.

At the luncheon that followed, as in past years, the seminarians participating in the field work program were presented with their Certificates of Achievement by the local hospitals, prisons, and nursing homes to which they had volunteered their services. Shortly after the meal, at 2:00 p.m. in the Seminary Auditorium, there took place the 55th annual Academic Commencement of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

Speaking to the graduating students, the seminary community, and guests, Metropolitan Theodosius remarked that "setting out to study at Tikhon's Seminary is much different from attending and studying at another type of institution. By being students at an Orthodox seminary you have embarked on a course of study that demands not only academic excellence but an ongoing change of mind and heart. The study of holy scripture, patristics, liturgy, Church history, and canon law are disciplines that are to be integrated with your lives.

"When properly studied and received into one's very being they affect one's

behavior and outlook on life. Thus the study of theology is much more than the acquisition of data or information. The proper study of theology assists in the formation of your lives. It ultimately di-



rects you to a life of righteousness — a life of union and communion with the living God." The commencement address itself was delivered by Archpriest Gregory Havrilak (see the text printed in this issue).

Saturday at 4:00 p.m., the Vigil service for the Resurrection was served in the Monastery Church, with the hierarchs, clergy, monastics, and pilgrims joining for the prayers of Vespers and Matins. The next morning, a hierarchical Divine Liturgy was served at 9:30 a.m. Celebrating was the Metropolitan together with the hierarchs and clergy already mentioned. In his sermon, Met-

ropolitan Theodosius spoke about the gospel account of the Samaritan woman. "Like the Samaritan woman," he observed, "we must respond positively to the divine overture of love. In her dia-

logue with the Savior she asks for the living water that wells up to eternal life (John 4:14). In our dialogue with the Savior we are to rediscover that in our baptism we have been plunged into the living water of regeneration. From this water we have received the gift of the Spirit who proceeds from the Father and is given to the world through his Son."

His Beatitude concluded his remarks by noting that "today this sacred space is revealed as the place where the New Jerusalem gathers. With the courage and sincerity of the Samaritan woman we must draw near to the Savior, leaving behind the stale water of sin and corruption. For only when we draw near and dialogue with the universal Savior will we always recognize him as the fountain of immortality."

The Monastery Church was already packed with pilgrims. After the sacred liturgy a luncheon was held at the Monastery dining Hall. At 4:00 p.m. that afternoon, Vespers and Matins were served in the Monastery Church.

Commencement Banquet

On Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. a banquet was held at Fiorelli's Convention Center in Peckville marking the 55th



annual academic commencement of St. Tikhon's Seminary. Before the banquet the choir from Christ the Saviour Cathedral in Toronto, Canada gave a folk concert of traditional Russian songs. V. Rev. Gregory Havrilak, director of the Office

visiting hierarchy being greeted. The hierarchical Divine Liturgy began at 10 a.m. at the Pavilion church. The following bishops participated: Metropolitan Theodosius, Archbishop Herman, Bishop Nathaniel, Bishop Job of Chi-

reminds us of our great and high calling to be in union and communion with the incarnate Son of God." The Metropolitan concluded with this exhortation: "As we continue to celebrate the bright Feast of the Resurrection we are now called to embrace the incarnate Truth. We are now called to withdraw from all sin — from all the lies we allow to rule over us. Together, in the Holy Spirit, let us receive the Word of the Father. For it is this True Word who yearns to share His life with us in the Kingdom, where death and lies no longer reign."

After Liturgy, Metropolitan Theodosius, together with Archbishop Herman and the rest of the bishops and clergy, held a memorial service at the grave of Metropolitan Leonty of blessed memory for the repose of his soul and the souls of all the departed spiritual leaders and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America.

A service of thanksgiving to the Theotokos and anointing of the sick and all the pilgrims was held at 2:30 p.m. As in past years, pilgrims were anointed before making their journey home. The homily was offered by Fr. Michael Dahulich (see text in this issue). Hundreds of pilgrims, old and young alike, came forward to be anointed and healed of ailments both physical and spiritual. Pilgrims with noticeable medical conditions waited for the special moment that they would be touched by the healing oil. Each year following the molieben, the

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Toronto Cathedral choir

of Communications for the Orthodox Church in America, gave the welcome and V. Rev. Alexander Golubov, Academic Dean at St. Tikhon's, served as toastmaster. Archbishop Herman, the Rector of the Seminary, spoke words of encouragement concerning the spiritual life of the Monastery and Seminary.

During the banquet the 1997 graduates of the seminary were seated on the dais along with the visiting hierarchy and distinguished clergy. The keynote address was given by Metropolitan Theodosius (see text in this issue). One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of a \$10,000 scholarship fund for the Seminary to Archbishop Herman. The new fund was given by the Thomas Bushallow family of Auburn, N.Y. in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of Mr. Bushallow's graduation from St. Tikhon's.

On Memorial Day, May 26, a Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Monastery Church by the monastic and diocesan clergy at 7:30 a.m. The homilist for this early liturgy was Fr. Daniel Kovalak, pastor of Holy Cross Orthodox Church in Williamsport, Pa.

At 9:30 a.m. a Pilgrim's Procession to the Monastery Church took place with

cago, and Archbishop Makary of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. They were joined by many other visiting clergy. The prayers, preaching, and wonderful singing of the Liturgy filled the grounds of the Seminary and Monastery.

The Most Blessed Metropolitan Theodosius preached to the gathered pilgrims, clergy and lay alike, as follows: "What we have heard this morning has a direct tie to the trial and sentencing of the Lord. It is a reading that requires us to understand that we are being called to draw near and to embrace the one who is the Truth. It is a reading that strongly



93rd Annual Pilgrimage

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Pilgrimage draws to a close with the anointing of the sick and infirm with this oil of healing and renewal.

During the day pilgrims also were given the chance to visit the new icon repository that houses the largest collection of ancient and rare icons on the East Coast.

Those who came to pray had the opportunity to contemplate and to enter into the heavenly Kingdom, a foretaste of which is disclosed in the Holy Liturgy.

As always, the annual pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery provided the occasion for all pilgrims (among whom, incidentally, are numbered the monks of St. Tikhon's as well as the visiting guests) to be spiritually renewed. Those who came to pray had the opportunity to contemplate and to enter into the heavenly Kingdom, a foretaste of which is disclosed in the Holy Liturgy. As always, the Liturgy was a time to retreat from the everyday schedule of the busy world outside, and to "lay aside all earthly cares"; but this was easier to do when one's prayers were joined with the prayers of so many other pilgrims in this holy place.

The Ninety-Third Annual Pilgrimage challenged us, during the liturgical season of Pascha, to strengthen our personal relationship with the God-Man, Jesus Christ. By effecting once again within each of us the accomplishment of the goals of the Church, the internal mission of the Body of Christ, our Lord showed to us yet again the richness of our Faith, and by so doing revealed to us the true nature of the outward mission of Holy Orthodoxy: to share with others that "the Lord is good," as we have ourselves tasted and seen and experienced this. And in essence, it is this Good News which is the Gospel of salvation which we are to proclaim to all nations.

— Archpriest John Kowalczyk



Metropolitan serves panikhida at Metropolitan Leonty's grave



Healing service

“That You May Be Healed”

Sermon at the Healing Service

Memorial Day Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon’s Monastery

Each Memorial Day His Eminence, Archbishop Herman and the priests of his Diocese afford us the privileged opportunity of participating in this healing service at the conclusion of the annual pilgrimage to the Monastery of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk. What greater blessing could we receive than to go out into our world from this hallowed place where saints have walked, having received the forgiveness of our sins in holy confession, having partaken of the precious Body and Blood of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ in Holy Communion, and finally being anointed “for the healing of our soul and body”?

I truly hope and pray that each of you realizes the richness of these blessings and specifically the power of this healing service, in which we pray to the Most Holy Mother of God, asking her intercession, and in which we beseech the intercession of the great faith-healer Saint Panteleimon, the unmercenary physician, as well as all the saints of America. I pray that you do not see this as just an *ending* to the pilgrimage festivities, or take it lightly. It is a blessing,

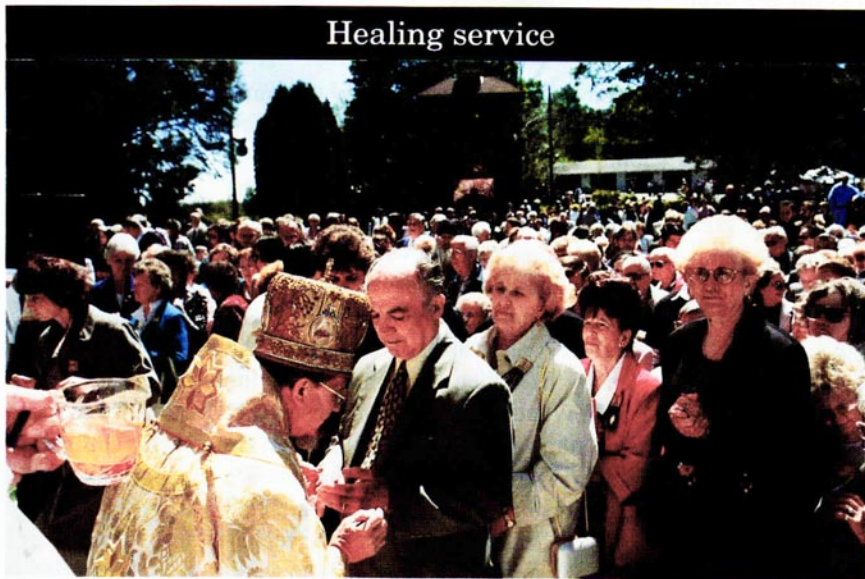
a healing, from the Lord Himself, that will sustain us for the real *struggle* that awaits us in the world tomorrow and the days and weeks ahead.

After all, we know from the Scripture that healing from the Lord is nothing short of a *miracle*. How often did Jesus make it possible for the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the crippled to walk and, yes, even the dead to rise? These

for the youth of our Carpatho-Russian Diocese who had gathered in King of Prussia for a tournament hosted by my ACRY chapter — I thought about the God Who creates miracles and the healing He has done.

How well I remember as a newly-ordained priest, being called to Children’s Hospital in Pittsburgh, where a newborn baby from my parish was being rushed

in for emergency heart surgery to correct a congenital, life-threatening defect. How hard I prayed that that baby would live. How my hands trembled as I traced the sign of the cross with holy oil on his tiny body, over his tiny heart, and begged the



Healing service

were His many miracles . . . these are the things that the prophet King David foresaw, impelling him to write that verse in the Book of Psalms that we sing so often in our churches: “Thou art the God Who doest wonders!” (Psalm 77:14).

Healing of Body

This morning in particular — as I stood before the Holy Altar of my parish church to serve the Divine Liturgy

Lord to heal him!

This morning, that tiny baby, now grown up, in his senior year at Penn State, led the singing of the responses to the Liturgy that I celebrated. The healing of the Lord had made him well, and in gratitude for it, Brett serves the Church as a cantor in his parish.

My thoughts also ranged out the window of my church and focused on what

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was once the Veterans' Hospital in Phoenixville, where many years ago (when I was graduating from high school), my pastor's son lay, near death, the victim of an automobile accident that claimed the life of his twin brother. How hard an entire diocese prayed for months that that young man who had been in the service during the Viet Nam War would recover, that a priest and his wife would not be deprived of a second son because of the recklessness of a drunken driver.

This morning, that man stood at the altar with me, serving the Liturgy, as a priest; in fact, he is now my mother's pastor. In gratitude for the Lord's miracle of healing, Father Jim has since given his life in the service of the Church. And in recognition of how truly outstanding that service has been in twenty-five years, he is being elevated this coming Sunday to the rank of Protosybyter!

When I think of these two people, who are so much a part of my life, both of whom I love so dearly, I cannot but think of the countless people in our Lord's lifetime who likewise thought of individuals whom they loved — who had likewise been healed by His touch. And how they must have remembered, as I did this morning, the words of the great prophet Isaiah echoing across the centuries: "He took upon Himself our infirmities and healed our diseases" (Isaiah 53: 4, quoted in Matthew 8:17).

Healing of Soul

And so I come to this healing service with thoughts such as these in my mind and heart and soul. And I come, seeking the healing of body that the Lord works through the anointing with oil, blessed by His Eminence: the power of healing that worked miracles for Bartimaeus and Lazarus, as well as for Brett and Father Jim. I hope and pray that you come with similar thoughts yourselves.

But I know that a bit more is required of us at this healing service than such remembrances of scripture stories and incidents from real life that prove Christ's power to heal. We must also come with a clean heart and a pure soul before the Almighty Son of God Who

became flesh for us and our salvation. We must come properly disposed, free from the shackles of sin, purified in the mystery of holy confession, the stains of

trembling over the outcome of some physical illness, but with tears of sorrow for our sins. We need to be constantly repenting for our transgressions, avail-



Thomas Bushallow presents scholarship gift

our sins washed in the Blood of the Lamb of God in the mystery of holy communion.

Yes, before we can be healed in the body, we must be healed in the soul. This is the precise order in which Christ performed His healings, as recorded for us in the Gospel accounts. Remember the paralytic, who was lowered through the roof by four men to be healed by the Lord? What happened? Did Jesus first say, "Stand up and walk?" No. What He said first was: "My son, your sins are forgiven you" (Mark 2: 5). Only after his soul was healed was the man the recipient of the miracle of being able to walk.

How often that pattern is repeated for us. To the woman with the hemorrhage, Jesus said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well" (Matthew 9:22). And to the crippled man who was healed at the pool of Bethesda, we hear Jesus' words of stern warning, "See you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you" (John 5:14).

We need to come to the Lord of healing, not merely with tears of fear and

ing ourselves of the wisdom of our spiritual father and the graces of the mystery of holy confession, and nourishing our sin-scarred soul with the Bread of Life and the Fountain of Immortality in the holy Eucharist.

It is then that we can best approach the God Who does wonders to heal us — when our souls have been touched by His grace, when they are as pure as is humanly possible. And such an occasion as this spiritual pilgrimage is the perfect opportunity for us to find forgiveness in Confession, communion with Christ in the Eucharist and healing from the Lord through anointing with Holy Oil.

The Ultimate Healing

Some of you, however, may ask, "But what about those people who came to this pilgrimage, who went to holy confession and received the holy Eucharist and were anointed with oil, and for whom we prayed as hard as we could for their healing — what about those people who died nonetheless?"

I think of two such people even now as I look across the vast expanse of faith-

ful gathered here for this service. I see in the front row Elizabeth and Walter, my own parishioners, whose beloved sister Margaret died this past year, after a heroic and valiant struggle of four decades against the ravages of cancer. She prayed almost ceaselessly, and her family joined her throughout the day for hours at a time, and she received the holy mysteries almost daily. My entire parish prayed for her recovery; countless parishioners lit vigil-candles for her intention. Nonetheless, one night she fell asleep and never woke up again to this life. What happened in her case?

Or, in the very back row of this gathering, I see my best friend since seminary days, Fr. David. His beloved wife, Pani Jeannette, just died this past March, after a yearlong struggle against the horrors of leukemia. An entire diocese was joined in prayer for her healing. She too prayed ceaselessly, and she and Father prayed together both day and night, and she received the holy mysteries daily as well. In fact, the evening she passed into eternity, he brought her the Presanctified Gifts from the Liturgy, she partook of the communion, and closed her eyes, and by the time Fr. David returned to the church,



Pilgrims' recessional

she had left this world. Were all these prayers unanswered?

In both of those cases, and in so many others that all of us could share together, the answer is the same. In the face of the flaws of the fallen world — whether diseases which befall millions like Margaret and Pani Jeannette — or accidents which daily claim victims like my own

for our transgressions, tortured for our iniquities; the punishment he bore in health for us, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53: 5).

Let Us Come with Faith

As we approach this healing service and its prayers for the intercession of the Holy Mother of God, Saint Panteleimon

This ultimate healing, you see, is the real reason the Son of God came to this planet, so that He might die for us and our salvation and gain for us the Kingdom of Heaven which Adam and Eve had lost and which we could never attain on our own.

wife — the Lord comes to the battered bodies, no longer able to hold the life-force of the soul, and takes the *real person* — what we call the *soul* of that individual — to Himself. He comes and performs the *ultimate healing* — the passage from this life *through death* to eternal life — to that luxuriant and peaceful place where there is no sickness or pain or sorrow, but life everlasting.

It is in that moment we call *death* that the Lord of Life comes to carry the soul He created to the life He intended for us in the first place — long before Adam and Eve sinned. It is in that single moment that He says to Margaret and Pani Jeannette and my wife and countless others before them and countless others yet to come, those words that He spoke on the Cross to thief on the right, when He privileged him with the *ultimate healing*: “Amen, amen, I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43).

This *ultimate healing*, you see, is the real reason the Son of God came to this planet, so that He might die for us and our salvation and gain for us the Kingdom of Heaven which Adam and Eve had lost and which we could never attain on our own. Once again the words of the Prophet Isaiah ring true: “He was pierced

and all the saints of America, as well as the anointing with holy oil at its conclusion, let us come with faith — faith in the Lord of Life, faith in the God Who “doest wonders.” Let us come with souls cleansed through repentance and nourished with the Bread of Life and the Cup of Salvation, to meet the Divine Physician of our souls and bodies. Let us come to the One who forgave the greatest of sinners and made them into saints, and who made the blind see, the deaf hear, the crippled walk, and the dead rise.

