

Christ is Born!

Glorify Him!

Your Diocese

# *Alive in Christ*

The Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America Volume IX, No. 3 Winter 1993



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*Christ is Born!*

*Glorify Him!*



Dearly Beloved in Christ:

From the time of our first parents, Adam and Eve, the world had been waiting for the arrival on earth of the promised Messiah. Throughout the ages, God, in His loving providence and in many diverse ways, had prepared the Chosen People for His coming. God's promise was fulfilled when His only begotten Son appeared among us in the fullness of time in the person of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The purpose of His coming is explained briefly, but dramatically, in the Gospel of St. John: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have eternal life" (John 3:16). He came to restore the original beauty of His greatest work of art and crown of His creation, mankind, made to His image and according to His likeness. He came to redeem the human race which was broken and bruised by sin and to restore it to its rightful inheritance.

Christ is indeed the Light of the World. His rays of truth and the graces of salvation continue to penetrate today's spiritual darkness. Unlike the lights in the world that go out from time to time, the light of Christ can never be overpowered by darkness. It continues to shine as a beacon of hope and life and a sign of salvation to the world.

Beloved in the Lord, Venerable Pastors, God-loving Monks and all Devout Children of our Diocesan Family, on this joyous Feast of our Lord's Nativity, let us renew our commitment to Christ. May His message of peace and salvation fill our hearts. May His continued presence among us inspire us to greater loyalty and dedication to Him and His Church.

Prayerfully I greet all of you with the peace and joy of this blessed Feast and wish you an increase of mercies from our Lord Jesus Christ in the coming New Year.

With love in Christ,

*+ Herman*

+HERMAN  
Bishop of Philadelphia  
and Eastern Pennsylvania

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Your Diocese  
***Alive in Christ***

The Official Magazine of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania  
Orthodox Church in America

Volume IX      Number 3      Winter 1993

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**Your Diocese Alive**

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Sarah Jubinski gives keynote address.

## Diocesan Council Held In Northampton College

Over one hundred members of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania recently gathered in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for a diocesan parish council conference. His Grace, Bishop Herman, diocesan clergy, parish council members, and parishioners met at the Northampton Community College on Saturday, October 30, 1993, for an all day program focusing on parish growth.

In opening the conference with an introductory address, Bishop Herman set the tone for an active, productive day aimed at recognizing parish/diocesan situations that require attention and ways in which improvements may occur. Bishop Herman emphatically noted that we cannot sit back but rather must assume our responsibility in building up our Church. He encouraged both clergy and faithful to give of themselves while participating in the day's discussions so that the conference would provide enlightenment and insight into attaining our mutual goals in working for Christ's Holy Church.

Sarah Jubinski, Vice President of Bethlehem's St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church parish council, gave the keynote address, "The Parish:



Bishop Herman

Growth or Status Quo." Her inspiring presentation contained practical operational suggestions for conducting successful parish council meetings, as these meetings, in many ways and in concert with the pastor's spiritual guidance, steer the life of the parish. Mrs. Jubinski asked the attendees to consider the motivation for serving on parish councils. She suggested that these positions be

taken seriously and pointed out that much may be gained from a council comprised of a cross section of the parish, both men and women of all adult groups ranging from young adults to senior citizens.

Beyond discussing the operations of a successfully functioning parish council, Mrs. Jubinski pointed out the central role of worship in the life of the parish and how parish leaders must serve as examples to other parishioners by regularly and consistently participating in the liturgical life of the Church. Mrs. Jubinski identified additional responsibilities related to parish council service, including keeping abreast of Church issues at all levels (local, diocese, and national) through reading the wealth of available church publications, visiting other parishes, participating in conferences and attending the All-American Councils.

Challenging the attendees to bring about Church growth, Mrs. Jubinski discussed employing one's God-given talents as a means to this goal. She suggested taking one step at a time with one commitment today, another next week, leading ultimately to realization of the fruits of this labor.

*Continued on the next page.*

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Mrs. Jubinski set the foundation for the group discussions that followed, calling conference participants' attention to the group discussion topics, "membership" and "communication." These topics were chosen in response to the diocesan survey as primary areas of concern identified by survey respondents. Recalling the 1983 All-American Council's emphasis on Church growth and evangelization, Mrs. Jubinski observed that statistics show the Church has not grown significantly in the last ten years, and that some parishes have shown declines in membership. Mrs. Jubinski stressed that parish leaders can no longer be complacent about these declines. In addition, Mrs. Jubinski identified communication issues to be dealt with during the group discussion sessions. These issues included specific ways of enhancing communication, practical means to reach all segments of the Church, and individual responses to the means of communication currently in place.

