



YOUR DIOCESE

Alive in Christ

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA • SPRING 2018



PASCHA
AROUND THE DIOCESE

45TH ANNIVERSARY
OF METROPOLITAN HERMAN'S CONSECRATION

YOUTH WINTER RETREAT

DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

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COMMUNICATIONS BRIEF

Glory to Jesus Christ!

The latest issue of Alive in Christ features many articles especially pertinent to our Diocese, as it should. This past February marked the 45th Anniversary of the Consecration of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, Former Archbishop of Washington and New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada, to the episcopacy. This auspicious event is reflected upon by the Diocese's own Archbishop Timothy Hojnicky.

A second article discusses the "Minor Orders," specifically the Reader. This an important article in other ways as well. Are you an active Orthodox Christian? Do you participate in services with the Gifts given to you by God? Do you support and participate in fellowship and activities of the Church? Or do you only show up on Sunday for Divine Liturgy, and maybe holidays. Take a few minutes to read the article and reflect on your life in the church.

The annual Teen Winter Retreat is discussed and by all accounts, youth of the Diocese had a great time working and playing, experiencing Orthodox fellowship with their peers.

Finally, the 19th All American Council will take place this July; its theme is "For The Life Of The World," inspired by the book of the same name by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann. His book and its impact on the Orthodox Church in America is discussed.

Don't forget to check the Diocesan website - www.doepa.org - for all of the latest news and events.



Alive in Christ is produced by
the Department of Communications
of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania,
a diocese of the
Orthodox Church in America.

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Alive in Christ is distributed
free of charge within the
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Submission Deadlines

August Issue: July 1
November Issue: October 1
February Issue: January 1
May Issue: April 1

In the interest of keeping current, events
that have occurred prior to the most
recent issue date will not be included.

Please submit articles and photographs
(with captions) to Aric Gingo at
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Seminarian Internship Program

Based on discussions held at the Spring Session of the Holy Synod and with the enthusiastic cooperation of Archbishop Michael and the administration of St. Tikhon's Seminary, we are launching a seminarian internship program this Fall for our own seminarians, five at present, and those of others dioceses as their bishops wish them to participate. At this time we have one seminarian from the Diocese of the South, Fr. Michael Shepherd, who will be serving in the diocese during his studies.

The purpose of the program is to give seminarians consistent, practical experience of service in parish life under the direct supervision of a mentor priest in one parish, following a list of goals and expectations which will be the responsibility of the parish, rector and the seminarian and seminary to fulfill and evaluate. Currently, this rubric is undergoing final review of the diocesan and seminary administrations, having been developed by Archpriest Nicholas Solak of Holy Trinity, Stroudsburg, Dean of the Wilkes-Barre deanery and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology at St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, New York, and will provide guidance for all involved. At the end of the first year it will be reviewed and adjusted based on experience, should that be necessary.

Every week seminary is in session participants will have the opportunity to serve weekly in the Sanctuary, read the Epistle or Gospel as appropriate and shadow the priest during coffee hour to learn interpersonal skills necessary in serving as clergy. Our students are quite excited about being able to serve on a weekly basis in their appropriate capacity. We would hope each student can meet with the respective council chair, choir director, church school director and treasurer to understand how each perceive their responsibilities and their relationship to the Rector. At the end of each school year, the mentor will provide a letter to the seminary outlining what was covered during the year. Additionally, I would hope the Matushki would take advantage of the opportunity to learn from the Matushki of our parishes. Ideally, we want each student to have the opportunity to serve regularly as first Deacon and later to be given opportunity to serve as first Priest. Certainly, each student will be allowed to give homilies as determined by the mentor.

During the month of June I ordained Vjekoslav Jovicic to the diaconate and priesthood, and Silouan Burns and Daniel Valentine

to the diaconate. Fr. Michael Shepherd was ordained by His Beatitude at St. Tikhon's Monastery during the Pilgrimage. Each of them, as well as seminarian Lawrence Conover, will be assigned a parish before the commencement of the school year after they meet as a group with the deans and diocesan administration in August. They are excited about this opportunity and so am I. It is my wish that participating parishes will provide funds for the travel of the seminarians during the school year, and would encourage other parishes that wish to do so as this program is intended for the benefit of our diocese not only in the short term but for the future. I hope the very favorable responses I and the parish priests have received from the parishes in which these men were ordained is indicative of your enthusiastic and generous support through prayer and monetary gifts for the formation of our seminarians. Let us not miss this wonderful opportunity to provide practical experience for our seminarians and other seminarians of the Orthodox Church in America.