Let us come, understanding fully the command of St. James in his Epistle: “Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your sins one to another and pray for one another *that you may be healed*. The fervent prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects” (James 5:13-16).

To the God Who doest wonders, be glory unto ages of ages. Amen.

— Archpriest Michael G. Dahulich

Commencement Banquet Address

by Metropolitan Theodosius



In my commencement address I spoke about the discordant voices within the Church which proclaim themselves to be the authentic articulations of Orthodox thought and life. To counter these many and confusing voices I stressed the need to be like St. John the Baptist. For it is the greatest of the prophets who instructs his disciples that he must become less so the voice of the Bridegroom may increase.

Becoming less did not mean that Saint John ceased to prepare Israel for the coming of the Messiah. Becoming less did not mean that the gifts given to him to proclaim the truth were diminished. To become less meant that all the energies and gifts of the Baptist were used to enhance the stature of Christ and to provide the foundation for the Gospel of new and eternal life.

This year our autocephalous Church is celebrating the two hundred anniversary of the birth of St. Innocent Veniaminov, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlightener of North America. His life, particularly his missionary work in North America, offer us a living icon of one who became less so Christ would become more. All of his efforts and talents

were offered for the building up of the body of Christ in this land. By seeking to serve Christ first, he developed his gifts and talents to the extent that he became one of the outstanding renaissance figures of the nineteenth century. By humbling himself for the sake of the Gospel he became the first hierarch to serve the Orthodox Church in North America.

As we honor our graduates, all of us need to reflect on the life of Saint Innocent if we are to hear beyond the many and confusing voices virtually claiming to save the Church of Christ. Like the Baptist and all the true holy men and women of the Church, St. Innocent recognized only one Savior. And to that Savior, who is the crucified and risen Lord, Saint Innocent offered his entire life. His words and deeds complemented each other so that he was recognized as a man without guile. How St. Innocent lived was just as convincing as the words he wrote and spoke in guiding new people and their cultures into the body of Christ.

All of us who have come together on this joyous day are recipients of the missionary legacy of St. Innocent. But to

truly understand and value what we have received we must begin to identify ourselves as a missionary community. We must begin to see ourselves, and therefore our Church, as being entrusted to spread the Gospel to a secular environment that is multi-ethnic and multicultural. By reflecting on the accomplishments of St. Innocent we need the courage and humility to become less so that Christ's body may increase in its faith and service to this land and all the world. For it is with increased faith and service that the one voice of Christ will be clearly and powerfully proclaimed. And it is by this voice that new people and new cultures will be brought into the fellowship of the saints. This is the mandate of the Gospel. This is the way of the Cross which pours out the joy of the Resurrection upon all the world. Let us take heed and follow the example set forth for us by our Father among the Saints, St. Innocent of Alaska, Evangelizer of the Aleuts and Apostle to America.

O Holy Father INNOCENT, pray unto God for us!



Father Gregory Havrilak

Archpriest Gregory Havrilak Gives 1997 Commencement Address

Last week newspapers across the country reported how graduating seniors at Colby College, a small liberal arts school in Maine, were afforded a relatively rare perk: they were allowed to select their commencement speaker. In the past they were able to secure such heavy hitters as George Bush and Bob Dole. So who did the 450 Colby seniors rate number one on their wish list this year? "Adam Sandler," said the senior class president, referring to the young comedian who gained fame as a cast member on NBC's "Saturday Night Live." "Sandler declined," said the spokesman, "but it was a sad commentary. My classmates were evaluating a person's status and personality, not his ability to give a good speech. They wanted a celebrity."

Judging by the list of commencement speakers across the country, this is the case with other schools. Wellesley College landed Oprah Winfrey. The University of Vermont lucked into Whoopi Goldberg. Marymount College was able to secure Kathie Lee Gifford.

While prominent politicians and academicians have long been part of big school graduations, students and administrators say that in recent years more colleges and universities have gravitated

to celebrities. According to a professor of communications at Northwestern University, today's graduations have become an extension of entertainment; they are about celebrity and visibility. For this reason those at Ohio University were thrilled to have Matt Lauer, host of the "Today" show on NBC, as their commencement speaker. Others receiving honorary degrees this year are Hillary Rodham Clinton, Bruce Willis, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jerry Seinfeld, and Dan Aykroyd. While all of this may be true at Wellesley College or Ohio State, we can enjoy some comfort this afternoon that commencement at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, has not followed the trend.

With profound joy and deep humility I stand here today on the grounds of my *alma mater* to address the graduating class of 1997. I was pleased to accept the kind invitation from His Eminence last week to be a part of this academic convocation today, a "feast of theology," according to one very prominent Orthodox theologian.

It was thirty years ago this month that I received a letter from the Registrar of St. Tikhon's Seminary, informing me that my application had been received and processed, and that I was accepted for

enrollment in the fall. The letter was signed by the Rev. Joseph Swaiako. But the letter also informed me of a new development at St. Tikhon's which, to be honest, frightened me somewhat. It said that St. Tikhon's Seminary was undergoing a major transformation in curriculum and programs, and that I should plan to stay for five years of study, not four. These five years of study would include matriculation at a local college, in subject areas for which the seminary was not equipped to offer instruction. The purpose of this new program of study was to elevate St. Tikhon's into a degree-granting institution, recognized and approved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and eventually by an appropriate accrediting agency. Having this goal in mind, the seminary was chartered by the state in 1967, the faculty was enhanced, major work was begun to enlarge and update the library, and a massive building program was undertaken. A new class of fifteen freshmen arrived here in the autumn of 1967. The entire student population was over fifty.

When classes began that September the freshman class studied no theology, no scripture, no liturgics. One of my classmates, when perusing the freshman

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class schedule for the first time, shouted, "Biology, English, World History — I didn't come here to take these courses. I came here to be a priest."

To say that some anxiety existed among the student body would be an understatement. The upper classes looked at the newcomers, who were now taking secular courses at a theological seminary, with suspicion. Many alumni were afraid that St. Tikhon's would never be the same again. How could students be excused from Vigil in order to attend class at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, or Marywood College in Scranton? How was it possible to arrange someone's seminary work schedule in order to accommodate a class schedule off campus? There was tension.

How was it possible to combine a program in theology, which included a full liturgical cycle and campus responsibilities, with a concomitant academic program at the university? Could this be done? Was this the direction St. Tikhon's Seminary wanted to go?

In planning for the future development of St. Tikhon's Seminary in the 1960s, it appeared that a balance had to be found in juxtaposing these two approaches to theological education. A model had to be found. Among the martyrs and confessors of the Church, our ecclesiastical history includes several luminaries whose exemplary life and theological achievements place them high above the rest. The two Church Fathers I will focus upon today provide not only an exciting paradigm for a solid and workable theological education, but their years of study present an excellent example of successfully combining a solid theological and secular education, as was the practice in the mid-fourth century.

Saint Basil left for Caesarea in the year 343 A.D. to study. We know this from the most excellent chronology of his education by his close friend, Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. In fact, Gregory and his brother were already in Caesarea studying under a man named Carterius, who was one of the instructors of Saint John Chrysostom. It was in Caesarea that a lifelong relationship began between

Basil and Gregory. The immediate friendship they enjoyed, however, was short-lived, as Basil moved from Caesarea to Constantinople to continue his education. A short time later Gregory also left Caesarea, but decided to study in Alexandria. So Gregory became a student in Alexandria while Athanasius was the bishop there and Didymus ran the famous catechetical school. In a short time Gregory became weary of his stay in Alexandria and of his studies there and longed for the intellectual and cultural stimulation of Athens. Gregory traveled to Athens. And in 351 Basil arrived there and the two friends were reunited in Athens once again. Here the two closest of friends would enter a period of serious study and prayer.

*My friends, there
is no shortcut to the
altar of God.*

In outlining the education of Saint Basil, Saint Gregory lists the major cities where his friend studied: "Caesarea — the metropolis of letters; to Byzantium, the imperial city, for it was distinguished by the eminence of its rhetorical and philosophic teachers; to Athens, a city truly of gold." Now, Gregory came to Athens first, and when Basil arrived an interesting development ensues: they become competitive in their studies, trying to out-learn one another. In this great city of learning, Gregory wrote, "The first of our advantages is education. We must not dishonor education," he said, "because some men are pleased to do so, but rather suppose such men to be boorish and uneducated . . ."

Their most intimate friendship was deepened further in Athens by their common goal: "in pursuit of letters." And they respected each other with healthy, stiff competitive learning. "We struggled," Saint Gregory wrote, "not to gain the first place for ourselves, but to yield it to the other. We seemed to have

one soul, inhabiting two bodies." At this point Saint Gregory writes about the two roads they both must follow in completing their education.

Athens, just like any major city of the day, provided numerous distractions for students of any discipline. There were theaters, parties, feasts, assemblies — city life in all its splendor for anyone interested in these worldly distractions. In fact, as Saint Basil arrived in the city, he was subjected to the local custom reserved for newcomers to the university, what perhaps we might today call "initiation" or even "hazing." Gregory protected his friend from these public demonstrations near the bathhouses, as Basil became the only undergraduate to escape this embarrassing spectacle. Instead, Basil and Gregory decided to refrain from these activities and to follow two roads: one, which led them to the Church with its holy teachers, and the other road, which took them to their university lectures. In Athens the two Cappadocians were well-known among their contemporaries for three things: their diligence and success in work; their spotless and devout life; and their close mutual affection. As in any university town, Athens had many college-type fraternities. Both Basil and Gregory participated to a certain degree in the activities of these organizations. Among their professors was a teacher named Prohaerius, an Armenian Christian, and someone named Himerius, who was a pagan. What great students they were, in secular studies at the university, and in theology with the holy men who lectured at the Church. Both of their professors mentioned exercised an enormous influence on their lives.

Each of you graduating seniors today, I am certain, can look back upon his days at St. Tikhon's and give thanks for that one professor, who, perhaps more than anyone else, became a personal mentor, someone especially close to you throughout your seminary days. Among the distinguished faculty members who walked these hallowed halls throughout the years were classic names still heard here and about: professors Meyevsky, Leonty,

Kaminsky, Nicholai, Victorin, and Kiprian. As you leave this institution today you will, without a doubt, also carry in your hearts the names of professors present today, who provided you with a solid foundation upon which to build your ministry in the Church. Throughout my twenty years of parish ministry, I can still recall how many times I appealed to those three-hour marathons in pastoral theology with +Fr. Vladimir Borichevsky, of blessed memory. The presentations and sometimes heated discussions in that class helped get me through many arduous parish council meetings decades later.

Earlier I spoke of how my class in 1967 was the first group required to spend five years in this institution. When you are young, as were Saint Basil and Saint Gregory when they arrived in Athens, five years seems like an eternity. But do you know how long Gregory of Nazianzus remained in Athens to study? He was eighteen when he arrived, and did not leave the ancient city until he was over thirty. And this followed previous study in Caesarea and Alexandria.

I was away from St. Tikhon's for only seven years, working as a parish priest

in New York City, when, at that time, Bishop Herman invited me to join the faculty. Every Friday morning during the school year, from 1979 to 1985, I drove three hours from New York to South Canaan, taught classes until three o'clock in the afternoon, and returned to the city that same day. Those days were very special to me for several reasons. First, it provided an opportunity to engage in theological discourse and honest exchange of fresh ideas with young minds. But more importantly, there was always that opportunity to attend Church services, or to meet one of monastics on the monastery grounds, to talk about anything and everything.

In my work today for the Orthodox Church in America, I have been blessed to see our Church from many sides. From the perspective of theological education, following the example mentioned earlier of Saint Basil the Great and Saint Gregory the Theologian, nothing can take the place of a formal theological education. Each week I receive countless phone calls and e-mail messages from men who are interested in sacramental ordination. Many of these inquiries include a request for a shortcut to the

priesthood. In other words, they do not want to go to the seminary. My friends, there is no shortcut to the altar of God. In the Orthodox Church in America, if you want to become a priest, you have to graduate from an Orthodox School of Theology.

Yes, in those thirty years since the seminary was chartered and approved by the State as an institution of higher learning, in 1988 the Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania approved St. Tikhon's as a degree-granting institution.

In whatever capacity you are called to serve the Church, the foundation provided by this institution will not crumble. As you leave St. Tikhon's Seminary today, you must, first of all, be grateful to God who has called you to this holy place, where the spiritual food of its rich liturgical life has nourished you these past years, and where the scholarship and theological discipline of its faculty has taken you from Glory to Glory.

To the graduating class of 1997 of St. Tikhon's Seminary, congratulations, and may our Lord grant you many years of fruitful work in His Vineyard. Thank you.



Faculty, trustees, and graduates

Russian Child Finds Help in Harrisburg

To Christ the Saviour Church in Harrisburg came little Maksym Sadov and his mother Yelena while awaiting his cardiac surgery and while recuperating afterwards. The pair had traveled all the way from Samar, formerly Kuybishev, in south-central Russia. Their long journey had as its destination Hershey Medical Center. At the hospital and at church Maksym made many friends. Many prayers were said for the three-and-a-half year old. The operation on his heart, which involved five corrections, was an unqualified success. Praise be to God!

How did it happen that this Russian boy came to central Pennsylvania?

It all started seven years ago, when another mother in Samara was seeking medical help for her ailing child. Faya Kim's daughter Sveta was two at the time. She was told about an international helping organization called Gift of Life. Through the Russian Gift of Life, Sveta and her mother were brought to the U.S. for heart surgery when the girl was three. The successful operation motivated the mother to serve as a contact person in her corner of the world for any mother whose child had a heart problem needing surgery.

In time, Yelena Sadova found Faya Kim. Maksym was born in 1993 with Tetralogy of Fallot, which is a combination of problems within the heart. Maksym was a twin, but his brother Ilya did not have the defect. At the time the Russian Gift of Life program was not in a position to accept Maksym as a candidate. Despite the setback, Yelena did not give up hope. It turned out that God had another way for Maksym to come here.

An American volunteer in the Russian Gift of Life program, Natalia Lusin, heard about Maksym from Faya Kim. Natalia was so touched by the case that she sought information about similar helping organizations that might possibly aid Maksym.

One such organization was Variety Clubs International, which has fifty-five chapter groups around the world, includ-



l. to r.: Helen Henry and daughter Sasha, Ellen Motoviloff Miller, Fr. Michael Kovach, Maksym Sadov, Yelena Sadova, Fr. Daniel Ressetar, Yelena Sarkisova

ing in Russia. The organization's most vital program is its Children's Lifeline. Like Gift of Life, Lifeline permits desperate parents to get specialized surgical and medical treatments for otherwise hopeless children. Natalia, who lives in Great Neck on Long Island in New York, contacted Lifeline and got the process started.

Maksym's case history, the diagnosis of his problem, and other medical data were transmitted for evaluation. With the prognosis for success high, the case was then matched with an affiliated hospital where the surgery could best be performed. As soon as Hershey Medical Center was selected, Lifeline began to arrange for the travel, lodging, and support services. Lifeline and the cooperating medical facility absorb all costs. The physicians and surgeons donate their services.

Natalia, who is a member of Our Lady of Kazan Orthodox Church in Sea Cliff on Long Island, assisted Lifeline in finding an Orthodox church near Hershey, one with some Russian-speaking

people who could help Yelena through the difficult days ahead. Because Yelena's support structure was far away, the fact that some of the people who filled in could speak her language was of comfort to her. All the parishioners of Christ the Saviour, not just those of Russian background, opened their hearts to Yelena and Maksym as soon as they arrived in April of this year. Yelena was overwhelmed by the show of support and love she received. She marveled that strangers could be so giving and caring. She said that she never dreamed it could be so.

The Very Rev. Daniel D. Ressetar organized whatever help was needed. Besides Matushka Theodora Ressetar, three Yelenas in the parish were among the Russian-speaking helpers — Helen Henry, Ellen Motoviloff Miller, and Yelena Sarkisova. Another parishioner, John Pylypciw, happens to work in the pediatric intensive care unit at Hershey Medical Center, right where Maksym would be after the surgery. It was performed on May 20. John's children be-

came instant friends with Maksym and visited him in the hospital during the recovery. When the charge nurse visited Maksym's bedside anticipating any questions Yelena might have, there appeared another parishioner, Knara Rzayeva, who works in the hospital's housekeeping department, to act as translator.

Dr. Mark Tulchinsky, on the staff of Hershey Medical Center, and himself an immigrant from Russia, volunteered to let Yelena and Maksym stay at his family's home near the Medical Center in the weeks before the surgery. Dr. Tulchinsky and his parents, Dr. Yeliazar and Mrs. Lara Tulchinsky, became like family to Yelena. Their neighbor was Betty Pellegrini, another parishioner who with her husband helped with transportation for Yelena and Maksym.

After the surgery, mother and child stayed with another Russian-speaking doctor, Dr. Barbara Sumbatian. She and other members of her family are parishioners of Christ the Saviour. Helen and David, Barbara's young children, also became instant playmates. From their home it was only a short drive to church.