After the keynote address, group break-out sessions followed. Conference participants met in three groups determined by the size of their parish: those with fewer than one hundred members, those with one hundred to two hundred members, and those with more than two hundred members. Diocesan council members Marie Proch and Paula Lahutsky, and keynote speaker Sarah Jubinski served as group facilitators in leading the spirited exchanges on membership for the morning session and communication for the afternoon session. Each one-hour group discussion was followed by reconvening in the large group to share ideas, concerns, and plans that were developed.

Matushka Deborah Maxwell served as spokesperson for the small (under one hundred members) parishes. In reporting the small parishes discussions to the conference body, Matushka Maxwell noted that her group began by emphasizing that



Large-size parish workshop.

Jesus Christ is the center of everything and it is from Him that we have our starting point. The small parishes discussed the reasons people are church members: Christ and His salvation. In order to keep members in the Church and to gain new members a number of ideas were presented. These included practices currently occurring in some parishes with other parishes contemplating instituting some of these in the near future. Matushka Maxwell cited enhanced communication through bulletins and newsletters, guest greeters sensitive to the feelings and needs of visitors to the parish, education on all levels, individual attitudes that foster participation of others, public/community involvement of the priest and the faithful, and individual personal contacts in which the faithful show love for one another.

Father John Onofrey, spokesman for the medium (one hundred to two hundred members) parishes reported that the medium parishes discussed the importance of recognizing the responsibility of doing God's work. In contending with the challenges of parish leadership positions, the group identified a need for a handbook for parish council members. Current successful practices were exchanged among group members with suggestions for adapting these practices to other parishes. The concept of the parish as a family unit was emphasized in leading to mutual understanding and inter-generational cooperation. Specific suggestions ranging from the obvious to the non-tradi-

tional were cited as means to increase membership and enhance communication. Sending greeting cards, participating in low cost church/family dinners, having occasional or regular luncheons instead of traditional "coffee hours," inviting people to Vespers, making needs known, and enlisting others to pray for us, are but a few of the ideas presented.

Representing the large (over two hundred members) parishes, Father Eugene Vansuch reported that this group cited a need for a "vision" for the Church. In developing this vision, reaching new members, and returning lost sheep to the fold, the representatives of the large parishes listed a number of practices to consider: (1) newspaper and advertisements inviting people to discover Orthodoxy; (2) outreach to mixed marriages; (3) soliciting involvement on committees from less active members; (4) assisting visitors during the liturgical services; (5) college outreach; (6) effective and meaningful bulletin boards; (7) monthly activities calendars; and (8) welcome packets for newcomers. The group also suggested biannual pastoral visitations to provide direct personal contact in the home, visitations by the laity to shut-ins, follow-up contacts with visitors, parish retreats, and youth groups such as the Federated Russian Orthodox Clubs.

The large parish representatives noted that what is referred to as a lack of communication may in reality be a lack of concern. The group noted that perhaps the issue is tied to the

faithful not fulfilling their Orthodox responsibilities. Fr. Vansuch indicated that the group discussions called for Orthodox Christians to respond to communications, be responsible for one's own opinion, express concerns to the parish council and priest, provide feedback to the priest, and communicate with those outside of the Church. The group also cited the need for dynamic clergy involved in all phases of life.

The day concluded with closing remarks from His Grace, Bishop Herman, who urged the conference participants to take the lead in responding to the message given to all of God's children. He suggested that the day's activities have brought the conferees a better understanding of the tasks entrusted to members of Christ's Church. He noted that it is also apparent how short we fall in attempting to fulfill this task. Bishop Herman reflected on the emphasis on spiritual growth, calling on himself and the clergy to be good examples to those entrusted to their care. Observing that the clergy cannot do it alone, His Grace pointed out the need for clergy and laity to support each other.

Bishop Herman recalled the positive results of the celebration of the Millennium of Christianity in Russia in 1988. Challenging the conferees to gain even more through the current celebration of the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America, Bishop Herman called for the faithful and clergy to open the doors of the churches to those outside of the faith. The bishop reminded the conference participants that Orthodox Christians must listen to only one person, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Any confusion regarding church discipline is confusion brought on by man, not God, as Jesus "permitted no confusion," noted the bishop. "Confusion is never resolved unless we go to Christ Himself," the bishop added. To deal effectively with this, Bishop Herman specified that Orthodox Christians must permit the com-

mandments and teachings of Christ to be the guide. The bishop urged the faithful to "choose to be obedient to Christ's commandments, teachings, and to permit them to rule our lives."

In concluding, His Grace, Bishop Herman, noted that this is a great beginning for us. While we do not know what the end result will be, the bishop pointed out that our good intentions will be written in the Book of Life. He called for a new beginning in the life of the parish, for both clergy and faithful to examine themselves in working together to build up the parish and the Church.