THE 54TH ANNUAL DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY

The 54th annual Diocesan Assembly was held on January 25 & 26 at the Archangel Michael Orthodox Church in Wilmington Delaware. The formal opening of the Assembly began on Thursday evening, followed by dinner, Great Vespers in the church, and finally a guest address by Archimandrite Joseph Morris of St. Gregory Palamas Monastery in Hayesville, OH. Thursday ended with a Small Compline in the church.

The Assembly continued on Friday, beginning with Divine Liturgy. Following brunch, departments presented their reports. A question and answer period followed, and the reports were approved. Every department and deanery provided a report, which were posted on the Diocesan Website for review before the Assembly began. During the old business portion, the continuing saga of the Diocesan Property Transfer and move were discussed in detail. Finally, plans were made for the 2019 Assembly.





POTENTIAL PROPERTY IN BATH, PA

Since the last update posted on the Diocesan website in March, a property has been found in Bath, PA, seven miles from St. Nicholas Church in Bethlehem. It is a commercially zoned house with offices on the ground floor, a main floor with living room, dining room, kitchen and family room and a second floor with a master bedroom suite and three other bedrooms.

An offer has been made with conditions and accepted. The conditions pertain to the diocese receiving a favorable response to our petition for a zoning variance that will make it possible for it to serve as a residence as well as a diocesan office. The property was examined by the entire Diocesan Council, which approved the choice and made many useful suggestions for both the process of acquiring it and what could/should be done in the event of completing the purchase.

His Eminence has been at the forefront of this entire process consulting the Diocesan Council at every step, and there have been many before we reached this point. He has been graciously assisted with professional advice by Attorney John Coles of Christ the Saviour in Harrisburg, Mr. John McGarrity, of St. Nicholas in Bethlehem, a licensed contractor, along with Ms. Yadira Colon, our realtor, and most recently Attorney Lawrence Fox of Allentown, who has been retained to facilitate the zoning process, all of whom have been an immeasurable help.

The hearing regarding our request is scheduled for July 18th at 7:00 p.m. at 129 South Walnut Street, Bath, PA. The presence of our clergy and faithful may significantly influence a favorable ruling from the Zoning commission.

The **Major** Significance of the **Minor** Orders

ARTICLE COURTESY OF OCA.org / Reflections in Christ / Fr. Lawrence Farley / October 29, 2017

Many denominations have no real “minor orders”—i.e. clergy set apart to perform tasks other than ruling the flock and presiding at the celebration of the sacraments. In these communities, ecclesiastical status is starkly binary—one is either a layman or “the Minister.” If you are the latter, your function is to perform the entirety of the service yourself. You preside at all the sacraments, preach, and read the lessons. Sometimes a member of the laity might help, but when this occurs the task bestows upon the helper no change of ecclesiastical status: the person doing the reading that day does not thereby cease being a layman or become a clergyman. He or she is just helping out for that day. Their lay status remains unaltered by the task they perform.

Thus, when I was (briefly) in the United Church of Canada, the Sunday service was performed by The Minister (spelled with a capital “T” and a capital “M”). When I visited my (then) girl-friend’s Baptist church, the whole service was done by The Pastor. Of course people in the choir would sing and lead the congregational singing, and someone might do a solo, but they did so as individuals, not as members of a group to which some special ritual like ordination admitted them. Even in the Anglican Church where I served and which had special readers, the readers were still not considered as true “minor orders.” A Reader might indeed be admitted to that role by a special ceremony and with a special badge, but his status was not permanent, and it had to be renewed every time a new Rector or Minister came into the parish. Even their title betrayed their status: they were called “Lay Readers”—by definition not clergy in minor orders, but laity. The Anglican churches also had people to help out at the altar, called “servers” or “altar boys,” but no ceremony admitted them to the role. They simply showed up on Sunday morning and changed into their altar boy vestments with the priest’s permission.