For the two weeks before they left on June 16, the Sadovs stayed at a residence in the church's "backyard." By this time Maksym was well on his way to normalcy. Visits with parishioners were easy and frequent at the convenient location. Many presents were brought there, necessitating the purchase of an additional suitcase to take all the gifts back home.

Warren Smith was the pediatric social worker at Hershey assigned to Maksym and Yelena. His job was to help them adjust to the hospital situation, to smoothe the way, to handle any problems that came up. According to Mr. Smith, most of the 35 to 40 children whom Lifeline has sent to Hershey Medical Center have been from Central and South American countries. Only recently have cases from Russia and the former Yugoslavia come to Hershey. Warren has some knowledge of Spanish but knows only a few words in Russian. Nevertheless, because he has worked with so many foreign mothers who have gone through the same thing, he knows that what they go through is common to all — the tension, the pressure, the anxiety. Communica-



Dimitri Ressetar, grandson of Fr. Daniel, lets Maksym take a ride in his jeep while his father Gregory Ressetar, his grandfather, and his uncle Nicholas Ressetar look on.



Home from the hospital, a recovering Maksym talks animatedly with Matushka Theodora Ressetar at the parish picnic.

tion occurs even without a translator around. Yelena also quickly picked up on many English words.

Each person who met Maksym has his or her own favorite memory of the little guy. I remember when his mom showed me a packet of pictures of their life back in Samara. Maksym right away hurried over when the top photo was one of him with his mom, dad, and brother. The picture apparently stirred up a longing for the close family life that has been interrupted by the trip. He tenderly laid his cheek against the glossy surface and cooed "Papa" "Ilya" in the most loving tone I have ever heard a child express.

Now Maksym and his family are one again. Even at his young age, he has a strong sense of who he is. And now he has a future.

We thank God for sending him to our church for a little while. Let each of us not take health for granted but realize anew that it is a gift from God.

—Ellen Motoviloff Miller

For more information on the programs mentioned, you can write to:

Variety Children's Lifeline, 350 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1119, New York, NY 10118.

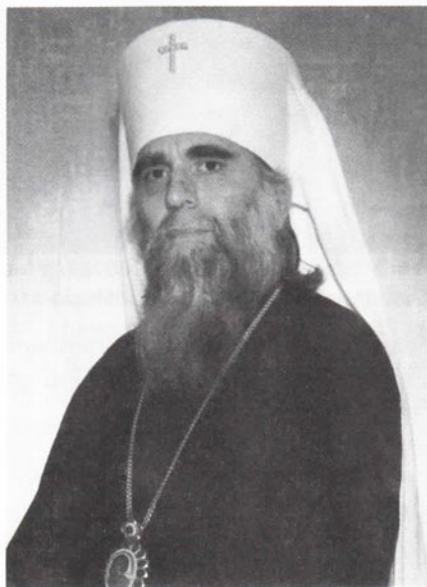
Russian Gift of Life, PO Box 403, Sea Cliff, NY 11579.

Newly Reposed Metropolitan Vladimir Interred at St. Tikhon's Mausoleum



His Eminence, Metropolitan VLADIMIR (Nagosky), retired bishop of our Church, died peacefully during his sleep early in the morning on August 2, 1997 at the home of his sister, Anna Mack, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, following a long bout with cancer.

Metropolitan Vladimir was born on March 6, 1922, in Donora, Pennsylvania, receiving the name Basil at baptism. Soon after his birth, his parents, immigrants from Galicia, moved their family to Cleveland, Ohio, settling down across the street from the St. Theodosius Cathedral. As a child, Metropolitan Vladimir studied under the Right Rev. Jason Kappanadze, later assisting him in the parish office. After serving in the armed forces during World War II and then in the civil service of the United States government both here and abroad for five and a half years, he received his undergraduate degree from Western Reserve University in Cleveland. He continued his education, spending two summers at Vermont's Middlebury College, one year at Columbia University, and one



Metropolitan Vladimir

year at the University of Vienna. He then entered St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and, while a student there, he was ordained to the diaconate. Upon completion of his studies in 1959, he was ordained to the priesthood and assigned to Alaska, serving as a mission-

ary priest first in St. Michael's Cathedral in Sitka, and later, in Unalaska, along the Aleutian Chain. In 1961, Father Basil took monastics vows, receiving the name Vladimir. On October 14, 1962, Hieromonk Vladimir was consecrated Bishop of Kyoto, Japan, auxiliary to the Archbishop of Tokyo and, in 1964, the Great Council of Bishops appointed him Ruling Bishop of Tokyo and Japan. In March 1970, when the Church of Japan received its autonomy from the Moscow Patriarchate, the title of Metropolitan was bestowed upon Bishop Vladimir.

In March of 1972 he received a canonical release from the Moscow Patriarchate and returned to the United States as assistant to Archbishop John of San Francisco. He became ruling bishop of the Diocese of San Francisco and the Western United States in 1974 upon the retirement of Archbishop John. After serving briefly in this capacity, Metropolitan Vladimir, in July of 1975, was granted a leave of absence due to poor health.

Funeral and Interment

Following Metropolitan Vladimir's repose, a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was served on Thursday, August 2, at 9 a.m., at Saints Peter and Paul Church in Phoenix, Arizona, with His Grace, Bishop Tikhon officiating. This was followed by the burial service. Metropolitan Vladimir's earthly remains were interred at St. Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, Pa., on Saturday, August 9, the feast of St. Herman of Alaska. The Divine Liturgy was celebrated at 8 a.m., and later that morning a memorial service was held followed by the burial. During the service, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius offered these words:

"I am thankful that I can be here today, as we prepare the body of His Eminence, Metropolitan Vladimir, for burial. When I was notified of his death, I was far away in Ukraine, not far from where His Eminence's forefathers, and mine, left to come to America in search of a better life. Reflecting on Metropolitan Vladimir's life, however — thinking back to when I first met him when we were both still seminarians — it struck me that while we all have roots in specific places on earth, we truly are but sojourners on the face of the earth, waiting patiently for that time when we will be with God in His Kingdom.

"Metropolitan Vladimir's life was a life of pilgrimage — born of immigrant parents in western Pennsylvania, serving in the Army and civil service around the world, studying at seminary, pastoring communities in Alaska, serving as archpastor in Japan and then the United States and Canada — he followed God's call wherever that call took him.

"In the latter portion of his life, Metropolitan Vladimir was called by God to a different kind of pilgrimage. His Eminence suffered greatly in illness and infirmity — ill health robbed him of the ability to continue his archpastoral labors, but led him to a different path of Christian witness. In the latter portion of his life, Metropolitan Vladimir bore witness to the Gospel of Christ by faithfulness to Christ in the face of his own sufferings. This too is a form of Christian witness.

"Metropolitan Vladimir's falling asleep in the midst of our celebration of

the feasts of Transfiguration and Saint Herman, and in the midst of our preparation for the feast of Dormition, reminds us forcefully of what we are all called to do with our lives. We are all called to transfigure our own lives through ascetic effort and humble acceptance of God's will, as St. Herman did, so that like the Mother of God we might (as we sing in the kontakion of the Feast of the Dormition) be 'translated to life by the One who dwelt in her virginal womb.'

"There is a saying of a holy man that 'life is given us that we may learn to die

well.' As we now bear the body of our brother and father VLADIMIR, beloved of God, to the place where it will await the Second Coming of Christ that we all are awaiting, let us meditate on His Eminence's life of pilgrimage. Let us also seek to be pilgrims, preparing ourselves each day for that day when we too will face that final part of our journey on the way to the Kingdom of Heaven.

"May Metropolitan Vladimir's soul dwell with the blessed! May his memory be eternal!"



Commentary on the First Epistle of Saint John the Theologian

by Saint Justin (Popovich)

Part VIII

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Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. (5:1)

Faith in Christ as Messiah and Saviour of the world is faith in Him as God and Lord; in this faith are found all the reasons for an unlimited love towards Christ. Thus, in fact, faith and love are two energies in one, two virtues in one: faith in Christ as God and Savior is also love of Christ as God and Savior — and love towards Christ God and Savior is also faith in Christ as God and Saviour. Yea, this very thing is faith in Christ, and it is this alone that can be called faith in Christ, Christianity, and Christian Faith. In

the same manner, he alone loves Christ who loves Him as God and Savior, and not the one who loves in Him less than God, less than a Saviour. Only such a love is truly love of Christ. It is by such a faith in Christ, by such a love towards Christ, that in truth man can be born of God with all his being, for with all his being he lives in God and because of God. This is the good news of the holy words of the Holy Evangelist.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. (5:2)

Here is what completes what we have commented above (I John 4:20-21); the Holy Evangelist explains why we must love men, our brothers: we must love them because they are children of God — which means that they are in the image of God, that they are divine beings, bearers of divine holiness and value; we must love them because they are born of God, and for this reason they resemble God.

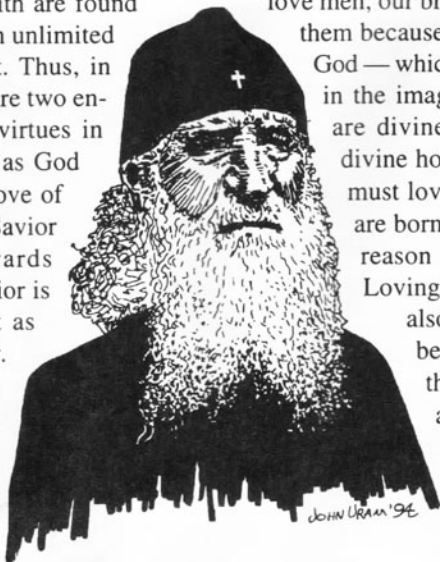
Loving Christ God we love also — through Him and because of Him — all that is divine in man, all that he has that is immortal, all that in him is in the image of the eternal and divinely-human Christ. We cannot

love men with a true love if we do not love them for these reasons — any other love is a pseudo-love, a so-called love which quickly leads to non-love, to hatred towards men. True love of man is a consequence of love of God, and the love of God increases by the keeping of the commandments of God. Only God can give to man the divine energy and the perseverance which permit him to love men — even in their sins — and to love

them without any contempt or disgust — for it would be too easy to feel disgust for man under the pretext of his corruption, his stench, or his rottenness.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. (5:3)

To love God signifies to live by the divine commandments. Without divine help, this is a difficult and almost impossible thing, but with effort and in labor, God gives His energies to man so that he might fulfill His commandments, and He gives them in the measure of this labor, for the more man works for the fulfillment of the commandments of God, the more God gives him divine energies — until that time when the fulfillment of the commandments of God becomes an easy task for him. Among the hardest workers, among athletes, it happens to some of them that God Himself fulfills His commandments in them — in them is fulfilled to the letter the word of the Holy Apostle: *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure* (Philippians 2:13). Love always creates in the soul a joyous disposition: by loving with joy, he fulfills the wishes of the beloved, often even at the cost of the greatest sacrifices. For the man who loves the Lord Christ, His commandments are not difficult; now the one who loves Him is the one who truly believes in Him as his God



and Lord, and the man-befriending God, Christ the Lord, ever gives this man His divine energies in abundance — for it is through them that he easily fulfills His Divine commandments.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (5:4-5)

Thus the world, as slave to sin, to death, and to the devil, as “kingdom of the devil,” as kingdom of death (Hebrews 2:14), is as it were against God, is as something which continually fights against God. There can be no doubt: the alliance of sin, of death, and of the devil is a terrifying force, stronger than any man, stronger than each man separately, stronger than all men together. In our human world, only the God-man, Christ, revealed Himself as stronger than this triple alliance: it is He Himself Who destroyed the kingdom of death, it is He Who crushed the devil and annihilated sin. Now, it is also He Who gives to every man who believes in Him as God and Savior the divine-human energy of victory, which is capable of vanquishing the kingdom of death, of sin, and of the devil — the world. In reality, only the Christian is the true victor in this world, for he overcomes the greatest enemy of the human race, the three-headed enemy: sin, death, and the devil. Without the Lord Jesus and His disciples, this world would be, and would forever remain, the kingdom of death; the tyranny that rules over this empire is the greatest devourer of men: it is the tyranny of sin, of evil and of the devil — it is such in truth for all those who do not believe in Christ as the only and unique God, as the only and true Savior of the human race.

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. (5:6)

Behold those things with which Jesus testifies that He, while man, is the Son

of God: by water, by blood and by the Spirit. Being both man and Son of God, He united in Himself that which is most important in heaven and that which is most important on earth: the Spirit of truth, with water and blood — and it is thus that He became the Savior: by the heavenly, He illumined the earthly; by the Divine, the human. In this manner He saved the human race from sin, from death and from the devil. Water is the most widespread of the elements of this world, and by sanctifying it, the Savior illumined the principle element of man’s body. By showing that it is incorruptible from the moment that it is sanctified by the Holy Spirit and in His Name, He indicated that this holds for the human body as well. Blood is the symbol of life and of the very energy of life: the soul itself is in blood. Now, in becoming man — that is, flesh and blood, — the Savior sanctified this principle element of life: He made it blood of God, blood of the Lord — and above all in the holy Eucharist. He thus revealed that the body also is “for the Lord” — for immortality, for eternal life. He bore witness to this and fulfilled it definitely when He ascended to heaven in His holy body — to sit eternally at the right hand of the Father. All this He accomplished by His Spirit, by the Holy Spirit, by *the Spirit of truth*. Indeed, it is through the Holy Spirit that witness is continually borne in the life of the Church, for the Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. It is the Holy Spirit who bears the principal witness concerning Jesus Christ as Son of God and Savior, for without ceasing, throughout the ages, He saves in the Church all those who believe in Jesus Christ. It is He, the Spirit of Truth, who reveals to us, who tells us, who confirms for us, the entire truth concerning Jesus, the God-man and Savior. By His sanctifying energy He reveals that He is the Holy Spirit, *the Spirit of Truth* and the truth itself, God Himself and the life-giving Lord: by sanctifying the dead nature of water, He makes it incorruptible; He transforms wine into the blood of Christ the Lord in the holy Mystery of the Eucharist — how much more does He will to, and can He, sanctify man and his living soul created in the image of God. Concerning Jesus, it is Truth itself which

bears witness: the Holy Spirit; for the Second and Third Persons of the Holy Trinity are equally the Truth, a single and same and eternal Truth, formed in the image of the two divine and eternal Persons. It is this Truth which makes truthful all the witnesses who bear witness to Jesus on earth, for it consists entirely in a demonstration of the Spirit and of power (I Corinthians 2:4). This is what is declared by the Spirit-bearing Apostles: *We are His witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Spirit, which God hath given to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32). The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit (Romans 8:16).*

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. (5:7)

Here we find all the truth concerning the triune Divinity — the Divinity which is not accessible to reason but is open to experience: divine reality is infinitely more profound, broader, and higher than all that man can think, know, and perceive. Moreover, this is very natural since even the masterpiece of this earthly and material world is inconceivably larger, inconceivably more profound and more vast than human knowledge: life itself, that reality which we live as living human beings, is much broader, more profound, and higher than our logic and human reason — even though this is for us the most immediate and most genuine reality that exists. The immense and universal ocean of life little by little infiltrates even unto the most minute capillaries of our conscience — and this ocean itself overflows and floods even unto those spaces that know no end or limit. On an even higher level, this holds true for the life and the divine realities of the Most Holy Triune Divinity, concerning which we know only that which has been given to us concretely through experience — and certainly much has been given us through the incarnation of God the Word and by the abiding of the Holy Spirit in the Divine-human body of the Church. We have been given all that we need to know about, all that we

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St. Justin Popovich

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need to receive from, the triple-sunned Divinity so that we might, as human beings, be saved from sin, from death, and from the devil, and to be able — through the holy mysteries and the holy virtues — to reproduce its divine perfection: to become Christ, to become Spirit, to become God — in a word: to become Trinity. God is a tripersonal Being: this is the reality that men continually live in the Church — for the Church continually lives from the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. This is the universal truth that was revealed in the God-man — and in the Church, this truth is completely fulfilled: of this does the entire life of the Church bear witness, given by God but always real; she bears witness to it through material, tangible, and visible acts, which are earthly, incontestable, and logical realities. It is concerning them that the holy Evangelist announces to us the good news:

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (5:8)

It is above all in the God-man that these *three* became perfectly *one*: God, the eternal *Spirit*, became man, He united himself to *flesh* and to blood and He revealed that there is no true man — no perfect man — save in a complete union with God. Such was the Lord Christ, not only in Himself, but also for the entire human race: by transforming Himself into a Church He gave to all men all the necessary powers so that with the aid of those powers they might — if they so will — progressively transform themselves into perfect human beings, by living through the God-man and in the God-man — and especially through the holy mystery of Communion. For Holy Communion is nothing else than the holy mystery wherein God — concretely and in reality — incarnates Himself in man. And behold how man obtains the most real and most convincing witness of this: it is through union with God that man is truly man, through life in God, through union with God, by a continuous life in God, by the continual incarnation in one-

self of the holy and divine powers given by the grace of God.