The concluding words of Bishop Herman captured the sentiments of the lay and clergy conference partici-

pants as well. Those in attendance were asked to complete evaluation forms rating the quality of the conference and the benefits gained by attending. The evaluation responses were overwhelmingly positive with many participants asking for more frequent conferences of this nature. Evangelization and programs for youth, singles, divorced, married, and senior citizen members emerged as areas of high interest for future conference topics. One participant wrote, "We need to continue the process by developing workshops in some of the areas discussed . . . We need to keep talking together as a diocese. We'll get better as we do."

—Paula Lahutsky



Middle-size parish workshop.



Small-size parish workshop.

# The Winter Feast Of Lights

*"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5).*

Not just one or some of our Orthodox festal celebrations are feasts of light, they all are; in fact, every day of the year in our worship, we may encounter the real presence of the Transcendent Light, that Light which transfigures those who are prepared and who humbly cooperate with the Divine Energies. Holy Apostle Paul proclaims, "It is the God Who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness, Who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Christ'" (II Cor. 4:6).

If all Feasts and all days of the year are feasts of light, yet three in particular stand out most brilliantly. Centrally, of course, is Pascha:

Now are all things filled with light:

Heaven and earth, and the places beneath the earth;

Let all creation celebrate the Resurrection of Christ,

In Whom we are established.

*(Paschal Canon)*

Next in mind is Transfiguration in the later part of summer. In the Vigil of that Feast, we hear:

Today on Tabor in the manifestation of Thy Light, O Word,

Thou unaltered Light from the Light of the unbegotten Father,

We have seen the Father as Light and the Spirit as Light,

Guiding with light the whole creation.

*(Exapostilarion at Matins)*

The season of winter no less has in its midst a very special Feast of Light: Epiphany, which means "manifestation." Here, as always, the Light manifest is the three-fold Unity of the Holy Trinity.

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptised in the Jordan,

The worship of the Trinity was



made manifest...

*(Tropar)*

The Savior, Who is grace and truth,  
Has appeared in the streams of the Jordan,

And enlightened those that sleep in darkness and shadow;

For the Light that no man can approach

Has come and is made manifest

*(Exapostilarion)*

If the Feast of Epiphany presents to us each year Christ's Baptism at the hands of St. John the Forerunner, what then is the connection between the theme of light and the washing of Our Lord in Jordan? We know surely that of all persons who

ever lived or ever will live, Christ alone needed no baptism for the forgiveness of sins. But then, He needed no transfiguration to reveal His Divinity, nor the Resurrection to reveal His immortality. Yet, He went through these, not as in a play, but deigning to suffer these for our sake and our salvation. The holiness, the perfection, the grace, the joy, the Light that He is by nature, He wishes to share with others, to bestow on us, unworthy as we are.

St. Gregory Nazianzen in an Oration delivered on January 6, 381, at Constantinople, spoke eloquently about the Light which is manifest at



the Baptism of Our Lord:

"God is Light: the most high, the unapproachable, the ineffable, that can neither be conceived in the mind nor uttered with the lips, that gives life to every reasoning creature. He is in the noetic world what the sun is in the aesthetic world, presenting Himself to our minds in proportion as we are cleansed, and loved in proportion as we love Him, contemplating and comprehending Himself, and pouring Himself out upon what is external to Him: That Light, I mean, which is contemplated in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, whose riches is their unity of nature, and the one outpouring of Their brightness.

"A second light is the Angel, a kind of outflow or communication of that first Light, drawing its illumination from its inclination and obedience thereto . . .

"The third light is man, a light which is visible to external objects. Man is called light (poetically in the ancient Greek language) because of his faculty of speech. And the name is applied again to those who are more like God and who approach God more nearly than others.

"Light was also the first commandment given to the first man—for the commandment of the Law is a lamp and a light (Proverbs 6:23), and because Thy judgments are a light upon the earth (Psalm 119:105), although the envious darkness crept in and worked wickedness. Moses' face was made glorious by the Light (Ex. 34:30), and to mention more lights—it was Light that appeared out of fire to Moses in the burning bush that remained unconsumed. And it was Light in the pillar of fire that led Israel through the wilderness. Light carried up Elijah in the chariot of fire that did not burn him as it carried him. It was Light that shone round the shepherds when the Eternal Light was mingled with the temporal. Light was the beauty of the Star that showed the path to Bethlehem and guided the Magi on their way, the escort of the Light above us when He came amongst us. Light was that

Godhead which was revealed on the Mount to the disciples—a little too strong for their eyes. Light was that vision which blazed out upon Paul, and by wounding his eyes healed the darkness of his soul. Light is also the splendor of Heaven to those who have been purified here, when the righteous shall shine forth as the Sun (Matt. 13:43), and God shall stand in the midst of them, deciding and distinguishing the ranks of the Blessedness of Heaven (Wisdom 3:7). Light beside all these in a special sense is the illumination of Baptism of which we now speak, for it contains a great and marvelous Mystery of our salvation."