This was very different from the practice of the early Church. In those days there existed a number of minor orders, each of which had a different task and role. The people in them were considered to be clergy of sorts, since they were admitted to their roles with a form of ceremony and prayer, and these ceremonies conferred upon them permanent status and rank. This practice has continued within the Orthodox Church to this day and so, for example, a person in the Orthodox Church who reads liturgically was (ideally) once tonsured a Reader by the bishop. That person was thereafter no longer called just “Michael” (for example), but “the Reader Michael,” and was communed and confessed under that name ever after. A person, having become a Reader, might then also later be ordained a Subdeacon with prayer and the laying on of the bishop’s hands, and would then no longer be “the Reader Michael,” but rather “Subdeacon Michael.” After their ordination they would be communed and confessed under that name and with that rank. Such ranks were not bestowed casually: the person being tonsured Reader or ordained Subdeacon was expected to take his task and his new rank seriously. He had other responsibilities also that went along with his liturgical duties.

Thus, for example, after praying for the newly tonsured Reader, the bishop would address him saying, “My son. . .it behoves you to peruse the divine Scriptures daily, so that the hearers watching you may receive edification, that you may in nowise shame your election. . .for by a chaste, holy, and upright life you will gain the favour of the God of loving kindness.” This showed that the ceremony of tonsuring a Reader or ordaining a Subdeacon truly bestowed upon the candidate an order and ministry of the Church, which in turn obliged him to pursue a life worthy of that calling.

This distinction between the binary roles of Minister and layman within Protestantism and the presence of the minor orders within Orthodoxy is of more than merely academic significance. It hearkens back to the apostolic Church, in which the liturgical assembly worked as a single body with many bodily functions: “even as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ” [1 Corinthians 12:12]. At that time there were many functions and roles in the assembled ekklesia, even as there were many functions in a living body. And all were crucially necessary to the total health and functioning of the body. “There are many members, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ or again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, it is much truer to say that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary” [1 Corinthians 12:20-22]. Thus everyone’s gift, calling, and liturgical contribution are necessary to the full and healthy liturgical functioning of the body on Sunday morning. The Priest cannot say to the Reader, “I have no need of you.” The Priest’s role may be the more prominent, but the Reader’s role also is necessary. Just imagine if the summoning call of “Wisdom!” prior to the Epistle reading were met with silence because there was no Reader that Sunday. People would soon discover that the head cannot say to the feet, “I have no need of you,” nor could the Priest say that to the Reader. Both were needed, head and feet, Priest and Reader.

The presence of so-called “Minor Clergy” (in itself an odd term; if both are equally necessary, why is one more “minor” than the other?) witnesses to the essentially corporate nature of authentic liturgical worship. The laity are not the liturgically disenfranchised or the great unwashed. In Holy Baptism they were washed, and became part of the holy laos, the holy people of God. As Saint Clement said in the earliest days of the Church, “Let each of you, brethren, make eucharist to God according to his own order [Greek tagmati], keeping a good conscience, not transgressing the appointed rule of his liturgy Greek leitourgias” [1 Clement, 41.1]. “Liturgy”/leitourgia in this context meant one’s personal contribution to the common good. Each person present on Sunday had his own task: the Priest offered the prayers as his leitourgia; the Reader read the Scripture lessons; the Subdeacon assisted the Deacon. Neither was really interchangeable; all were required. Everyone’s different leitourgia was needed.

One is sometimes tempted to slack off, and assume that their particular leitourgia is not really necessary. Who will really notice if I am absent and do not commune, pray, or sing? Surely only the Priest and perhaps the cantor or choir are really necessary? Who needs the Minor Orders? Who needs me and my little contribution? Well actually, God and His Church do. He notices when your voice is missing and your leitourgia absent. If you were initiated into one of the “Minor Orders” then you are AWOL if you skip out on a Sunday morning. And if you were initiated into the holy laos through Holy Baptism, you are similarly AWOL if you skip. The Church is more than The Minister and a cantor or choir. It includes all of its baptized members, as a body includes all of its limbs. This includes you. You are more important than you may think.

METROPOLITAN HERMAN:

Reflections of a Spiritual Son

ARTICLE COURTESY OF OCA.ORG | Reflections in Christ | Archpriest Timothy Hojnicky | February 11, 2018



NOTE: Saturday, February 10, 2018 marked the 45th Anniversary of the Consecration of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, Former Archbishop of Washington and New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada, to the episcopacy. He had been elected by the Holy Synod of Bishops on October 19, 1972. He retired on September 4, 2008. His complete biography is available online. To mark the occasion, Archpriest Timothy Hojnicky, Rector of Holy Apostles Church, Mechanicsburg, PA, wrote the following reflection, accompanied by photos from Metropolitan Herman's consecration in Wilkes-Barre, PA's historic Holy Resurrection Cathedral on February 10, 1973. We congratulate Metropolitan Herman on this occasion and ask God to continue to grant him strength and good health for many years to come.