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. (5:9-10)

Such is the divine witness concerning the God-man and, through Him, the Holy Trinity. Every man, if he so desires, can verify it by his personal experience, by his personal perception, by his personal life. Everything by which the All-powerful and omniscient God was able

The proof that Jesus is God and Savior lies in this: that He gave eternal life to the human race: He destroyed death and *hath given to us eternal life.*

to testify that Jesus is truly God and Savior has borne witness to this. No other truth or reality of the human world has as many witnesses as do these divine-human realities and truths, and the man who does not receive this divine witness concerning Jesus — a witness which is nevertheless so perfect and so convincing — makes known by this very fact that he considers God to be a liar. Now, therein truly lies the greatest fall that a human soul can make. In reality, this fall resembles the fall of Judas, for the latter, in the presence of so many convincing — so totally convincing — witnesses, did not wish to believe in Jesus as God and Savior. The truth nevertheless jumps out for our eyes to see: every divine and human reason to believe in Jesus as God and Savior has been given to the human race by the Person and the work of the God-man, in His Gospel, in His Church, in His saints. In truth, there is no excuse for any man not to believe in Christ (cf. John 15:22-24). He who believes in Christ — with all his heart,

with all his soul, with all his mind, with all his strength — perceives all the divine and human witnesses to Jesus, as God and as unique Savior of the world, as supreme reality. In his soul, this reality becomes the fullness of reality: he lives by it, he thinks by it, he feels by it; all his thoughts flow together into a total thought, all his feelings into one — into one total feeling. This is that “all-thought,” this is that “all-feeling”: Christ is my Savior and my God, my Savior and my Paradise, my life, my truth, my love, my joy, my eternity — all that is mine and all the things in all the worlds. Yea, one thing is necessary for us: a sincere and personal encounter with the Lord Jesus — but it is also necessary that a man believe in Him and that he experience all of that. Thus did the Samaritans have the experience of a personal relation with Christ the Lord, and thus did they declare to the Samaritan Woman who had sent them to Jesus: *Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world* (John 4:42). The man who lives by faith in the Lord Christ gathers in himself a totally convincing and all-powerful witness concerning Jesus as God and Savior — a witness which no force can deprive him of. The Holy Evangelist announces to us these glad tidings: *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. (5:11-12)

The entirety of the glad tidings of life is in these words, and in them all the witnesses are summed up in a single witness. The proof that Jesus is God and Savior lies in this: that He gave eternal life to the human race: He destroyed death and *hath given to us eternal life.* This *new life* which He gives is the proof and the witness that death is truly vanquished, annihilated, shattered. In the God-man there is no death, there is no

sin, for in Him is life eternal: as long as he does not believe in the Lord Christ, man remains continually in death, he lives in death, he is dead to all that brings about true life. But by faith in Him, man comes to life, he resurrects from among the dead, he feels the divine joy of life — the meaning of life and the goal of life. Until then, man did not truly know what life was, he could not conceive this divine value. *And this eternal life is in his Son.* In order for man to feel this, he must be *in the Son of God*, within His divine-human body, in the Church, incorporated as a living cell nourished by Him. Outside of Him, outside of the Church, everything is death itself, everything is nothing but corpses — and this is truly the kingdom of death, of sin, and of the devil. As long as man has not come to this living awareness of the God-man, Christ, he does not have life and he does not know what life is in reality; only this living awareness of God can bring to man the testimony that he is truly alive. Now, this awareness he acquires by faith in the Lord Jesus, and by the other holy virtues he perfects it in love, he fulfills it, and transforms it into an eternal awareness of *eternal* life. The man who has acquired such awareness feels at every moment of his earthly life that he is eternal, that he is full of eternal life — and it is for this reason that he can vanquish all that is mortal, all that leads to death. Do you wish to know if you are living or dead, dead before death? You can easily verify this: if you believe in Christ God, you are living; if you do not believe in Him, you are dead. If you do not have Christ God in your soul, you are dead of the most sinister death, even if you consider yourself to be immortal — and then, one can with good reason apply to you these words of reprobation from the Apocalypse: *Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead* (Apocalypse 3:1).

To be continued.

[Editor's note: The last part of 1 John 5:7 and the beginning of verse 8, called the "Johannine comma," consists of the the words "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth." The comma is not found in Greek manuscripts of 1 John from before the 15th century, and was not

known to the Greek Fathers. It is absent from all pre-1500 copies of the New Testament in Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Slavonic. First cited by the 4th century Spanish heresiarch Priscillian, it later appeared as a marginal addition in certain Latin manuscripts of the NT and still later was incorporated into the text. From there it found its way into a few Greek manu-

"This Reality of Orthodoxy in America"

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Spirit, Whom therefore we must possess. We even have to know to how to take risks. As you know, theologians say that when God created the world he assumed a risk upon his shoulders because he placed some persons endowed with freedom before His absolute freedom. We too must know how to take a risk in order to be able to make progress, to accomplish something positive. If we do not know how to take a risk, that means that we are afraid — and those who waver have no part of the Kingdom of God, says St. Apostle Paul — we become complacent in our minute [spheres of] comfort.

Once again, to avoid any misunderstanding, I have nothing against the traditional Synods and Patriarchates. On the contrary, I am expressing here a reality which you are living daily, and which I myself have ignored prior to my coming here. So, it seems to me — perhaps you have reached it, here — and maybe you have reached this moment a long time ago — the moment when a well-thought, well-written document should be drafted — documented historically, describing today's reality, the organization you wish to have in America and the future you foresee — and then make it known to all the Orthodox. I did not come to give you "precious indications," but some impetus and courage, and to tell you that if you aspire to an American Orthodoxy you desire a good thing.

Let me urge you to try at all levels to understand the sin of today's man. Our own sins that [we commit] when we come together are different than when we are alone. Proceed with wisdom, insistence, perseverance toward the holy ideal which you have. It seems to me that the accent falls always on the spiritual

scripts and eventually into most modern translations. See Constantine Siamakis, *Transmission of the Text of the Holy Bible* (Belmont, Mass.: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, c1997), p. 40; also the *Anchor Bible* volume on the Epistles of John, Appendix 4. The phrase is printed in smaller type in modern editions issued by the Church of Greece.]

work of the parish. You are gathered here, clergy, under a bishop, responsible for a local community. Only inasmuch as these local parishes — and we as clergy are capable — witness for a pure and authentic Orthodoxy — shall we be credible to the world.

I feel that many times our parishes accept being reduced to some cultural, human clubs. We need to elevate the spiritual level of these communities, to the degree that they experience profoundly the life in Christ, in an authentic manner. Let's make all our faithful — from the first to the last — aware of what parish as community means — the liturgy, the prayer. Then, this reality in the Holy Spirit of the parish will help us all to grow.

I will stop here to leave room for some discussions and questions.

I thank you once again for the love with which you received me and please remember me and those whom God has entrusted to me in your prayers. Let's pray together for the unity of Orthodoxy and for the witness which all of Orthodoxy must offer in unity. For Orthodoxy is community in Faith, liturgy, and spirituality more than even Roman Catholicism, which although it seems to be united, is much more divided internally than we are. Unfortunately — speaking from an external perspective — Orthodoxy presents herself to the world in a condemnable way. The simple people first notice the exterior; and only later can one enter the interior of the faith where they can eventually appreciate it. But sadly enough, when they see how divided we are, they question our witness. May God help us to be true witnesses!

Thank you!

— translated by Priest Remus Grama.

Marriage as a Sacrament

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to grow stronger in the spiritual life:

"In marriage the festive joy of the first day should last for the whole of life: every day should be a feast day; every day husband and wife should appear to each other as new, extraordinary beings. The only way of achieving this: let both deepen their spiritual life, and strive hard in the task of self-development."¹¹

Something else that could be very beneficial for the continual safeguarding and strengthening of our marriages is a regular time when the spouses ask each other for forgiveness for whatever ways they may have upset, hurt, or disappointed each other — for whatever may have intruded upon the strength, joy, and purity of their marital relationship. This could be a standard part of the couple's daily prayers together — and we would very strongly urge each of you wives here today to have daily prayers with your husband, if at all possible. This should be a time of prayer for just the two of you, in addition to your regular family devotions including the children (if you have any), and in addition to your regular private prayer time. Certainly this would be something to talk about with your husband, if the two of you are not doing this already.

Asking each other's forgiveness might not be necessary every day, but at least it could be a standard part of your mutual prayers in preparation for receiving the Holy Eucharist. Perhaps this practice of regularly asking each other's forgiveness could have extra meaning for a couple if they think of it specifically as part of their renewal of the sacrament of marriage during which Christ knit them together in the first place. Through this kind of regular mutual asking of forgiveness, our marriages can be renewed and strengthened, as we have suggested, in a way analogous to how we understand the sacrament of confession to be an ongoing renewal of our baptism.

Another suggestion for married people would be for them to remember, whenever they attend a wedding, to apply the prayers to their own marriages, and to some extent to "re-live" their own

marriage ceremony. If your own wedding service was videotaped, it would be great to watch it together sometimes, perhaps at least once year at the time of your wedding anniversary. You may find, as we have, that your children will very much enjoy watching it as well. An alternative would be to read through the marriage service together every now and then, reaffirming your commitment to each other as you go. Looking through your wedding album periodically could also be very helpful along these same lines.

riage. Perhaps the place to start would be Ephesians 5:20-33, the Epistle reading for the Orthodox wedding service, which includes the profoundly meaningful words, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for her . . . [Marriage] is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." In the Old Testament you could start with the second chapter of Hosea, and go on to the whole book of the Song of Solomon. You will probably be amazed to discover how often the Scriptures describe the relation-



Lunch

Finally, we would like to suggest that married couples devote themselves to a study of the references in the Holy Scriptures concerning marriage. This can greatly deepen a couple's appreciation of the high regard that God has for mar-

ship of God with His chosen people in terms of marriage! This in itself affirms that God has a very high view of this wondrous, powerful, life-giving, life-enriching, indeed life-transforming sacrament, or mystery, of marriage.



Opening retreat led by Archbishop Herman inaugurates the Sixtieth Anniversary year of St. Tikhon's Seminary

¹¹ Fr. Alexander Elchaninov, *The Diary of a Russian Priest*, Helen Iswolsky, trans. (Crestwood, N. Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982), p. 91.

The Parish Council Member: Service and Leadership Within the Body of Christ

Talks Given at the Parish Council Conference,
Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Saturday, June 28, 1997

First Session: The Meaning of the Office and Its Responsibilities

As we gather together today for this Parish Council Conference, we are reminded that as members of Christ's Holy Church and, in particular, as members of our local parish councils, we are called, first and foremost, to serve our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. His words, His example and the examples of His Saints in the early Church are what we must diligently follow each and every day of our service to Him. This is what we will be seeking to rediscover, to be reminded of, at this Conference — what our Lord has taught us and what He wants us to do and how He wants us to live and serve Him in our parish communities.

The Mission of the Church

What were the words of our Lord to the members of His Church in its earliest days? These are recorded by the evangelists, Saint Luke and Saint Matthew. Jesus told His followers that they were to be *witnesses* for Him by their faith and lifestyle as Christians: "You shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the very ends of the earth" (Acts of the Apostles 1:8).

In addition, Christ gave His Church a Great Commission, a challenge that speaks to us nearly twenty centuries later, more than an ocean away from the Holy Land: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name

of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I will be with you always, even to the very end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

These verses from Scripture form the "mission statement" of our Church — we are to be Christ's witnesses, so that all the world will come to know Him and love Him and worship Him in His Holy Orthodox Church! We are to be instruments that make this happen, just as the earliest disciples were, making the Church in our time and our country possible.

Descriptions of the Early Church

You might ask, What was the early Church like? Was it huge cathedrals like Christ the Saviour in Moscow? Or "annual meetings" of the parish, known to us from days gone by? Or Sundays where affluent people opted to go elsewhere than to worship the Lord?

From St. Luke, once again, we read the following descriptions: "And they (the disciples) continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of the Bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). And, "So continuing daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking the Bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the



Opening moleben

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Parish Council Conference

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Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:46-47).

What was the essence of the early Church that we must strive to imitate, if we are to be true to Christ? It would seem: faithfulness to apostolic teaching, celebrating the Holy Eucharist, worshipping the Lord in prayer and sharing with one another in Christian love. These are the hallmarks of the Church of the first Christian generation. How close are our churches, and our own lives as parish leaders, to this model?

Membership in the Early Church

What constituted membership in the Church which Christ established? We know that His Church began with the Twelve Apostles who were "sent out" (cf. Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:14-19; and Luke 6:13-16). We know that they believed in Him and in His mission and helped Him in His ministry, both while they were together and long after His Resurrection and Ascension. I always tell my students that we all really ought to know their names by heart. Someday, one of our children, looking up at the iconostas, will ask us who they are. How embarrassing if we can't tell that child! We know that there was an even wider circle of Apostles — the Seventy (Luke 10:1; 17). Their names are listed in the Orthodox Study Bible, pages 818-19. And we know that there was an even wider circle of 120 disciples, who were "followers" (cf. Acts 1:15). They shared a common faith in Christ and worked in serving Him and His Church.

As the Church grew, it became necessary for the Apostles to have "assistants" to help "serve" the needs of the "members" of the Body of Christ. And so they appointed and ordained seven Deacons (cf. Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Among them, we know, were: Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas. As the Church spread beyond the Holy City of Jerusalem and the Apostles knew that they could not remain forever in those churches which they established, they appointed Bishops (literally "overseers") to succeed them in governing the Church. Saint Timothy and Saint Titus

were among the first (cf. 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9). And who could forget the first group of faithful to join the Church of Christ? Those 3,000 converts, inspired by Peter's sermon and filled with the Holy Spirit on that first Pentecost Sunday nearly 2,000 years ago! (cf. Acts 2:1-41).

The Spread of the Church

We know that the Church did not stay limited to the confines of the Holy City; it embraced the whole then-known world. It eventually brought an Empire to its knees, in the worship of the Lord. This expansion began from Jerusalem out into the "diaspora" of the Jews throughout the Hellenized world. It began with the stoning of Saint Stephen (Acts 7), and the persecution of the Church that followed, causing many to flee the ravages of men like Saul. In that diaspora, the message of Christ was spread to Jews and Gentiles alike. Remember the story of the conversion of Cornelius by St. Peter? Or the conversion of the Ethiopian man by St. Philip?

Organization of the Church

In that persecution of the early Church, the Apostles and the first Christians were literally thrown out of the Temple and the synagogues by the Jewish authorities and people. And so the early Church, the first-generation Christians, "met" in homes to pray and celebrate the Eucharist (cf. Acts 2; Rom. 16; Col. 4 and Phlm.) The Apostles left Bishops in their places to preside over the Eucharistic worship: Timothy, Titus, Silas, Stachys, Linus, and many others.

It was the people who provided the Church with houses to meet and worship in — their very own homes! For instance, Priscilla and Aquila, Gaius and Phoebe in Romans 16, Nymphas in Colossians 4, and Apphia and Archippus in Philemon. Together, they formed the Church herself, the *ecclesia*: not a building, but the people of God!

The Scripture tells us that the early Christians had "all things in common" (Acts 2:44). They shared everything together, for the well-being of one another and for the building up of the Church. The story of Ananias and Sapphira, who lied and who tried to cheat the Church, who were struck dead, confirms this (cf. Acts 5). And because the Church was united, because her members shared their homes and possessions and had all things in common, when a problem occurred in the Church (such as the question of imposing Jewish customs on Christian converts), the whole Church met together in the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15). St. Luke records the organization of the early Church at that Council in these words: "The Apostles, the elders (the bishops) and the others (the people) . . ."

When we read these accounts in Scripture, we see that there were no secular divisions within the Church. There was no false dichotomy between spiritual and temporal, between sacred and secular, between sacramental and administrative, between clergy and people — for all things were offered together by all for the glory of God. And they all gave of themselves to build up the Church: "the Apostles, the elders, and the others . . ."



Opening session

Changes in the Church

Towards the end of the first century, circumstances and needs affected the early Church, causing a number of changes. The fall of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 A.D. marked the end of the Jewish priesthood. This coincided with a period of growth in the Christian Church, such that in local areas it was necessary for there to be more than one gathering of Christians in worship. Priests were ordained to represent the bishop in each local parish.

With the death of the Apostles, the early Church was challenged with the question, Where is now the fullness of the Church? The Holy Spirit revealed that the fullness of the Church was to be found wherever the Eucharist was celebrated. As St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote, "Where the bishop is, so let all the people gather; just as where Jesus Christ is, there is the fullness of the Church" (Letter to the Smyrneans 6:2).

St. Ignatius, who was himself a successor to SS. Peter and Paul in the Church of Antioch, also tells us, "Indeed when you submit to the Bishop as you would to Jesus Christ, it is clear to me that you are living not in the manner of men but as Jesus Christ Who died for us, that through faith in His data you might escape dying. It is necessary therefore — and such is your practice — that you do nothing without the Bishop, and that you be subject to the presbytery, as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ our hope, in whom we shall be found, if we live in him. It is necessary also that the deacons, the dispensers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, be in every way pleasing to all

men. For they are not deacons of food and drink, but servants of the Church of God. They must, therefore, guard against blame as against fire" (Letter to the Trallians 2:1-3, about 110 A.D.)

The Orthodox Model of the Church

From the Scriptures and from the Fathers, we see in the Church — both the universal Church throughout the world and the local Church in a diocese or parish — a replica of the Kingdom of God. And the Council — whether an Ecumenical Council of the whole Church, or a diocesan or parish council on the local level — is a model of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All are coequal, yet the Father is first among the equals. All of life is grounded in the Ministry of the Holy Trinity. There is a Trinity because God the Father is a "Person"; we, too, are "persons" because God Himself is "Person."