Christ alone is sinless. Since the event of Adam's fall, sin belongs to humanity as an infirmity which cannot be cured but by God Himself. But the Master did not leave His

*Christ alone is sinless. Since the event of Adam's fall, sin belongs to humanity as an infirmity which cannot be cured but by God Himself.*

creatures unaided; rather He set about fashioning a new creation, just as He had created the old one from nothing. But the second is more exalted than the first, and it is inaugurated in each person by baptism—that Holy Mystery which receives its power from Christ's immersion in the Jordan.

Baptism was called "illumination" by the early Christians and by Orthodox Christians throughout the ages. It not only reestablishes our communion with God, but grants us the very splendor and glory of God Himself. Everything in Heaven is clothed with Light: the Holy Trinity, the angels, the saints, all who stand before the Throne of the Most High are robed in Light. This "garment" may be called by many names: light, fire, radiance, energies, glory—all referring to the same reality which is bestowed as a gift to those who re-

pent and freely enter the waters of baptism. Having died with Christ, the neophyte is raised as a new creation and the "robe of light" is put on at the singing of this hymn:

Vouchsafe to me the robe of Light  
O Thou who clothest Thyself with light as with a garment,

Christ our God, plenteous in mercy  
*(from the Baptismal Service)*

Since we are double-made, says St. Gregory, that is, body and soul, one visible—the other invisible, the cleansing of our being must be twofold: by water and the Spirit. This double cleansing is foreshadowed in ancient Israel, as Paul points out: "Our fathers 'all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea'" (I Cor. 10:2; reflecting Ex. 13:21).

The cloud is the manifestation of the "waters above"—the material realm. These were separated in the

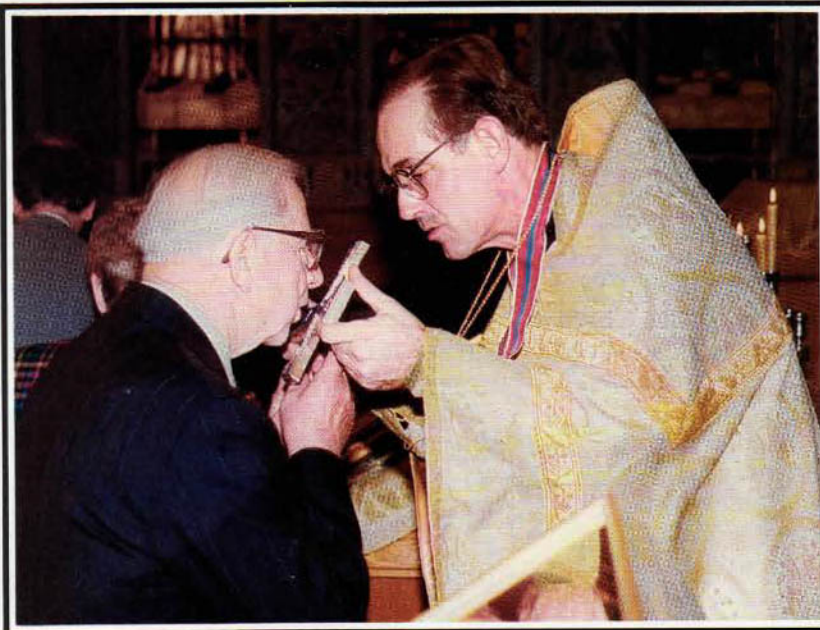
old creation and are now harmoniously rejoined in the new. Baptism then fully "recasts" us without visible fire; it creates us anew without breaking up the old.

Our baptism, empowered by Christ's, becomes our conversion, our purification, our regeneration, and our participation in the Light. The effect is recounted by St. John the Theologian: "Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He appears we shall be **like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is" (St. John 3:2). Since He is Light, we then become Light, as Paul affirms: "Once you were in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of Light—for the fruit of Light is found in all that is good and right and true" (Eph. 5:8-9).

—Archpriest Theodore C. Heckman

# On Founder's Day: A Tribute To Father Daniel K. Donlick

The Lord in His love for us does nothing by chance, but everything for a reason. And we are all quite familiar with that reason: that all might be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth. His guiding hand was truly felt by all on this Founder's Day celebration in which the Archpriest Daniel K. Donlick was honored. Not only did we all glory over how our Lord used His elect vessel, Saint Patriarch Tikhon, not only did



Archpriest Daniel K. Donlick

Jacewicz, a most generous benefactor of the seminary; the newly-ordained Father Deacon Peter Dubinin; Father Anthony (DuChaine), acting academic dean of Saint Tikhon's Seminary; Father Richard Gahuza, dean of Saint Pius X Roman Catholic Seminary in Dalton; John Boyko, president of Saint Tikhon's Century Association; Walter Palchik, vice-president of Saint Tikhon's Century Association, and member

of the Board of Trustees; Matushka Elizabeth Kondratick; Matushka Delores Donlick; and Father James Lackenmeier, president of King's College.

we feel grateful to our Lord for how He has used His vessel, the Archpriest Daniel, but even further we felt so strongly that the same Lord is there guiding not only Father Daniel, but all His faithful children towards a deeper walk with Him. This was a day truly blessed by the Lord.