Recently, I was asked to give a short reflection on the ministry of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, on the 45th Anniversary of his Episcopal Consecration. It is not an easy task, because I could write volumes about the many, many ways His Beatitude has affected my life in a positive way. I will try to offer just a few.

His Beatitude has been watching over me my entire life. The day I was baptized in Wilmington, Delaware in July of 1980, His Beatitude, then Bishop Herman, was present. He was there for the Lesser Blessing of the parish's new building. Over the years I had the blessing of being guided and formed in my vocation through his ministry. As a kid I can't tell you how many letters I wrote to him, with questions that seemed important to me at the time, but looking back must have seemed like a pesky kid interrupting a busy schedule. Nonetheless, His Beatitude always responded, and I still have those letters.

Growing up, I remember the excitement of waiting for him to arrive to the area Lenten Mission Vespers, and remember being in awe as the subdeacons vested him in the center of the Church. I remember at Summer Camp how he would come to the cookouts, and lead the groups on hikes. When I was old enough, I began to serve in the altar, and eventually as his subdeacon for a time. In seminary, I was blessed to travel with him on occasion, and really learned how to serve through his watchful eye, and direct corrections.

As I grew older, there were many times I came to him with various problems and concerns. He always responded with patience and love, even when I needed correction. But those corrections always came with a smile. I remember in particular a difficult situation that took place in Seminary. When I went to talk to him about it, I expected to have the riot act read to me. Instead, he patiently listened to me, and then simply asked what I learned from the event, and how I would do it differently the next time. He gave a gentle correction, offered me a Pepsi, and sent me on my way. This still serves as an example to me as a pastor of how to minister to those who come to me.

I was ordained to the priesthood in January of 2005, in the same church we first met, at my baptism some twenty-five years earlier. I remember being terrified the first week of serving when he came into the altar during an early morning daily Liturgy at the monastery, and simply said, "Pretend I'm not here." After the service, after I received his blessing, he told me to be at his office that afternoon. "What did I forget to do? Did I mess up?" I thought. Actually, he assigned me to my first parish that afternoon, only a week after being ordained. Later that spring, he gave me one of my greatest gifts, assigning me to my beloved parish which I have been in ever since.

It is not an exaggeration to say that my life and vocation were fostered and affected in a great way through the loving care and ministry of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman. Now in retirement, I pray for him, and visit him any time I come to Saint Tikhon's. On this the 45th Anniversary of his consecration to episcopal service, I join the many who sing "Axios" to this important man, who had and continues to have such a great influence and impact on my life. May the Lord remember him and his service to the Church in His Heavenly Kingdom. *Eis polla eti despota!*



Fellowship and Fun at the 2018 Winter Teen Retreat



By the Office of Young Adult Activities



The Diocesan Office of Young Adult Activities welcomed 27 students for the annual Winter Teen Retreat, held at Spruce Lake Retreat Center over the weekend of February 9-11, 2018.

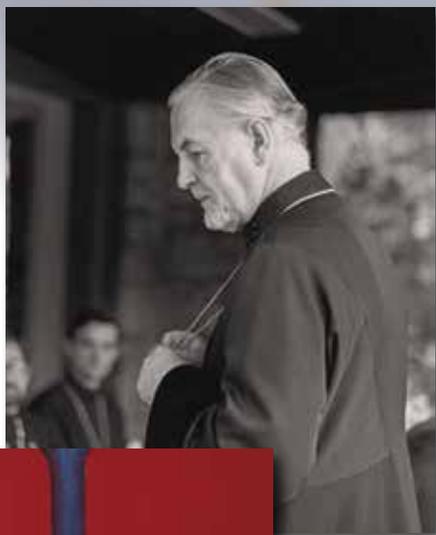
Fr. Timothy Hojnicky (Holy Apostles, Mechanicsburg), our Retreat chaplain and keynote speaker, presented two in-depth workshops about Great Lent. He discussed the focus and purpose of each week of Lent, building up to Holy Week and Pascha. His Eminence, Archbishop Mark also visited with the teens on Saturday evening, and hosted a lively Question and Answer session with lots of questions sparked from Fr. Tim's earlier workshops.