Each Person of the Trinity possesses unique attributes which distinguish Him from the others (the Father from the Son, and from the Holy Spirit; the Son from the Father and from the Spirit; and the Spirit from the Father and from the Son). The first important aspect of the Orthodox Trinitarian way of being is that persons are unique yet inseparable. That is why our Church is comprised of unique persons, united however as members of One Body, working together in concert.

We see in the Trinity both hierarchy (the Father as Godhead) and conciliarity (each Person in council with the others). Thus, in Orthodox theology, we cannot speak of hierarchy without conciliarity.

In the words of Fr. Alexander Schmemmann: "The Church is conciliar and the Church is hierarchical. There exists today a tendency to oppose these two qualifications of the Church, or at least to emphasize one over the other . . . the Trinity is the perfect Council because the Trinity is the perfect hierarchy" (*Church, World, Mission*, pp. 145-46).

Therefore, the second important aspect of the Trinitarian way of being is "hierarchical conciliarity." The Church is an hierarchical Council — Bishops, clergy, and people — like the model of the Trinity, like the example found in Acts 15. The Church is like a "three-legged stool" — it needs all three legs to function properly.

Human organizations (and the Church is, in part, one of them) need the mutual accountability inherent in hierarchical conciliarity. And to be truly human, the Orthodox Christian leader (at each and ever level: parish, diocesan, national, and worldwide) must come to grips with the Trinitarian image and likeness that is in every human being.

A Communion of Love

The third important aspect of the Trinitarian way of being is unity as a communion of love. The basis of conciliarity, of communion, and of unity is LOVE. It is love that unites the persons of the Holy Trinity. Indeed love is their very essence; as St. John the Theologian tells us: "God is love" (1 John 4:8).

This is reflected in each of us when we live in love and conciliarity and unity. What makes us different as persons from the rest of creation is not that we are rational; rather it is that our personhood, our identity, is realized in love and communion.

Our leadership responsibility is to implement and incarnate these Trinitarian ways of being in each and every leadership situation.

Parish Council Responsibilities

Therefore, our responsibilities as Parish Council members and leaders are:

First to God Himself ("Give thanks always to God in all things");

To our Lord Jesus Christ ("He who



Delegates and clergy

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Parish Council Conference

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has seen Me has seen the Father . . . He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father . . .”);

To the Holy Orthodox Church (“You are my witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth”; “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . .”);

To the Bishop, who represents Christ (“When you submit to the bishop, as you would to Jesus Christ . . . you are living in the manner of Christ”);

To the parish priest (who represents the Bishop “as did the Apostles”);

Similarly, to the Scripture and to the Tradition of the Holy Church; and

To our own consciences, that we live that Tradition out in our personal lives.

The Parish Council is NOT like a local school board, where members have a responsibility to those who elected them, such that they do not worry about “quality” education, but rather ensure that “taxes won’t be raised!”

What has gotten in the way of the Trinitarian way of thinking in our parishes is the Western way of thinking in terms of dichotomies: sacred vs. secular; Church vs. state; sacramental vs. administrative; spiritual vs. temporal; bishops vs. people; clericalism vs. congregationalism. Christ overcame all the divisions and dichotomies of the fallen world in His Incarnation, Passion, and Death, Resurrection and Ascension. We are called back to the early Church of the New Testament, where they “were all of one mind” and “had all things in common.” As they were, together we are called to provide for the Church!

Kingdom-Centered Parish Council

Every Orthodox Christian must walk here on this earth but live in and for the Kingdom. Orthodox Church leaders have the responsibility to lead the members of Christ’s Body towards and into the Kingdom — and nowhere else!

A Kingdom-centered life is the sacramental life (that is, the life of repentance and communion). Liturgical worship is the part of Church life that keeps our Christian compass calibrated and pointing East — and towards heaven! We are not ready to be Orthodox Christian leaders until we are able to actually un-

derstand and see all of life as a sacrament — to see leadership is a sacrament!

Leadership holds special sacramental significance because it includes the opportunity and responsibility to serve Christ and the Church and to be a channel for the communion, grace, and love of the Lord. What we are all about (even Parish Council officers) is converting our whole lives! Our faith must be integrated into our lives; it must shape and direct who we are and everything that we do.

Also, honesty and transparency are two of the most important aspects of Christian leadership — not divisive or

first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness”?

The monk from Mount Athos, Vasileios of Stavronikita, states in powerful simplicity the holy standard which we are called to emulate in our parish life: “He who has really seen the Church has seen the Holy Trinity.” Thus, the Church is not a democracy that parallels our American government. Remember, there were no voting booths on Mount Sinai! Remember, there was only one election recorded in all of the Gospels: that occasion when they chose Barabbas over the Son of God!



Fr. Michael Dahulich addresses the Assembly

hidden personal agendas. For every Orthodox Christian, including every parish council member, the spiritual reality *is the reality*. It is the reality of the Kingdom.

Eucharistic Ecclesiology

The ecclesiology of the early Church was Eucharist (not legalistic). Because he resides at the Eucharist, in Orthodox teaching it is the Bishop who is the first among equals in the Church (as the Father is among the Persons of the Trinity).

Most of us get “off track” because we learn too much of what we know and do from society, instead of taking our example from the Holy Trinity, from the Church, from the lives of the Holy Saints who have adorned her in all ages. The challenge for us is to surrender our conventional definitions of power and authority, and to begin to think and to live with the definitions which Christ incarnated — of being servants, stewards, children of God. Did He not say, “Seek

In Summary

Let me summarize the points I would want you to remember most in this presentation thus far. The Church is a conciliar Church — a Council, modeled after the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit; the Bishop, the clergy, and the people.

The Church is a hierarchical Church, again modeled after the Holy Trinity: the Father is the Source of divinity, the Principle of the Godhead or deity, just as the Bishop is the head of the Church.

As the Trinity is a communion of three Persons in love and unity of action, so too is the Church a communion of persons in love and unity of action. No divisions, no dichotomies, no oppositions, no hidden or personal agendas.

As were the first members of the early Church — Peter and Paul, Andrew, James and John — Timothy and Titus, Silas, Stachys and Linus — as well as Priscilla and Aquila, Gaius and Phoebe, Nymphas, Apphia, and Archippus, we are all called together — bishops, priests,

and people — to provide for the Church. In the words of St. Paul, so often quoted by His Eminence, we are called to work together “for the building up of the Body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12).

Second Session:

The Parish Council Member: Leadership Service in the “Year of Renewed Devotion”

In the Scripture we read these words from the Wisdom of Solomon, “A people without a vision will perish” (Proverbs 29:18). Orthodox Christian leadership in action is precisely this: perceiving and articulating *the vision of the Kingdom of God* and effectively defining and communicating its incarnation, following Christ’s example of service found in the Holy Gospel.

These words of St. Gregory of Sinai provide the formula of Church leadership: “Become what you are. Find Him who is already yours. Listen to Him who never ceases speaking to you. Own Him who already owns you.”

The Vision of the Church

The vision of the Church has to do with the life of God, our Creator, and thus, our whole life — not just pieces of it. We must ask ourselves how much our “goals” have to do with God and His Kingdom. Too often we live most of our lives as though Christ and the Kingdom of God were some optional “add-on,” some non-essential, just another “nice thing to do.”

Orthodox Christian vision is the picture that drives all our actions. The right vision inspires action and fosters success; the wrong vision stifles action and promotes failure. Our vision must be the Kingdom. Our theology, therefore, must thus have three dimensions:

mind-centered theology (faith), which pertains to *thinking*;

heart-centered theology (hope), which pertains to *feeling*;

and will-centered theology (love), which pertains to *doing*.

Our theology must move beyond concept to implementation; from talking about vision, to understanding and incar-

nating it in our lives. *Speaking about and sharing the vision is one of the primary responsibilities of the Orthodox Christian leader.*

A Shared Vision

Any human organization will be no better than the vision the members share. Consensus of minds, hearts, and wills is required in order to achieve a shared vision. When the vision creates effective implementation, momentum and enthusiasm develop. In the Orthodox Church, vision has its source in the Kingdom, and is defined by the Body of Christ with the help of her members.

The key to getting the vision is the process of what the Fathers call *discerning* and describing the vision and building *consensus* to affirm and make it happen.

True vision flows to us from the Kingdom of God. We discern it. Vision needs to be incarnated from the eternal and divine at the local and human level, without losing a single attribute of the other. All our spiritual life must be informed by vision. Without vision, we are not human. With the *wrong* vision, we are in trouble!

We are called to struggle and perceive and implement the vision, amid all the sights and sounds and temptations of the world. Church leaders lead by thinking, feeling, and acting in the right way, in the fulfillment of the vision! How we do — whatever we do — must be informed by the divine vision! All of us, without exception, are called to the divine vision. We must answer that call, implement that vision — and we must do so with enthusiasm.

A Trinitarian Relationship

All of us are called to the divine vision — which is an image of God the Father; we are to implement that vision — as an image of the Son; and we must do so with enthusiasm — as an image of the Holy Spirit.

All of us are called to the divine vision, the vision of God. Consider the words of St. John Chrysostom: “If you want to learn how difficult it is to live wisely, and how little the task allows relaxation, hear what Paul says: ‘I pommel my body and subdue it.’ When he

said this, he hinted at the force and effort which those must use who wish to teach themselves obedience in everything. Christ also said to His disciples, ‘In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.’ This tribulation, He says, will bring you relief. The present life is an arena; in the arena and in athletic contests the man who expects to be crowned cannot enjoy relaxation. So if anyone wishes to win a crown, let him choose the hard and laborious life, in order that after he has striven a short time here, he may enjoy lasting honor thereafter” (St. John Chrysostom, *On Wealth and Poverty*, SVS Press, p. 87).

The Archbishop’s Vision

In 1995, His Eminence, Archbishop Herman gave the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania — actually the whole Orthodox Church in America; in fact, all of Orthodoxy — a vision for the upcoming Third Millennium of Christianity — to truly see the vision of Our Lord and to incarnate it in our lives in honor of the two thousandth anniversary of His Birth in Bethlehem.

What greater vision is there than this? Than to see (in the Biblical sense) the Only God and Jesus Christ, His Only-Begotten Son, Whom He sent into the world for the sake of us men and for our salvation? Our Lord tells us through His words to St. Philip the Apostle, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father Who sent Me” (John 14: 9).

This vision of Archbishop HERMAN is in complete consonance with the Scripture, particularly Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, with the writings of St. Gregory of Sinai and St. John Chrysostom and all the holy fathers, and with the whole Tradition of our Faith. This is the right vision — we need simply to be inspired to act and to foster its success.

His Eminence has not only given us this vision; he has also given us the method of implementing it — in his Five Year March to the Millennium. In specific, this Year of Devotion, which 1997 is, provides each parish community with a perfect mode of making the vision *real* — for its members, for the Church as a whole and for the community at large.

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Parish Council Conference

Continued from page 57.

Renewal of Devotion

In his most recent Paschal Archpastoral Encyclical, His Eminence quoted the renowned theologian, Father Georges Florovsky, who reminded us, "Christianity is a liturgical religion. The Church is first of all a worshipping community. Worship comes first, doctrine and discipline second."

He also recalled images of the early Church, how we read in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2: "And day by day, attending the Temple and breaking the Bread . . . they partook with glad and generous hearts . . . praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their numbers day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:46-47).

He appealed to the members of the diocese: "Throughout the year, our faithful should fill their churches to capacity, celebrating the joy of the Risen Saviour every Sunday, every 'little Resurrection,' which is another Pascha."

The appeal called out to all to make the worship of our Saviour the focus of their spiritual life all throughout the liturgical year:

- (1) on the Lord's Day, during the Sunday Liturgy;
- (2) at the Vespers the night before;
- (3) on the feastdays of the Church, at Vespers or Vigil, and/or Liturgy;
- (4) during the fasting seasons, with all their special services; and
- (5) during the missions and other services scheduled in the Diocese.

Receiving the Mysteries

The Archbishop explained that there is no better way of experiencing the Lord Himself than through sacramental reception of the Holy Eucharist. All the faithful are encouraged to receive Holy Communion on a frequent basis.

He stresses, however, the need to come *in the fear of God and with faith* — which means, properly disposed — that is, constantly repenting of one's sins, and receiving, as frequently as necessary, the sacrament of confession.

He reminds us how *awesome* are the Holy Mysteries, and how St. Paul warns against casual reception of them: "For

as often as you eat this Bread and drink this Cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Therefore, whoever eats this Bread or drinks this Cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the Bread and drink of the Cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep" (I Cor. 11:26-30).

Daily Prayer Life

His Eminence reminded his flock to make the Vision of the Risen Lord more than a Sunday experience. Rather, he instructed that it should be an everyday occurrence. The daily prayer life of the

together and discuss with them the Holy Scriptures. They should prepare and receive together as a family the Holy Mysteries. They should teach them and sing with them the sacred hymns of the Church. In short, they should make Christ the *center* of their family living.

So beautifully he states: "If someone should ask you, 'What is the most important thing you could give your child?' Some of you might answer: a loving home, or a good education. But more important than these — both on this earth and in the world to come -- is the Faith in Our Lord that brings us to eternal life."

A Challenge to All

To implement these goals of the Christian vision His Eminence has shared for this year, he challenges *the whole Church* — clergy and faithful alike

Parish Council officers are called upon to set *the example* in the following ways:

- (1) Attending the Liturgy every Sunday and feastday (the Vigil, if one's work schedule does not permit being at the Liturgy);
 - (2) Reading the Scriptures and the teachings of the Holy Fathers of the Church;
 - (3) Singing the praises of the Lord in the hymns of the Church, in/with the choir;
 - (4) Participating as fully as possible in the traditions of the liturgical life of the Church throughout the year; and
 - (5) Leading the lines to Holy Communion each and every Sunday and holy day, coming spiritually prepared through holy confession.
-

clergy and faithful need to include, first of all, morning prayers; second, the blessing at each meal (thanksgiving and sharing as a family); third, the daily reading of the Scripture (best done as a family event); fourth, gathering to pray together before the icon corner at least once a day; and fifth, evening prayers (best done by parents with their children).

Archbishop Herman has urged that the Vision be an experience *shared by the entire family*. Parents should bring their children to services each Sunday and holy day. They should pray together with them in the morning, at meals, and in the evening at home. They should read

— to pick up the mantle with enthusiasm. The pastors of the parishes have been urged to preach this theme in their homilies, expanding upon various aspects of this message, drawing upon the words of the Scripture and the teachings of the Holy Fathers. The officers of the local parish councils have been challenged to be the very leaders of this movement of renewal. In the words of Archbishop Herman, "In everything you do in the parish, you should serve as a model for the other lay men and women to emulate — especially in giving of your time and talent and treasure for the extension of the Kingdom of God here on

earth and specifically in your community.”

Parish Council officers are called upon to set *the example* in the following ways:

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(3) Singing the praises of the Lord in the hymns of the Church, in/with the choir;

(4) Participating as fully as possible in the traditions of the liturgical life of the Church throughout the year; and

(5) Leading the lines to Holy Communion each and every Sunday and holy day, coming spiritually prepared through holy confession.

They are also asked to encourage the other members of the congregation to follow their example. This can be done in several ways: by inviting them, reminding them and bringing them to divine services; by inviting them, reminding them, and bringing them to Scripture classes; by welcoming them into the church choir or to join in singing the hymns; by assigning them to assist in the various liturgical practices of the parish; and, by encouraging them on a personal basis to receive the Holy Mysteries.

Parish Council members are urged to fulfill their responsibilities to God, to His Beloved Son, to His Church and to the Faith of the Church — to lead the way, to follow the discipline, to come up with methods, consonant with our Tradition, to encourage others to share the vision and to implement it with enthusiasm. In the words of the Archbishop, “All this is what will truly make you leaders of the parish community in the eyes of the Lord. And only in this way will our parishes grow and flourish — if we are together doing the holy work of the Lord, the way He prescribes, the way His Church teaches.”

For too long, there has been the notion that the *spiritual* dimension of the Church belonged only to the Bishop and the priests, and the *material* elements, to the parish council. This has caused division and has resulted in disunity. We

know, from the model of the Church as an icon of the Trinity, that there should be no divisions or disunity. The whole Church is the concern of bishops, priests, and lay persons alike. That is why *the temporal matters* are the concern of the whole Church, and that is why *the spiritual matters* are the concern of the whole Church. In his encyclical, His Eminence wrote: “If we unite together, archpastor and rectors and faithful alike, we will see the fruits of our labors for the greater glory of Almighty God and the building up of His Holy Church.” (This challenge has also been issued to the FROC, parish choirs, sisterhoods, and men’s clubs alike).

Practical Aspects

The Lord Himself always placed the spiritual aspects of His ministry ahead of the material. He always healed the soul first, then the physical ailments. He preached “first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness . . . and then all these other things . . .”