The day began with the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy in the monastery church by His Grace, Bishop Herman, and many diocesan and visiting clergy. During the Divine Liturgy, seminarian Peter Dubinin was ordained to the Holy Diaconate, and Father Sergei Glagolev delivered the homily. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, the Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, Father Rodion Kondratick, presented Father Daniel with the award of Saint Innocent, as well as a Bicentennial Cross.

In addition to all the other events, this year's Founder's Day was marked

by the official groundbreaking ceremony for the new mausoleum. After the veneration of the Cross, His Grace, Bishop Herman led the procession to the New Cemetery. The clergy and faithful endured the cold wind as His Grace read the prayers for groundbreaking and himself took a shovel and dug up the earth in the shape of a Cross.

Following the groundbreaking, all gathered for the banquet. The toastmaster for the dinner program was the V. Rev. John Kowalczyk. Throughout the program, Father John kept the life of Saint Patriarch Tikhon in the foreground, reminding us of the continuity of God's works from the saints who went before us, to those of us who strive to follow their noble examples.

Father John then introduced the honored guests at the head table: John Paluch, president of the Friends of Saint Tikhon's Seminary; Julia

member of the Board of Trustees; Matushka Elizabeth Kondratick; Matushka Delores Donlick; and Father James Lackenmeier, president of King's College.

The first speaker was Father Rodion, representing His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, who was unable to attend due to his busy schedule. Father Rodion read the following letter from the Metropolitan:

"Dear Father Daniel,

"I greet you today as one who bears within his heart both the joy and sadness I am sure is felt by everyone present in this room.

"We gather to honor you and we gather to thank you. At the same time, we know that you are finishing one aspect of your ministry and calling . . .

"Over the years, Father Daniel, your work has strengthened the moral, spiritual, and academic fiber

of Saint Tikhon's Seminary. Much was placed on your shoulders, more than most could carry. And you bore it with the dignity and courage that came from your desire to serve Christ and His Church. Indeed, it is a privilege for everyone here to be here on this day and to honor you and offer you our humble and sincere thanks.

"But also be sure, dear Father Daniel, that those who are here offer you more than words of gratitude. All of us have witnessed the devotion, compassion, love, care, and concern your dear wife, Delores, and children have shown you over the many years. I now ask you, Father Daniel and Delores, on behalf of those here present: allow us to share your burden; allow us to assure you that you are not alone but surrounded by those who love you and desire to care for you in any way we can. You and your wife have strengthened us, now allow us to strengthen you.

"Father Daniel and Delores, may your labors continue to be a sweet-smelling fragrance to Almighty God; may you continue to inspire those who yearn to serve the Lord and His Church; and may the light of Christ ever shine from you for all to see and know that the glory, power, and love of God is ever victorious."

In conclusion, Father Rodion presented Matushka Delores with a special limited-edition Bicentennial bowl from Tiffany's, and the Donlick household with the official O.C.A. Bicentennial icon.

The next speaker was His Grace, Bishop Herman. He spoke first about the missionary labors of Saint Patriarch Tikhon in America. Just as the Holy Patriarch knew how to express himself to defend the teachings of the Church and to lead all to the Heavenly Kingdom, so do we on this day honor all who have followed in his footsteps.

"This day we have the privilege of acknowledging the good work of one such laborer, that of Father Daniel, together with his wife and children. We know that they were willing to give totally of themselves for the building up of Christ's Holy Church,

not looking for that reward in this temporal life, but looking toward life in His Heavenly Kingdom."

In his own labors, Father Daniel followed the example of Saint Tikhon, not only in his accomplishments, but also in the sufferings which he endured. Speaking of the many illnesses that have forced Father Daniel to retire from his position of Academic Dean, His Grace said:

"The trouble with his eyesight was the most difficult to accept, and not because he felt it was some kind of personal punishment or some kind of personal pain . . . His only concern was that he would not be able to continue to do the work he had been doing and in the manner he would like to do it . . . We are grateful for one thing, Father Daniel, and that is, that your greatest gift was not touched. If you look to all your accomplishments, look to all the good that people are going to say about you, not

one person is going to say that they saw you reading; not one person is going to say that they saw you writing; but one thing that they will forever acknowledge: the words that came out of your mouth, the wisdom you offered to . . . all the people you ever came in contact with. The Lord was very careful not to touch that . . . And as we are grateful, we pray that you will be just as grateful to the Lord. May he permit you to continue to be that good instrument and lead others into the Heavenly Kingdom."