When they were not in workshop sessions, the teens had the opportunity to go snow tubing and winter hiking. They visited the reptiles at Spruce Lake's Nature Center. They also enjoyed a few moments warming up by the fire with a serving of s'mores. And most importantly, the teens got to make a lot of new friends throughout the weekend event.

We would like to offer special thanks to Deacon John Black (Holy Trinity, Pottstown) for serving as our Choir Director for the weekend event. We would also like to thank Christopher Metz (St. Nicholas, Bethlehem) for representing St. Tikhon's Summer Camp Teen Program at the Retreat.

Next year's Winter Teen Retreat will take place at Spruce Lake the weekend of February 8-10, 2019. Save the date! The event is open to youths ages 12-17. Please email retreat@ocayouth.org today to be added to our mailing list.

THE 19TH ALL AMERICAN COUNCIL “For the Life of the World”

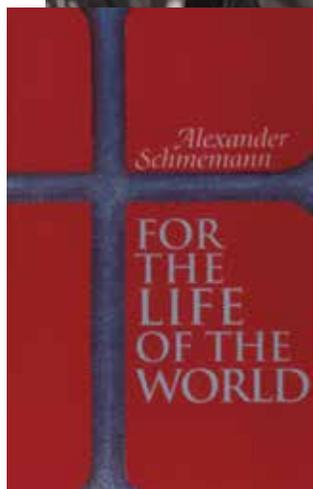


The 19th All American Council which meets this July in St. Louis has as its theme “For the Life of the World,” chosen since this year is the 55th anniversary of the publication by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann of a book of that title, subtitled “Sacraments and Orthodoxy.” Drawing the title from the Proskomedia Service of the Divine Liturgy, Fr. Schmemmann sought to reveal in this work the vision of the Orthodox Christian life as manifested in her sacramental celebration, through which human life in the here and now is transfigured. Based upon a series of talks he gave to young people, the work was intended to serve as an introduction to Orthodoxy for those within the Church who were culturally Western, living in North America, though the children and grandchildren of Orthodox immigrants who had built the constellation of churches that covered the continent at the time and were in the midst of transitioning from immigrant churches to native churches. Resources that explained Orthodox Christianity as precisely that, Christianity, was virtually non-existent at the time and Fr. Schmemmann was

profoundly conscious of the need to educate the young generation out of the riches of our tradition, equipping them to face the challenges of life in 1960’s United States.

Little did he or any know what lay ahead for the nation in the remainder of that tumultuous decade during which witnessed social revolution in the Civil Rights movement, Women’s movement, Anti War and Poverty movements and the still resonant experience of the Vietnam War. Within what was then the Metropolia profound developments were undertaken which would result in autocephaly in 1970. What did Orthodox Christianity have to offer? What response could it make to the challenges facing American society in particular and Western society in general?

For the Life of the World offered a concise, coherent and profound expression of Orthodox Faith and Life. Fifty-five years later the work is still in print, still read and discussed, still inspiring those born into Orthodox Christian families while also attracting those born outside the faith with its eloquent beauty and holistic vision of a Eucharistic life of loving service to God and neighbor.



DIOCESAN CALENDAR

JULY

July 1	All Saints Church	Olyphant
July 8	Holy Cross Church	Williamsport
July 15	St. Nicholas Church	Coatesville
July 18	Bath Borough Zoning Meeting	
July 21-27	19th All-American Council and FOCA National Convention	Saint Louis, MO
July 29	Holy Ascension Church	Frackville

AUGUST

August 5-6	Transfiguration: Holy Transfiguration Monastery	Ellwood City, PA
August 12	TBD	
August 15	Dormition of the Theotokos	
August 19	TBD	
August 23-25	OCPM Meeting	
August 26	90th Anniversary, Holy Trinity Church	Pottstown
August 29	Beheading of St. John the Baptist	

SEPTEMBER

September 2	Labor Day Weekend	
September 8	Nativity of the Theotokos.	
September 9	St. Mary's Church	Coaldale
September 15	Women's Retreat at St. Tikhon's Monastery Church	
September 16	St. Michael Church 110th anniversary	Mt. Carmel;
September 23	St. John the Baptist	Edwardsville