If we strive to gain the souls of the members of our parish community, and perhaps also the souls of the inactive members of the congregation, and perhaps even the souls of potentially new members who will be spiritually uplifted

by what they see and hear of what we are doing; and if, with the Lord’s help, we succeed and have won *their whole self* to Christ our Lord — we will have won their commitment — time, talent and treasure as well. Our parish will have grown in number, in support, in stewardship, because we have touched and won their souls for Christ. But if we seek first material things, go for their financial obligations, we may gain nothing and even lose them. *To implement our vision, we must follow the Lord’s way!*

In implementing the Archbishop’s vision for the spiritual renewal of the diocese during this five-year period, when we prepare to celebrate the Two Thousandth Anniversary of the Coming of God into the world in the flesh, use the Tradition of the Faith and the enthusiasm of the Holy Spirit. Be generous with yourself, your time, your talent, and your treasure. Be not afraid to do things boldly, as the Apostles, the disciples and the early Christians did so long ago. Never forget the challenge of God at the end of the Old Testament: “Put me to the test, says the Lord of Hosts, and see if I do not open windows in the heavens and pour a blessing upon you so long as there is need” (Malachi 4:10-11).

— Archbishop Michael G. Dahulich

The deadline for the Christmas issue
of *Your Diocese Alive in Christ*

is

November 15, 1997.

Please send all submissions to:

**Alive in Christ
Diocesan Center
South Canaan, Pa. 18459**

DAILY DEVOTIONS

SEPTEMBER

1. 1 Tim. 2:1-7 (New Year)
2. 2 Cor. 5:15-21
3. 2 Cor. 6:11-16
4. 2 Cor. 7:1-10
5. 2 Cor. 7:1-10
6. 1 Cor. 1:26-29
2 Cor. 8:7-15 (Sept. 8-Daily)
7. Gal. 6:11-18 (Sun. Bef. Elev.)
1 Cor. 15:1-11 (Daily)
8. Phil. 2:5-11 (Nativ. Theot.)
9. 2 Cor. 8:16-9:5
10. 2 Cor. 9:12-10:7
11. 2 Cor. 10:7-18
12. 2 Cor. 11:5-21
1 Cor. 2:6-9 (Sept. 13-Daily)
13. Heb. 3:1-4
1 Cor. 2:6-9 (Sat. Bef. Elev.)
14. 1 Cor. 1:18-24 (Elevation)
15. 2 Cor. 12:10-19
16. 2 Cor. 12:20-13:2
17. 2 Cor. 13:3-13
18. Gal. 1:1-10,20-2:5
19. Gal. 2:6-10
20. 1 Cor. 1:26-29 (Sat. Aft. Elev.)
1 Cor. 4:1-5 (Daily)
21. Gal. 2:16-20 (Sun. Aft. Elev.)
2 Cor. 1:21-2:4 (Daily)
22. Gal. 2:11-16
23. Gal. 2:21-3:7
24. Gal. 3:15-22
25. Gal. 3:23-4:5
26. Gal. 4:8-21
27. 2 Cor. 4:17-5:5
28. 2 Cor. 4:6-15
29. Gal. 4:28-5:10
30. Gal. 5:11-21
Gal. 2:1-10 (Oct. 1-Daily)
- Luke 4:16-22 (New Year)
- Mark 1:16-22
- Mark 1:23-28
- Mark 1:29-35
- Mark 2:18-22
- Matt. 20:29-34
- Mark 3:6-12 (Sept. 8-Daily)
- John 3:13-17 (Sun. Before Elev.)
- Matt. 19:16-26 (Daily)
- Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Nativ. Theot.)
- Mark 3:13-19
- Mark 3:20-27
- Mark 3:28-35
- Mark 4:1-9
- Matt. 22:15-22 (Sept. 13-Daily)
- Matt. 16:13-18
- Matt. 10:37-11:1 (Sat. Bef. Elev.)
- John 19:6-11,13-20,25-28,30-35 (Elevation)
- Mark 4:10-23
- Mark 4:24-34
- Mark 4:35-41
- Mark 5:1-20
- Mark 5:22-24,35-6:1
- John 8:21-30 (Sat. Aft. Elev.)
- Matt. 23:1-12 (Daily)
- Mark 8:34-9:1 (Sun. Aft. Elev.)
- Matt. 22:1-14 (Daily)
- Luke 3:19-22
- Luke 3:23-4:1
- Luke 4:1-15
- Luke 4:16-22
- Luke 4:22-30
- Luke 4:31-36
- Luke 5:1-11
- Luke 4:37-44
- Luke 5:12-16
- Luke 5:33-39 (Oct. 1-Daily)

OCTOBER

1. Heb. 9:1-7 (Theotokos)
2. Eph. 1:1-9
3. Eph. 1:7-17
4. 1 Cor. 10:23-28
5. 2 Cor. 6:1-10
6. Eph. 1:22-2:3
7. Eph. 2:19-3:7
8. Eph. 3:8-21
9. Eph. 4:14-19
10. Eph. 4:17-25
11. 1 Cor. 14:20-25
12. 2 Cor. 6:16-7:1
Heb. 13:7-15 (Fathers)
13. Eph. 4:25-32
14. Eph. 5:20-26
15. Eph. 5:25-33
16. Eph. 5:33-6:9
17. Eph. 6:18-24
18. 1 Cor. 15:39-45
19. 2 Cor. 9:6-11
20. Phil. 1:1-7
21. Phil. 1:8-14
22. Phil. 1:12-20
23. Phil. 1:20-27
24. Phil. 1:27-2:4
25. 1 Cor. 15:58-16:3
26. Heb. 12:6-13,25-27
27. Phil. 2:12-16
28. Phil. 2:17-23
29. Phil. 2:24-30
30. Phil. 3:1-8
31. Phil. 3:8-19
- Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28 (Theotokos)
- Luke 6:12-19
- Luke 6:17-23
- Luke 5:17-26
- Luke 6:31-36
- Luke 6:24-30
- Luke 6:37-45
- Luke 6:46-7:1
- Luke 7:17-30
- Luke 7:31-35
- Luke 5:27-32
- Luke 7:11-16
- John 17:1-13 (Fathers)
- Luke 7:36-50
- Luke 8:1-3
- Luke 8:22-25
- Luke 9:7-11
- Luke 9:12-18
- Luke 6:1-10
- Luke 8:5-15
- Luke 9:18-22
- Luke 9:23-27
- Luke 9:44-50
- Luke 9:49-56
- Luke 10:1-15
- Luke 7:2-10
- Matt. 8:23-27
- Luke 10:22-24
- Luke 11:1-10
- Luke 11:9-13
- Luke 11:14-23
- Luke 11:23-26

NOVEMBER

1. 2 Cor. 1:8-11
2. Gal. 1:11-19
3. Phil. 4:10-23
4. Col. 1:1-2,7-11
5. Col. 1:18-23
6. Col. 1:24-29
7. Col. 2:1-7
8. 2 Cor. 3:12-18
Heb. 2:2-10 (Angels)
9. Gal. 2:16-20
10. Col. 2:13-20
11. Col. 2:20-3:3
12. Col. 3:17-4:1
13. Col. 4:2-9
14. Col. 4:10-18
15. 2 Cor. 5:1-10
16. Gal. 5:11-18
17. 1 Thess. 1:1-5
18. 1 Thess. 1:6-10
19. 1 Thess. 2:1-8
20. 1 Thess. 2:9-14
1 Thess. 2:14-19 (Friday)
21. Heb. 9:1-7 (Entry)
22. 2 Cor. 8:1-5
23. Eph. 2:4-10
24. 1 Thess. 2:20-3:8
25. 1 Thess. 3:9-13
26. 1 Thess. 4:1-12
27. 1 Thess. 5:1-8
28. 1 Thess. 5:9-13,24-28
29. 2 Cor. 11:1-6
30. Eph. 2:14-22
- Luke 8:16-21
- Luke 8:26-39
- Luke 11:29-33
- Luke 11:34-41
- Luke 11:42-46
- Luke 11:47-12:1
- Luke 12:2-12
- Luke 9:1-6
- Luke 10:16-21 (Angels)
- Luke 8:41-56
- Luke 12:13-15,22-31
- Luke 12:42-48
- Luke 12:48-59
- Luke 13:1-9
- Luke 13:31-35
- Luke 9:37-43
- Luke 10:35-37
- Luke 14:12-15
- Luke 14:25-35
- Luke 15:1-10
- Luke 16:1-9
- Luke 16:15-18; 17:1-4 (Fri.)
- Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28
- Luke 9:57-62
- Luke 12:16-21
- Luke 17:20-25
- Luke 17:26-37
- Luke 18:15-17,26-30
- Luke 18:31-34
- Luke 19:12-28
- Luke 10:19-21
- Luke 13:10-17

DECEMBER

1. 2 Thess. 1:1-10
2. 2 Thess. 1:10-2:2
3. 2 Thess. 2:1-12
4. 2 Thess. 2:13-3:5
5. 2 Thess. 3:6-18
6. Gal. 1:3-10
Heb. 13:17-21 (St. Nicholas)
7. Eph. 4:1-6
8. 1 Tim. 1:1-7
9. 1 Tim. 1:8-14
10. 1 Tim. 1:18-20; 2:8-15
11. 1 Tim. 3:1-13
12. 1 Tim. 4:4-8,16
13. Gal. 3:8-12
14. Col. 3:4-11 (Forefathers)
15. 1 Tim. 5:1-10
16. 1 Tim. 5:11-21
17. 1 Tim. 5:22-6:11
18. 1 Tim. 6:17-21
19. 2 Tim. 1:1-2,8-18
20. Gal. 3:8-12 (Sat. Before)
21. Heb. 11:9-10,17-23,32-40
22. 2 Tim. 2:20-26
23. 2 Tim. 3:16-4:4
24. Heb. 1:1-12
25. Gal. 4:4-7 (Nativity of Christ)
26. Heb. 2:11-18 (Theotokos)
27. 1 Tim. 6:11-16 (Sat. After)
28. Gal. 1:11-19 (Sun. After)
29. Heb. 3:5-11,17-19
30. Heb. 4:1-13
31. Heb. 5:11-6:8
- Luke 19:37-44
- Luke 19:45-48
- Luke 20:1-8
- Luke 20:9-18
- Luke 20:19-26
- Luke 12:32-40
- Luke 6:17-23 (St. Nicholas)
- Luke 17:12-19
- Luke 20:27-44
- Luke 21:12-19
- Luke 21:5-7,10-11,20-24
- Luke 21:28-33
- Luke 21:37-22:8
- Luke 13:18-29
- Luke 14:16-24 (Forefathers)
- Mark 8:11-21
- Mark 8:22-26
- Mark 8:30-34
- Mark 9:10-16
- Mark 9:33-41
- Luke 13:18-29 (Sat. Before)
- Matt. 1:1-25
- Mark 9:42-10:1
- Mark 10:2-12
- Luke 2:1-10
- Matt. 2:1-12 (Nativ. Christ)
- Matt. 2:13-23 (Theotokos)
- Matt. 12:15-21 (Sat. After)
- Matt. 2:13-23 (Sun. After)
- Mark 10:46-52
- Mark 11:11-23
- Mark 11:23-26

Belgrade Orthodox Faculty Hosts Representatives of Orthodox Theological Schools

In 1905, the Orthodox Theological Faculty in Belgrade, associated with many illustrious pastors and theologians who studied and taught there, including Archimandrite Justin Popovich, Archpriest Georges Florovsky, and Archbishop John Maximovich, was one of four faculties which came together to establish the University of Belgrade as an institution of higher education on the model of a "Western" university.

It was at this venerable and seasoned theological school that some 60 representatives of 23 Orthodox theological schools from 19 countries gathered August 16-26, 1997, for the VI International Consultation of Orthodox Theological Schools. Cosponsored by SYNDESMOS, the World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth, presently headquartered in Poland, the Orthodox Theological Faculty of Belgrade, and the St. Sava Youth Community of the Belgrade-Karlovci Archdiocese, the ten-day symposium provided a most opportune and useful forum for administrators, faculty and students to come together in prayer, discussion and fellowship in a focused effort to gain common understanding of the issues and challenges facing Orthodox schools of theology in the contemporary world. Representing the Orthodox schools of North America were Archpriest Michael Oleksa, Dean of St. Herman's Orthodox Seminary in Kodiak, Alaska; Archpriest Alexander Golubov, Academic Dean of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary in South Canaan, Pennsylvania, and Professor Paul Manolis, of the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley.

On Sunday, August 17, the opening

day of the Consultation, His Holiness Pavle, Archbishop of Belgrade and Patriarch of the Orthodox Church of Serbia, officiated Divine Liturgy in the St. John the Theologian Chapel of the Orthodox Theological Faculty of Belgrade. Concelebrating with His Holiness were Metropolitan Amfilohije of Cetinje, Montenegro, and Bishop Irinej of Bachka, together with clergy representing the Orthodox Churches and Theological Schools of Serbia, Greece, Russia, Bulgaria and America. In his pen- sive, yet emotionally-charged homily addressed to the participants of the Consultation, Patriarch Pavle noted that the overall situation of the Orthodox Church in the contemporary world can be likened to that of a ship storm-tossed in darkness by the angry waves of rough and turbulent seas. For the terrified passengers there would be little chance or even hope of survival, of reaching a safe haven, were it not for the fact that the Divine Pilot of the Ship, the Lord Jesus Christ, was Himself at the helm, guiding the Ship to its ultimate destination. And just as it was some two thousand years ago with the Apostles, who also found themselves in a ship caught in a storm, it seems to many today that the Lord is asleep, that He is not aware and does not see the storm raging around, threatening to engulf and swallow the ship. To the rational mind, moreover, it does not even seem plausible that the Ship can, indeed, be saved, for so-called objective evidence seems to speak against this possibility. There are even those who think it wiser to abandon ship, to try to make it on their own. Yet it is precisely in these circumstances, when our faith is sorely tested, that it is neces-

sary to hold on to our faith like a little, trusting child, and remain with the Ship. For it is only those who lose their faith, who allow themselves to be washed off the Ship, who can be lost at sea. It is the primary responsibility of the Orthodox Theological Schools, His Holiness reminded his listeners, to nurture this faith, especially among those who will become the members of the clergy and the theologians of the Church.

The keynote address was delivered in plenary session by His Eminence, Metropolitan Amfilohije. It is important for us to recognize, His Eminence pointed out, that the Orthodox Church is the central repository of theological education and knowledge, and that it is in the Church, more specifically, in the Divine Liturgy, that we are able to fully partake of the vast riches of divine knowledge that are contained there. We should not make the mistake of rising above the Church, above Divine Liturgy, in our quest for knowledge and theological enlightenment, for this would bring us to a spiritual dead end. In the One Bread and One Cup we should recognize the Source of all that exists. In cooperation with each other, schools, faculties, and seminaries must return to the Chalice, to the Eucharist, to Liturgy as the foundation of Orthodox spiritual life, and not attempt to exist outside or parallel to the Church.

Vespers was celebrated, in true pan-Orthodox fashion, in English and Church Slavonic by Fr. Alexander Golubov, with chanting on the clerics in Greek by Archimandrite Ambrosios Zographos, of the St. Nicholas Orthodox Theological School in Seoul, Korea, together with several students of the Orthodox Theo-

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Belgrade Orthodox Faculty

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logical Faculty in Belgrade.

After lunch, two discussion sections addressed practical matters affecting the life of Orthodox theological schools. The first, moderated by Professor Paul Manolis of Berkeley's Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute, addressed issues of cooperation and student/faculty exchange. The second, moderated by Archpriest Alexander Golubov, of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, focused on a whole range of broad issues affecting the selection of students and faculty at Orthodox theological schools.

In the remaining days of the Consultation, the work of the representatives of the Orthodox theological schools unfolded in a rhythm of prayer, fellowship, and theological inquiry. Each day began with Matins in the Faculty chapel, served in turn by the clergy attending the Consultation.

On Friday, August 22, with the blessing of His Holiness, Patriarch Pavle, Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the St. John the Theologian Chapel of the Orthodox Theological Faculty of Belgrade

by His Grace, Bishop Krystof of Olomouc and Brno, Th.D., of the Orthodox Church of Slovakia and the Czech Lands, in concelebration with clergy representatives of the Orthodox Theological Schools present at the Consultation.

Reports then followed on the various discussion sections. It could be seen that, in general, Orthodox theological schools function in three modes: as seminaries and theological schools directly related to their Local Churches, charged with the preparation of future clergy and theologians; as Orthodox theological faculties attached to universities, usually in an ecumenical context, also called to nurture vocations for clergy and theologians; and, finally, as independent, Church-approved theological schools for nontraditional students who wish to increase their knowledge and awareness of Orthodoxy, who may wish to serve as catechists, missionaries, or choir directors, yet who are not particularly called to enter the ranks of Orthodox clergy or to be theologians in traditional settings.

In these varying contexts, the Orthodox theological schools are particularly in need of inter-Orthodox support and cooperation. SYNDESMOS can be es-

pecially helpful in providing and supporting timely publication of a broad scope of informational resources, materials and curricula, which can be utilized by the administrators and faculty of Orthodox theological schools to expand and enhance the course offerings of their schools. In particular, the positive practice of ongoing International Consultations should be facilitated to the greatest extent possible on all levels, to provide administrators, faculty and students a broad perspective on the issues and challenges faced by the Orthodox theological schools, as well as the solutions and approaches which may be suggested.