After Bishop Herman's talk, Father John Kowalczyk introduced various members of the diocesan family, who also wished to express their love for Father Daniel. Seminarian Gregory Hatrak presented a gift to Father Daniel on behalf of the student body, thanking him for his love and respect, and for being an inspiration to all the students. Hi-

*Continued on the next page.*



A toast is offered.



Founder's Day Banquet.

## Founder's Day

*Continued from page 9.*

eromonk Gregory, on behalf of the monastic community, offered a photograph of Father Daniel at his ordination. Father Deacon Gabriel Petorak made a presentation with his son Joshua on behalf of St. Michael's Church in Jermyn. It was there that Father Daniel had served as pastor from 1971-1978, and it was there also that seventeen years ago, he had founded the Good Samaritan Society. Gifts were also presented by Mr. John Boyko on behalf of the Century Association, and by Mr. John Paluch on behalf of the Friends of Saint Tikhon's.

Finally, Father Daniel stood up to respond to all these gifts and words of love. In his humility, he dismissed all the praise given to him as exaggeration. He spoke openly and with feeling about the many trials and sorrows he had to undergo in the past few years, and about how so many had generously offered their help in these trials. He expressed the hope that now he would learn to develop more fully the gift of listening. Father Daniel spoke about Mary Magdalene and how she came to know the risen Lord not by seeing, but through hearing:

"And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, 'Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?' She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, 'Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.' Jesus saith unto her, 'Mary.' She turned herself, and saith unto him, 'Rabboni'; which is to say, Master" (John 20:14-16).

In introducing Fr. Daniel to speak, Fr. John had told of how Fr. Daniel, for his first job as a young man, had worked for one year at IBM. There, the company's internal slogan, THINK, was everywhere put on display before the eyes of the employees. Think he did—he thought about going to Seminary to study for the priesthood, and left after just one

year to do so. And today, near the close of his speech, Fr. Daniel—after so many years spent educating priests—spoke of how happy it had made him this very day that a young man had told him he had made up his mind to study for the priesthood. Reminding us of the great need for vocations, he asked everyone present to encourage their sons and grandsons, and other young men planning their futures, to consider the high calling of serving in the vineyard of the Lord.

Father Daniel also gave a moving tribute to his Matushka Delores, for her selfless love for him and for his

family. May her devotion and love for her husband and his calling be an example to all of us, as is Father Daniel himself—for he has taught us, through his words and through his example, to turn the eyes of our hearts to "the one thing needful": our Lord Jesus Christ and His Heavenly Kingdom. Let us pray that the Lord will continue to bless Father Daniel, Matushka Delores, and their children, David, Daniel, Thomas, and Deborah, that by their lives they may continue to show forth the light of Christ for their salvation and the salvation of all mankind.



A cake in honor of Father Daniel.



Faithful of Holy Trinity, Stroudsburg, with Father Daniel.

# Father Michael And Olga Kovach Celebrate Their Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary

On Sunday, September 6, 1993, there was a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy performed at Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church in Harrisburg, Pa. The church was filled with friends, relatives, and parishioners—over two hundred in all. The service was celebrated by His Grace, Bishop Herman, of Eastern Pennsylvania, and the host pastor, V. Rev. Daniel Ressetar, along with his assistant, the Rev. Dr. Michael Kovach. The other celebrants were V. Rev. Paul Lazor, Dean of Students at St. Vladimir's Seminary; V. Rev. Daniel Hubiak, of Moscow, Russia, the O.C.A. representative in Russia; Protodeacon Basil Hubiak of Chicago; and Deacon Nicholas Wyslutsky, of St. Tikhon's Seminary. The musical renditions and choir singing were led by the choir director, Matushka Theodora Ressetar, wife of Father Daniel Ressetar. The sermon given by Bishop Herman certainly inspired all those in attendance and was well received.

Father Michael G. Kovach is the surviving member of the first class to graduate from St. Vladimir's Seminary in 1943. He married Olga Hubiak on September 5, 1943, and was ordained to the priesthood on September 21, 1943. He was commissioned as an U.S. Army chaplain during World War II and served for thirty months.

Father Michael continued his studies at the University of Moscow during the summer of 1963 and at St. Sergius Theological Institute in Paris during the fall of 1969. He was the



Fr. Michael and Mat. Olga Kovach

pastor at parishes in Ambridge and Edwardsville, Pa. A graduate of Columbia University with a B.A. in 1942, he earned his doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh in 1957. Before being assigned to the local parish, he was an educator and administrator at Millersville University from 1959 to 1986.

From 1967 to 1987, Father Michael was a board member of WITF-FM, and from 1967 to 1989, a board member of the Congress of Russian-Americans. He was a member of the Governor's Ethnic Heritage Commission from 1980 to 1986. Since 1985, he has been the spiritual advisor of the Orthodox Society of America (formerly UROBA), and since 1990, a member of the Bicentennial Commission of the Orthodox Church in America.

