

Holy Apostles Orthodox Mission
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Rev. Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Rector

2011 Report to the Diocesan Assembly Saturday, December 2, 2011

This past year has been a busy time at Holy Apostles! 2010 ended with a special presentation to the parish on Christmas Day. Due to the excellent stewardship of the faithful, our very successful annual Fall Dinner Dances, and several VERY generous donations from outside the parish, the mortgage on our present facility was paid off a year early! It was decided to pay it off at the December Mission Council meeting, and to keep it a secret until Christmas Day when the "Mortgage Thermometer" (usually displayed in our vestibule) was wrapped up in a festive package. With the help of the kids of the parish, Fr. Tim revealed the poster with the clear message: PAID IN FULL.

The New Year brought about our annual Blessing of the Susquehanna River. This year on Sunday, January 9, the Sunday after Theophany, His Grace, our Bishop Tikhon was with us and led us in the ancient service standing on the banks of the Susquehanna River with the picturesque skyline of Harrisburg behind us. The five local Orthodox Churches of the Greater Harrisburg area were represented.

Great Lent was met with prayerful dedication and excellent attendance at services. In addition to our many services, the faithful especially enjoyed the times of fellowship after the Presanctified Liturgies where we could encourage one another in the Lenten struggle. His Grace Bishop Tikhon again joined us on the Sunday of the Holy Cross celebrating a full Vigil on Saturday night and the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Sunday morning where he awarded Fr. Timothy with the right to wear the kamilavka. Our parish also hosted our area Young Adults Retreat and a Deanery Lenten Vespers during Great Lent.

Pascha was glorious as always. Right before Holy Week we welcomed Xenia Gaskill and Tatiana Jacka into the Orthodox Church through Holy Chrismation. We were blessed to have Fr. Nicholas and Mat. Anastasia Molodyko-Harris with us again this year. This year Pascha was made all the more joyous as we used our newly constructed Tomb (built by Joseph Kurtz, Jr. for his Eagle Scout project).

On Sunday, May 8, 2011, the 3rd Sunday of Pascha, the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women, we traveled to the U.S. War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. There we blessed the former school's Indian Cemetery where the graves of 186 children who died while attending the school are buried. Of the 186 children buried there, 10 have been identified as baptized Orthodox Christians who are believed to have never received a proper Orthodox Christian burial. A Panakhida (Memorial Service) was served for these children followed by the blessing of their graves. The parish was informed about this situation by the Archpriest Michael Oleksa, Chancellor of the Diocese of Alaska, who had visited Mechanicsburg in September 2010 and told the sad story of these children. During this time in American history Native American and Alaska Native children were removed from their homes and transferred to Carlisle (and other places) to attend the boarding school. Holy Apostles plans on making this an annual event to remember those who have fallen asleep, and to proclaim the Risen Christ even to those in the tombs. May their memories be eternal!

We also proudly congratulated our Subdeacon Seraphim on successfully completing the St. Tikhon Seminary Deaconal Training Program (traveling to and from Philadelphia every week during the school year for two year . Many Years!

On Holy Pentecost we rejoiced to welcome John and Stacey Halliburton into the Catechumenate of the Orthodox Church and Amanda Mylin two weeks later. We pray that God would continue to bless them as they grow in love and knowledge of the Orthodox Church. Many Years!

We also celebrated 3 baptisms this past year! Ellen Irene Crosby was baptized Sunday, October 24, William John Maddox was baptized on Saturday, April 9, and Liam Daniel Jacka was baptized on Saturday, October 8. We thank God for the increase!

During the summer we started a "Youth Choir" in an effort to train and prepare for the future of our choir. The choir, led by Philip Graybill consists of the youth of our parish, ages 10-16. They have sung several pieces during the Liturgy and have done an excellent job! Keep up the good work!

Due to the growth of Holy Apostles a new chalice was needed. An Orthodox parish in Ganister, Pennsylvania recently closed and among other things donated their Chalice set to us for our use. The Sumple and Sullivan Families took up the task to have the Chalice set completely re-plated in honor of Basil Sumple's 85th Birthday. We thank them for their generosity and love in a gift that truly gives back to us every time we approach for Holy Communion.

Our local Orthodox communities rejoiced that the long awaited Agia Sophia Coffee House was blessed and opened its doors this summer. It serves as a wonderful oasis in the heart of the city of Harrisburg. Please come and continue to support it!

Our Church School began again on September 18, with over 35 children participating! We have also made the social activities of the youth of our parish a priority with many events throughout the year.

On Saturday, September 24, we hosted a Liturgy in honor of Fr. Nicholas Molodyko-Harris's 50th Anniversary of Holy Ordination. His Grace Bishop Tikhon, and His Beatitude, Retired Metropolitan Theodosius were with us for the event. The parish honored Fr. Nicholas with the gift of a pectoral cross at the end of the Liturgy.

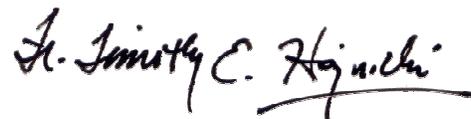
We welcomed the miraculous myrrh-streaming Hawaii Iveron Ikon of the Theotokos to our parish the evening of October 13. This was a special event that will be treasured by everyone present (some 200+!) for many years to come!

On Sunday, October 16, we were overjoyed to have our Subdeacon Seraphim Reynolds ordained to the Holy Deaconate at the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy by His Grace, Bishop Tikhon. To him and Matushka Mary – AXIOS! We also celebrated our 6th Annual Dinner Dance and Silent Auction where we burned the recently paid off mortgage.

As you can see this past year was one filled with much joy and activity – but we wouldn't have it any other way! We pray that the coming year is met with the same joy and activity especially as we pursue potential Church properties to move our growing community.

Glory to God for all things!

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Timothy C. Hojnicky". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Fr. Timothy Hojnicky