On Friday evening, a reception for clergy participants was hosted by Archpriest-stavrophore Liubodrag Petrovich, pastor of St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Belgrade, which is home to 5 parishes of approximately 6500 people. On Saturday, August 23, many of the participants of the Consultation started departing for home. For those who were able to stay, a pilgrimage to the historic places and monasteries of Serbia was arranged by the hospitable hosts.

—Archpriest Alexander Golubov



Representatives of Orthodox Theological Schools with His Grace, Bishop Irinej of Bachka and monastic brotherhood of Kovyl Monastery near Nova Sad, Serbia. Fr. Alexander Golubov and Fr. Michael Oleksa (white cassock), the two representatives of Orthodox Theological schools in North America

Recollections of a Pilgrimage to the Churches and Monasteries of Russia

Although only a little over a month has gone by since I was part of the group of eleven that accompanied His Eminence, Archbishop Herman on this tour to Russia, it seems as though it happened in another lifetime.

Our flight to Helsinki, then St. Petersburg and finally Moscow was memorable, but for all the wrong reasons—enough said! Leaving on Friday evening and reaching our destination, Moscow, on Saturday evening left most of us ready to relax and unwind, but this was not to be. After meeting Valentina, our guide, we were taken to the Intourist Hotel on Tverskaya Street in Moscow. After checking in and freshening up we were hurried off to St. Catherine's Church, the *podvorye* (representation) church of the O.C.A. where we attended the vigil service, which was already in progress. We were impressed with the beautiful singing of the small choir. After the service, the good people of St. Catherine's had prepared some refreshments for us and this allowed us the opportunity to chat informally. After this we were taken to a private restaurant for an excellent dinner. Finally we returned to the hotel for a good night's rest. For some of us this was not to be. It seems that they felt it was a good time to repave the street in front of the hotel!

The next day, His Eminence and I were picked up at 8:30 a.m. and taken to the Kremlin where we were to serve with His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy in the Church of the Twelve Apostles. (This was located in the Patriarch's Palace, and it was the only the second time that services had been held there since the revolution.) The Liturgy began at 9:30 a.m. and admission was by ticket only because of the small size of the Church.

Needless to say, this was a moving and awesome experience. Later in the day I remarked to His Eminence, "Did you ever think we would serve with the Patriarch, much less in the Kremlin, when we were in seminary?" After the Liturgy we were invited to the Patriarch's

Pokoi (rest) for tea. After many lavish and tasty dishes, including ice cream and watermelon, and numerous singings of Many Years, we had to leave to rejoin our group.

After lunch we were off to see the Cathedral of Christ the Savior presently under construction. The lower sanctuary is already been use and it holds ten thousand people, as will the main sanctuary when it is completed. The hope is to consecrate the cathedral on Christmas Day in the year 2000. Next we were off to the Donskoy Monastery where St. Patriarch Tikhon was buried and his relics are enshrined today. This was a moving experience for me personally, because I when I visited here in 1988 everything was in disrepair. The grounds were overgrown, the cathedral closed and covered in rusty scaffolding. Today it is quite transformed. The cathedral is open, the grounds well-maintained, the road is paved, and the holy relics of St. Patriarch Tikhon are available for veneration.

We had a tour of the Kremlin, its many cathedrals and churches, and the Armory Museum.

Our next excursion was a five-hour bus trip to see the Shamordino Women's Monastery and the Monastery of Optina Pustyn. We first went to Kaluga where we picked up our local guide, and then continued through the Russian countryside till we finally reached the convent. The main church was an exquisite work of art, with its fifteen cupolas; however, it was in a bad state of disrepair after serving time as a summer school. The church was built to accommodate a thousand people, because at one time it had that many nuns. Today there are about a hundred. Our guide told us that Tolstoy's sister was a nun at this convent.

We had lunch at the refectory, prepared and served by the sisters. We saw an interesting icon of the Theotokos here; she is depicted in a field of wheat. After lunch we were off to Optina Pustyn, which was only a few miles away. We were going to walk the last mile or so

because the bridge could only support one car at a time. We persuaded a Russian man to take us to the monastery (it took two trips for all of us). When we asked him to return and take us back to our bus he said he didn't know if he could. However, we paid him well and when 5 o'clock p.m. arrived he was waiting for us. The monastery was in excellent condition; we visited two of the churches and listened to our guide explain about the monastery and the elders for which it is famous. On our return trip to Moscow we saw many people sitting by the roadside trying to sell a small container of vegetables or berries.

The next day we were off to Sergiev Posad, the earliest and best-known monastery in all of Russia. Here we visited the many beautiful churches, and venerated the relics of St. Sergius of Radonezh and St. Innocent of Alaska. The monastery is well-maintained, and the grounds are beautifully kept. While here we were able to visit the crypt where some hierarchs are buried. We also received holy oil from the monastery. After lunch and some time for shopping, we were off to Yaroslavl. Because we were running late, we had to bypass Rostov and only saw it from a distance.

We arrived in Yaroslavl in the early evening and found it to be a beautiful city. It has lovely parks and a beautiful promenade along the Volga. There seemed to be a church on every corner, with the most impressive being the Church of St. Elijah, which sits in the center of town surrounded by a beautiful garden. Another outstanding structure is the chapel of St. Alexander Nevsky (a native son) which also sits in a garden with a fountain. During our tour of the non-functioning Monastery of the Transfiguration, we were given a beautiful demonstration of bell-ringing by a young man. While in Yaroslavl we visited the Tolga Convent, which sits on the banks of the Volga. The Cathedral of the Presentation is presently being restored by

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Sermon for the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist

In every age, some faithful lovers of God are called upon to give up their lives for the sake of the Kingdom which is to come. In the Old Testament, some of the Prophets were stoned to death because they spoke the truth. The seven Maccabee children and their mother Solomonea, whom we commemorated earlier this month on August 1, were put to death because they testified to their faith in the true God and refused to worship idols. They were called the “Martyrs before the Martyrs.”

The Christian martyrs also, from St. Stephen down to the present day, have voluntarily laid down their lives out of faithfulness to the faith of Jesus Christ. All these witnesses, these martyrs — have made the supreme sacrifice for ultimate truth — which is that faith in Jesus Christ.

St. John the Baptist also was a martyr before the martyrs. He was the only martyr for Christ who died for the Lord even while Christ walked on the earth. Indeed, his whole life was truly a martyrdom, because the meaning of this term is a “witnessing” -- and John was sent to bear witness to Christ, to point him out to all men as the Messiah, the Holy One of Israel, the Redeemer of the world.

John spent his whole life witnessing to the coming of the Messiah. He stressed that he himself was not the Messiah — he was not the Light — but only came to



bear witness to the Light, as St. John the Theologian tells us in his Gospel — the true Light that was then, at that time, coming into the world. And when the Light appeared John rejoiced; he yielded to the Light, saying, “I must decrease, he must increase” — and even after his death, his beheading, he preached the coming of the Light to those who were held captive in hades.

St. John the Baptist was, then, a martyr before the martyrs. He was also a monk before the monks, because of his ascetical way of life — living in the wilderness, his whole life dedicated to the service of God and to the knowledge and fellowship of God. For this reason, John was called an “Angel in the flesh.”

John bore witness to truth in all forms — he also denounced falsehood and unrighteousness whenever and wherever he saw it. He was not afraid to do so because he was afraid of no man, since his whole life was devoted to God. He feared God alone — and because he had the fear of God he feared nothing earthly — not even death itself — and he was not afraid

of any man. He fearlessly condemned Herod’s wickedness and for that reason he was imprisoned and finally put to death. But his death, rather than silencing his message, amplified it. The truth cannot be silenced. The death of the martyrs accentuates their message. In worldly terms the truth is suppressed — that is, to those who only listen to the voice of the world. But St. John’s voice, his whole life, continued to speak even from the grave with greater eloquence even than when he was alive. His message was vindicated because the Lord’s death and resurrection showed that John’s message was true — the Light has come into the world and has overcome the world.

We can be sure that just as St. John denounced immorality, he also condemned any kind of injustice, hatred, or bigotry — anything that is contrary to the fruit of the Spirit. Yet he did so not judgementally, but lovingly, desiring that all men should repent — which was his constant refrain: “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!”

St. John spoke against all things that separate us from God or disturb peace among men. He was qualified to do this because of his righteousness, his holiness. These are the two words that are used in the Gospel to describe him: it is said that Herod feared John because he knew John was “holy” and “just,” that is to say, righteous.

Being, as Christ said, the “greatest among those born of women,” being holy and righteous, St. John the Baptist was able to see clearly the faults of others, and was fearless in pointing them out, because he only feared God. But there are those who will not be corrected but

who instead kill the messenger that God sends — as Herod killed John. Yet he could not kill John’s message.

Most of us do not have the righteousness and the holiness that qualify us to denounce evil, as St. John did. Instead, most of the time, it is more fitting for us to remain silent about the apparent faults of others — this is what our Lord commanded us when he said, “First remove the beam from your own eye; then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.” St. John the Baptist indeed had fulfilled this requirement, and thus he was in a position to condemn unrighteousness when he saw it.

Righteousness and holiness, love, fear of God, absence of fear of anything else or anyone else, zeal for God, and rejection of sin and worldliness — all these qualities made St. John the Baptist an “angel in the flesh.” By his prayers, may we approach a little bit closer to that angelic way of life to which we have all been summoned — remembering that, as his beheading was not in vain but was a necessary fulfillment of God’s plan — so too, the sacrifices and sufferings that we may have to make as the cost of faithfulness to truth, will not have been in vain.

— Hieromonk Juvenaly

Recollections of a Pilgrimage

Continued from page 63.

the nuns. We attended Vespers here for the feast of St. Sergius. The next day we wanted to attend Liturgy for the feast, and after finding out where the working churches were, we took a taxi to two churches situated side-by-side, St. Nicholas’ and St. Theodore’s. Unfortunately we arrived at the Liturgy very late. It was being celebrated in the chapel of the winter church which is dedicated to St. Sergius. In the summer church, the first of six weddings was taking place.

A priest of the church gave a tour of the churches and grounds and we saw a second-floor chapel dedicated to St. Nicholas that had an iconostasis of solid brass. From Yaroslavl we drove back to Moscow where we had supper, and then took the overnight train to St. Petersburg. This was an interesting and cramped experience.

We arrived in St. Petersburg around 7 a.m. and were taken to the Prebaltiskaya Hotel where, after checking in and having breakfast, we had a tour of the city. We visited the Nikolsky Sobor with its three altars, and also St. Isaac’s Cathedral which is impressive by reason of its size and grandeur. Later that day we attended the vigil at the Trinity Cathedral in the St. Alexander Nevsky Lavra. Here we were able to venerate the relics of this sainted Russian prince.

The next day we attended the Divine Liturgy here, and then visited the cemetery where many of the famous Russian composers are buried. Before returning

to the hotel for lunch, we visited the St. John of Rila Stavropigial women’s monastery, which was founded by St. John of Kronstadt, and where his grave is in the chapel crypt. Here again I was impressed by the changes since 1991. The place sparkled with brightness and cleanliness, not often found there, and the main cathedral, which had been used as a factory, was completely refurbished. In 1991 the nuns were using a small chapel for services; today it is used just for baptisms, and a number of people were gathered there for that purpose. After our tour we were given tea by the sisters, who also gave each person a framed icon of St. John of Kronstadt which was a copy of the one in the cathedral, and several other items as well. They were very friendly and hospitable; this was not always the case. Needless to say, we were very impressed with this convent.

After a late lunch, those of us who were going to the opera that evening were given an opportunity to visit an outdoor market which was located near the unique Church of the Resurrection (also called the Church on the Spilt Blood — it was built on the site where Alexander II was assassinated). This opportunity to see the church up close showed it to be covered with more icons and designs than one could imagine. To me it seemed to be a gaudy version of St. Basil’s on Red Square.

The opera started at 6:30 p.m.; we saw Ruslan and Ludmilla at the

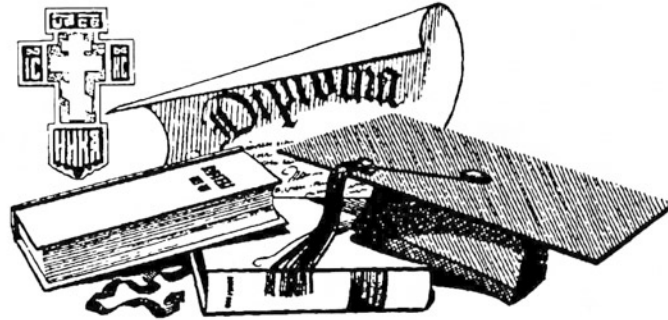
Marinsky Theatre. The performance was over around 11 p.m. and when we exited the theatre it was still light outside!

St. Petersburg was home to St. Xenia. How well I remember my first visit to her chapel almost ten years ago — that walk, late at night, through the cool, dark and overgrown Smolensk cemetery. Nothing has changed, except it is more overgrown. We stopped at St. Xenia’s Chapel twice during our visit, and the second time, during the afternoon, His Eminence celebrated a molieben in her chapel and we sang the responses. The people who gather there are always happy to see their fellow Orthodox Christians who honor St. Xenia. We were given some oil from the lamp on her grave, and I used this to anoint the people in my parish after our monthly prayer service to St. Xenia.

On our final day in St. Petersburg we visited the Peter and Paul Fortress and saw the church there the rulers of Russia are buried. You can imagine our surprise to see someone near the top of the spire of the church doing some repair work. We also visited the infamous prison where many famous revolutionaries were incarcerated. That afternoon we took a boat trip on the Neva and were entertained by some local artists. The next day we returned to the United States tired, but grateful that we had been blessed to visit and venerate the Holy Sites of Russia.

—Archpriest George Hasenecz

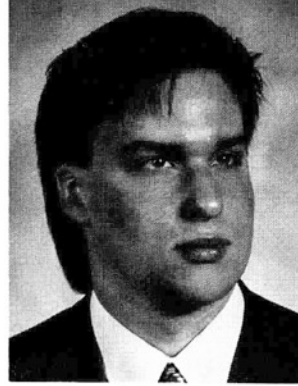
We Salute Our 1997 Graduates



Elise Bifano
Blue Mountain High School
St. Mary's Church
Coaldale, Pa.



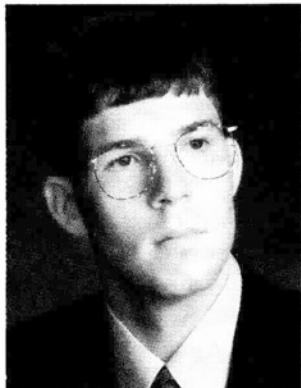
Kazi Bonczar
Phillips Academy
All Saints Church
Olyphant, Pa.



Edward J. Bosack, III
Penn State University
SS. Peter & Paul Church
Minersville, Pa.



Zachary Brusko
Hill High School
Holy Trinity Church
Catasauqua, Pa.



F. Joseph Campbell
Coatesville Area
High School
St. Nicholas Church
Coatesville, Pa.



Karen Chernikovich
John S. Fine High School
St. John the Baptist Church
Nanticoke, Pa.



Christopher Joseph Coles
Williams Valley
High School
Holy Ascension Church
Lykens, Pa.



Jaime Marie Cook
Pottsville Area High School
St. Mary's Church
St. Clair, Pa.

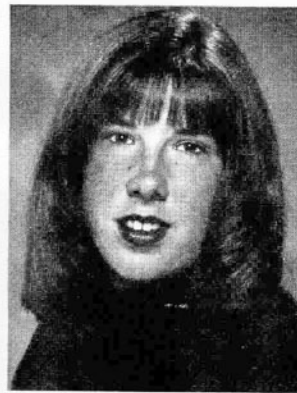
We Salute Our 1997 Graduates



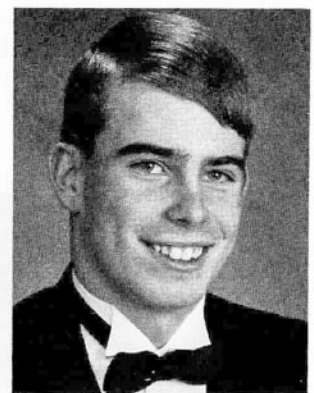
Danyel Donovan
Mid-Valley High School
St. Nicholas Church
Olyphant, Pa.



Andrea Dougherty
High School
St. Herman's Church
Shillington, Pa.



Tara Rae Drum
Berwick Area High School
Holy Annunciation Church
Berwick, Pa.



David Dzwonczyk
High School
St. Nicholas Church
Coatesville, Pa.



William Evanina
F.B.I. Academy
St. Nicholas Church
Olyphant, Pa.



Kimberly Evans
Lakeland High School
St. Nicholas Church
Olyphant, Pa.



Michele Renae Futchko
Lycoming College
Holy Trinity Church
Stroudsburg, Pa.



Jenny Hackett
Pleasant Valley
High School
Holy Trinity Church
Stroudsburg, Pa.



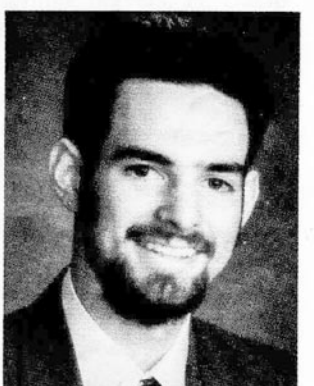
Amber Hallman
High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Natalie Hatrak
Minersville High School
SS. Peter & Paul Church
Minersville, Pa.