The Kovach's daughter, Helene, is married to John F. Dmochowski, M.D., and have two children: Ivan, a senior at Harvard University, and

Sasha, a member of the Boston Ballet Co. Ballet Corps.

Immediately after the Divine Liturgy, a coffee hour was held. At 1:30 P.M., there was a Molieben served, performed by His Grace, Bishop Herman; V. Rev. Daniel Ressetar; Deacon Nicholas Wyslutsky; Rev. Theodore Boback, U.S. Army chaplain from Fort Knox, Ky.; V. Rev. Paul Lazor; and Rev. Paul Borick, St. Mary's Church, Coaldale. At this service, His Grace, Bishop Herman, expounded upon the many achievements of Father Kovach on behalf of the Orthodox Church in America. It was pointed out that he devoted most of his life to the service of Orthodox Christian people, the Russian people, and the Church in general. His Grace also recognized Matushka Olga Kovach for her untiring efforts on behalf of their various local parishes and the Orthodox Church in America. At that time, the Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church of Harrisburg presented to them two icons, Christ the Saviour and the Theotokos.

Immediately following there was a banquet held at the social hall next door, which was attended by approximately 125 people. The meal served was especially good, and the singing which accompanied it was most enjoyable. After several hours of joyous festivities, the various people in attendance started to leave for their distant homes. May God bless Father Michael and Matushka Olga in the years ahead. We wish them and their families many years of happiness and good health.

# The Birthday Of The Lord Is The Birthday Of Peace!

From a sermon by Saint Leo the Great, Bishop of Old Rome and Pope

Although the state of infancy, which the majesty of the Son of God did not disdain to assume, developed with the passage of time into the maturity of manhood, and although after the triumph of the passion and the resurrection all his lowly acts undertaken on our behalf belong to the past, nevertheless today's feast of Christmas renews for us the sacred beginning of Jesus' life, his birth from the Virgin Mary. In the very act in which we are reverencing the birth of our Savior, we are also celebrating our own new birth. For the birth of Christ is the origin of the Christian people; and the birthday of the head is also the birthday of the body.

Though each and every individual occupies a definite place in this body to which he has been called, and though all the progeny of the church are differentiated and marked with the passage of time, nevertheless as the whole community of the faithful, once begotten in the baptismal font, was crucified with Christ in the passion, raised up with him in the resurrection and at the ascension placed at the right hand of the Father, so too it is born with him at this Nativity, which we are celebrating today.

For every believer regenerated in Christ, no matter in what part of the whole world he may be, breaks with that ancient way of life that derived from original sin, and by rebirth is transformed into a new man. Henceforth, he is reckoned to be of the stock, not of his earthly father, but of Christ, who became Son of Man precisely that men could become sons of God; for unless in humility he had come down from us, none of us by our own merits could ever go up to him.

Therefore, the greatness of the gift which he has bestowed on us demands an appreciation proportioned to its excellence; for blessed



Paul the Apostle truly teaches: We have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. The only way that he can be worthily honored by us is by the presentation to him of that which he has already given to us.

But what can we find in the treasure of the Lord's bounty more in keeping with the glory of this feast than that peace which was first announced by the angelic choir on the day of his birth? For that peace, from which the Sons of God spring, sustains love and mothers unity; it refreshes the blessed and shelters eternity; its characteristic function and special blessing is to join to God those whom it separates from this world.

Therefore, may those who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the

flesh nor of the will of man, but of God, offer to the Father their harmony as sons and daughters united in peace; and may all those whom he has adopted as his members meet in the firstborn of the new creation, [in him] who came not to do his own will but the will of the one who sent him; for the grace of the Father has adopted as heirs neither the contentious nor the dissident, but those who are one in thought and love. The hearts and minds of those who have been reformed according to one and the same image should be in harmony with one another.

The birthday of the Lord is the birthday of peace, as Paul the Apostle says: For he is our peace, who has made us both one; for whether we be Jew or Gentile, through him we have access in one Spirit to the Father.

(Sermon 6, On the Lord's Nativity)

# Vocations: A Common Responsibility

We hear much these days in the Church about vocations. In the Orthodox Church in America, we are experiencing a shortage of vocations. Most are aware that there are more priests retiring or approaching retirement than there are priests to replace them.

In time we may see more and more churches without a priest. Perhaps this reality hasn't impacted us as it should, because in our own particular circumstance the parish is being served by a priest. Unless the present trend is reversed, each of our parishes will be affected in

some way because of the shortage of young men answering the call of God to prepare for service in the Church as priests.

The purpose of this article is not to complain or bemoan this shortage, but to make some suggestions which may, let's hope, encourage vocations. Each of us, as a member of God's Holy Church, has a part to play in fostering vocations within our churches. Selecting and identifying young men to consider the priesthood is not exclusively the work of the bishop or the priest.