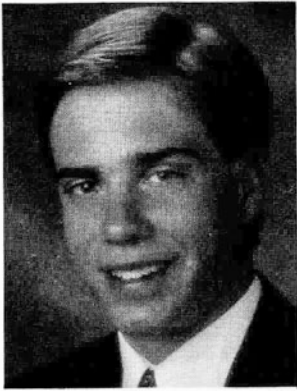


Timothy Alex Hasencz
St. Tikhon's
Theological Seminary
St. Nicholas Church
Bethlehem, Pa.

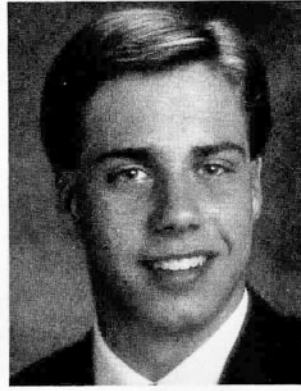


Bryan J. Hare
Coatesville Area
High School
St. Nicholas Church
Coatesville, Pa.

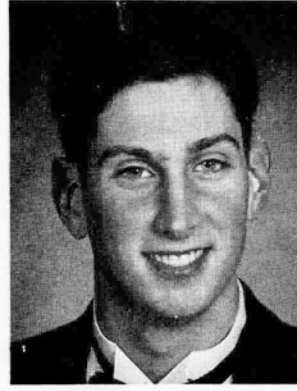
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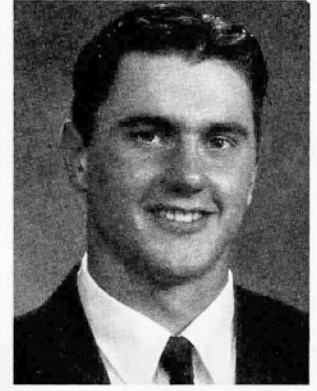
Matthew Henry
High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



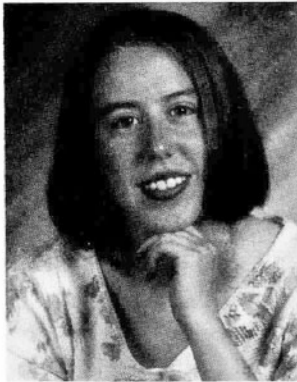
Michael Henry
High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



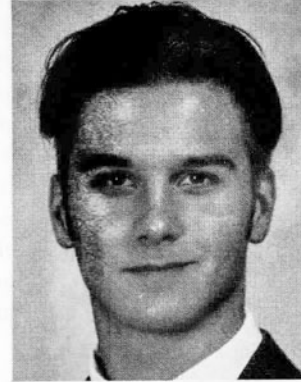
Jason J. Kutch
Archmere Academy
St. Michael the Archangel
Church
Wilmington, Del.



Thomas J. Lockard
Berwick Area High School
Holy Annunciation Church
Berwick, Pa.



Meghan McGinnes
High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Edward Michael Miele
Central Bucks High School
St. Mark's Church
Wrightstown, Pa.



Anne Narcoonis
Marywood College
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.



Lora Ann Nichols
Lehigh Area
High School
St. Mary's Church
Coaldale, Pa.



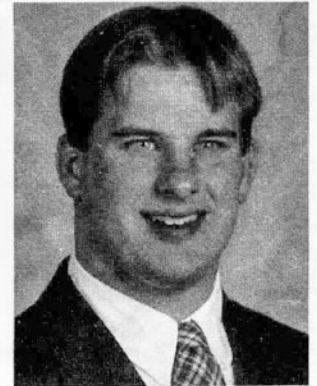
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Vanderbilt University
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Jillian F. Paprota
Hanover Area High School
St. John the Baptist Church
Nanticoke, Pa.



Holly Pieck
Wellesley College
Holy Resurrection
Cathedral
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

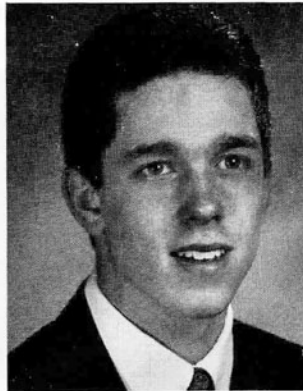


Kieth Pieck
Swarthmore College
Holy Resurrection
Cathedral
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

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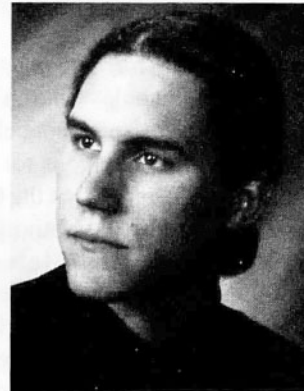
Heather E. Price
Berwick Area High School
Holy Annunciation Church
Berwick, Pa.



John W. Rabik
Central High School
Holy Assumption Church
Philadelphia, Pa.



Tanya Rezanka
Western Wayne
High School
All Saints Church
Olyphant, Pa.



John K. Seman
Oberlin College
St. Herman's Church
Shillington, Pa.



Melanie Sichak
Wyomissing Area
High School
St. Herman's Church
Shillington, Pa.



Rebecca Sichak
West Chester University
St. Herman's Church
Shillington, Pa.



Megan Marie Suhoski
Crestwood High School
Holy Resurrection
Cathedral
Wilkes-Barre, Pa.



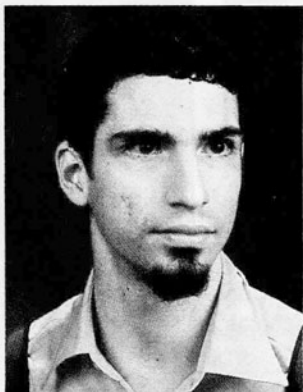
Ruth Alexandria Sysak
Carlisle High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.



Rebecca Telep
Bloomsburg University
St. Michael's Church
Jermyn, Pa.



Hannah Elizabeth Tsaporis
Univ. of the Arts,
Philadelphia
Holy Trinity Church
Stroudsburg, Pa.



Stephan Nikolaos Tsaporis
East Stroudsburg
High School
Holy Trinity Church
Stroudsburg, Pa.

NO PHOTOS

Paul J. Cunard
Hanover Area High School
St. John the Baptist Church
Nanticoke, Pa.

Blanche Hischak
Luzerne Community
College
St. John the Baptist Church
Nanticoke, Pa.

Emily Oldham
High School
Christ the Saviour Church
Harrisburg, Pa.

All in the Diocesan Family

BETHLEHEM

St. Nicholas Church

The St. Nicholas Church School enjoyed an outing at Knoebel's Park on Saturday, June 14. Icons for the beautification of the interior of the Church will be completed by the Nativity Fast.

Fr. Eugene and Matushka Fran Vansuch and their family are grateful to His Eminence, Archbishop Herman, and the diocesan family of clergy and laity for all their personal visits, phone calls, beautiful cards, words of encouragement, gifts, and prayers offered at the Divine Liturgy, at the time of the recent heart attack suffered by Fr. Eugene and his subsequent recovery. He is presently in Cardiac Rehab and slowly resuming his pastoral duties. Fr. Eugene and his family ask the Lord's blessings upon all for their love and concern.

Marriages: Damian Vansuch & Anastasia Yergey, May 18. Gregory Kelly & Jennifer Lynn Zentz, May 25.



Damian & Anastasia Vansuch following their wedding on May 18 at St. Nicholas Church

The deadline for the next issue of *Alive in Christ* is November 15, 1997.

BERWICK

Holy Annunciation Church



Fr. Andrew Shuga and the '97 graduates of the parish following the Divine Liturgy of June 8, 1997

CATASAUQUA

Holy Trinity Church

The parish of Holy Trinity held a successful community dinner May 3 and an annual parish festival was celebrated June 15. The parish also participated in the Catasauqua Independence Day celebrations in the local park, selling

holupki and halushki. They will have an holupki dinner in their parish hall on September 13, 1997 from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m.

Baptism: Joshua Alexander Morgan, son of Scott and Dana Morgan, June 14, 1997.

COALDALE

St. Mary's Church

An outing at Knoebel's Amusement Park was held on July 26. High School gradu-

ates were recognized with a dinner fol-



An easter egg hunt for the children was held on Saturday, April 19, with a surprise visit from the Easter Bunny

All in the Diocesan Family

GRADYVILLE

St. Herman of Alaska Church

On May 17 & 18, St. Herman's Church of Gradyville held its first "Polka Festival." Joe Stanky & the Cadets provided the music on Saturday and Cos-sack Sam entertained on Sunday. Ethnic foods and dances performed by the youth of the parish highlighted the weekend.



A molieben of thanksgiving was held for Helen & William Evetushick and Anna & Walter Sobolowski on June 8 to commemorate their 50th wedding anniversaries

HARRISBURG

Christ the Saviour Church

On May 21, Dana & Sue Talley presented a concert and talk in Christ the Saviour's parish hall on their missionary activity in Russia and Albania. Fr. Theodore Jurewicz has completed two icon murals in the Church: the Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem and Christ Blessing the Children. The holy icons will be blessed by His Eminence, Archbishop Herman on the 35th anniversary of the parish, scheduled for October 18 & 19, 1998. A chartered bus filled with 47 pilgrims went to St. Tikhon's Pilgrimage this year from the Harrisburg church. On June 8 an ethnic food festival was held and this year featured collectibles from Fr. John Perich. This fall, the St. Theophan study group will again meet on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month prior to Vespers. A Chinese Auction will be held on Oct. 5.



On June 15, Christ the Saviour was one of four area Orthodox parishes that participated in the annual March for Missions

NANTICOKE

St. John the Baptist Church

A successful rummage sale was held April 15-17. A chicken barbecue was held on May 17 at the church park. On



Fr. Daniel Ressetar with the graduates honored at Christ the Saviour Church this year

JERMYN
St. Michael's Church



V. Rev. John Kowalczyk receives the jeweled cross award from His Eminence, Archbishop Herman



Willard Brown of Jermyrn, Scholarship Committee Chairman, presents check for \$1,000 for student scholarships to Archbishop Herman, Rector of St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary



Anne Narcoonis of Jermyrn, a recent graduate of Marywood College, was honored by the Scholarship Committee following divine services



Matushka Dolores Dzury and family were the guests of St. Michael's at a dinner following Liturgy in memory of her husband and former priest at Old Forge, Fr. Valerian Dzury, on May 31

the weekend of June 7-8, St. John's was the site of a spiritual retreat entitled "Reaching In — Reaching Out" with Fr. Joseph Fester from the Chancery as the main speaker. This was sponsored by the Vision Year 2000+ Committee. The committee will continue to work on areas of outreach for the benefit of parish renewal on a continued basis. The annual bazaar was held on July 5-6 and featured a delicious menu of traditional foods, entertainment, and fellowship.

OLD FORGE
St. Michael's Church

An Easter egg hunt and breakfast was held on May 4 for all the youth of the parish. The youth of the parish enjoyed a day at Dorney Park on July 22. Alexa Barsigian and Paul A. Tumavich made their first Holy Confessions.

Baptism: Sophia Brooks, daughter of Robert & Maria (Mori) Brooks, Aug. 2, 1997.

Wedding: Judith Buranich and Jeremy Anderson, July 19, 1997.

SHILLINGTON
St. Herman of Alaska Church

Their annual Reading Phillies Barbecue and ballgame was held on August 6, and a parish Golf Tournament & 19th Hole Picnic was held on August 10. A talent show was held August 18 under

All in the Diocesan Family



On June 8 the parish surprised their Rector, Fr. David Mahaffey with a graduation party on the occasion of his graduation from St. Tikhon's Seminary



This year's king and queen were Steve Witiak and Anna Peregrim

POTTSTOWN Holy Trinity Church



On January 18, Marina J. Hutnyan and Daniel K. Long were married by Fr. Nicholas Yuschak



The Senior members of St. Michael's were honored again this year at the Annual Senior Citizens' Appreciation Day, June 26. Divine Liturgy followed by a meal and prizes for all those in attendance in St. Michael's Auditorium

OLYPHANT All Saints



The fiftieth wedding anniversary of Florence & John Boyko was celebrated April 26 with a reception at Heart Lake



On May 31, Christina M. Hutnyan and Jade D. Simmons were married by Fr. Nicholas and brother of the bride, Fr. Emil Hutnyan. Christina & Marina are the daughters of Fr. Michael Hutnyan and the late Matushka Mary Hutnyan



On Saturday, May 25, Fr. Nicholas baptized his granddaughter, Anastasia Eugenia Yuschak, daughter of Captain Michael and Karen Yuschak. Godparents were Nicholas Yuschak, Jr. and Karen Berezniak



St. Herman's parishioners enjoyed a day at Hershey Park on June 17

WILKES-BARRE

Holy Trinity



ROCMAS makes a presentation of \$2,000 to Archbishop Herman for St. Tikhon's Seminary

the direction of Rebecca Sichak, during which "The Jerusalem Singers" of Allentown performed a special concert. (1 photo)

Baptism: Madelyne Kay Grim, daughter of Tine & David Grim, June 8, 1997.

WILLIAMSPORT

Holy Cross Church

The Holy Cross Kids offered their support for the Orthodox Missionaries in Albania through the coin boxes for the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. The boxes, which had been placed throughout the community, were collected on St. Thomas Sunday with a total of \$466.20 being collected! Final preparations are under way for the 20th anniversary celebration of the parish, to be held November 2-3, 1997. Dana & Sue Talley will present a concert on Saturday following Vespers, and Archbishop Herman will celebrate the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday, at which time he will bless the new iconostasis, icons, tables, and stands. A dinner will follow at the Williamsport Sheraton. For details contact the parish at 1725 Blair St., Williamsport.



A special visitor came to Holy Cross on May 24: Dean of the Orthodox Cathedral in Prague, Czech Republic, Fr. Yaroslav Suvarsky. Fr. Yaroslav's visit was hosted by parishioner John Kovich, who formerly taught in Prague

WILMINGTON

St. Michael's Church

A Vacation Bible School was held at St. Michael's the week of June 16; 25 children participated in the week long education program. On Sunday, July 13, the parish enjoyed a baseball game between the Wilmington Blue Rocks and

All in the Diocesan Family

the Frederick Keys. The parishioners of St. Michael's Church were sad to see their choir director of the last two years leave this past June; as he graduated from

Achmere Academy and headed on to Princeton University, they expressed to him their deep and heartfelt gratitude.



Fr. George Palush, Fr. David Shewczyk, and committee members present \$2,100 to Archbishop Herman for St. Tikhon's Seminary



Fr. Daniel Kovalak chrismates Mr. Sergius (Richard) Lange into the holy Orthodox faith on Saturday, April 26



Holy Cross's newest member, Sophia Beiter was baptized and chrismated June 14 of this year



All Saints Day was a big event at Holy Cross, with an outdoor procession in which the faithful carried icons and sang hymns of praise

Deadline for the next issue of
Your Diocese
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is November 15, 1997.

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pictures, parish news, etc ...
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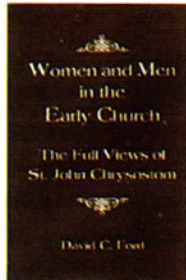
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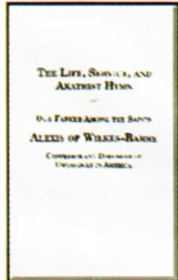
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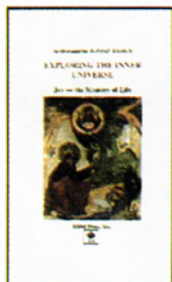
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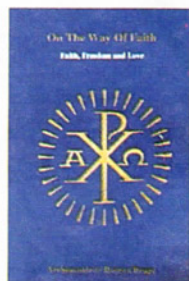
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The spirituality of a holy man of this century, whose outward life was uneventful but who left behind deeply moving meditations, poetic in style and profound in their theological vision . . . edited by disciple Archimandrite Sophrony . . . and shared by Father Zacharias, himself a student of Father Sophrony.

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

The Lives and Times of St. Silouan and Father Sophrony
Father Basil Summer

The life stories of two humble monks — one, a simple man of peasant background, who lived in the Russian monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mount Athos and was proclaimed a saint in 1988, only fifty years after his repose — and his student, the editor of his writings and founder of a flourishing monastic community in England.

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The Theology of "Theosis": The Goal of Two Holy Monks and Every Christian
Dr. Christopher Veniamin

Richly based in Scripture, the theology of the Fathers, and the lives of the Saints, theosis or deification is the basis of our Christian life. Typified in the examples of St. Silouan and Fr. Sophrony, the goal of every Orthodox person is to "acquire the Holy Spirit" (St. Seraphim) and "become like God" (St. Athanasius).

Tuesday, October 7, 1997

Practical Application of Two Saintly Lives for the Orthodox of America
Father Michael G. Dahulich

The spiritual life is not something reserved for a select few like St. Silouan and Fr. Sophrony, but something intended for all of us. And there is nothing extraordinary or esoteric about the methods we must follow in order to be deified. To the question, "How can I become like God?" . . . the answer is a very simple one.

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