In the Acts of the Apostles, chapter six, we read about the Church's selection and ordination of deacons. When the apostles decided that certain men should assist with the more mundane and practical matters of the ministry, they said to the multitude of the disciples, "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint [i.e. ordain] over this business" (Acts 6:4). The point here is that these men were "selected" from the multitude of the disciples and then ordained by the apostles for a specific ministry within the Church. The pattern remains the same for us today. We have a responsibility to



Ordination to the Holy Priesthood.

assist in the selection and identification of young men in our churches whom we can encourage to consider a life of priestly service in the Church. We will discuss how to identify these young men later in the article.

Perhaps, even before discussing the selection of young men for priestly service as a function of the community of believers, we should consider the home and family of Orthodox Christians as the starting place for this process. Before God blesses a home with children, mom and dad should pray that God would set their children apart for God's holy service. When we consider the blessing of children as Orthodox Christians, we should always consider the possibility that God may use them in service to His holy Church, as priests, deacons, or monastics. Unfortunately, it seems that many people today within the Church have lost the sense of privilege and honor it is to have a son dedicated to service in the Church. The account of Hannah, Elkanah, and Samuel helps to illustrate the importance of prayer and setting children apart for God's holy work.

Hannah was barren for many years. In her prayers to God, she promises to dedicate her firstborn son to the service of God and His holy

altar. It was her prayer and it must become our prayer as Orthodox Christian parents. God blessed Hannah and her husband Elkanah with a son. When he was weaned, Hannah and Elkanah presented their son Samuel to the house of the Lord. In short, they dedicated their son to God and took him to church. There they left him to learn about God and live a life of dedicated service to Him.

What is so important about all of this is that while Samuel is abiding and living in the Lord's house, he has his first encounter with

God. He called Samuel while he was sleeping, as the Scriptures say, "in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was . . ." (I Sam. 3:3). Many young men, who are priests today, had their first experience of and with God while serving in God's holy altar. Of course, these did not hear the audible voice of God as did Samuel, but they knew that it was something special to serve in the altar. They experienced a special joy and the presence of God within themselves while serving. As parents and priests, we must be attentive to this. When we see manifested in our altar boys a genuine joy and love for serving God's holy altar, we must take notice and continue to encourage these young men in their service to God. It is possible we are witnessing the first signs of a young man who is becoming aware of God's presence in his life. As priests, we should share what we observe with mom and dad. Together, as parents and priest, the young man's call to priestly service should be made a matter of specific and diligent prayer.

Serving God's holy altar as an altar boy is not the only way God warms the heart of a young man to consider priestly service. Church

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## Vocations

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school teachers as well need to be on the lookout for that one who seems to possess an extra special interest in the things of God and His Church. Choir directors also, be on the lookout for that one who seems to experience a special joy in lifting his voice in praise to God. People who care for the church and its maintenance, be aware of those young men who seem to find special joy in helping to maintain the beauty of God's house. All of us, as Christians, must train ourselves to be on the lookout for those whom God may be calling to service in His Holy Church; encourage them, and by all means, pray for them.

As parents and grandparents, let us never underestimate the power of a genuinely pious life to attract our young men to service in God's Holy Church. How many of us can remember as children seeing our babushki before the holy icons in their homes, praying for what seemed to be an hour or more. They were in Church each time its doors were opened, praying for their loved ones and families. They didn't have formal theological educations. In fact, some of them could not even read. But what they did have was a genuine love for God and His Holy Church. More than any words that could be spoken, the examples of their lives communicated to us that the most important reason for our existence was to love God and serve Him with our lives, as an offering of gratitude for His unbounded love and mercy. May we continue their examples.

To be a priest these days is no easy task. It never was. There is a great deal of sacrifice required of the one who would answer God's call to the priesthood. Unfortunately, there are some even in our midst who would rather see their sons become something, anything but a priest. Little do these people realize that if God truly has His hand on the life of their son, they are fighting against God by attempting to dissuade him from considering priestly service in God's Church. May we, each one, fear God

enough, not to stand in His way, but rather find ways to see God's will accomplished in the lives of our young men.

The nurturing of vocations is an all-encompassing process. It begins before the birth of a child and is carried out within the family and the community of the faithful, under the

watchful care of the bishop and priest. And when the time comes for our sons to ask the question, "What should I be when I grow up?" Let us be among the first to say, "Perhaps God wants you to be a priest." May God fill the fields of priestly service in the Church with our sons. Amen.

—Priest Peter Dubinin



Vesting of newly-ordained priest.



Fr. Peter Dubinin and Fr. Daniel Kovalak with Bishop Herman and Family.



The blessing of the newly-ordained priest.



# The Apostolic Mission To America: Yesterday And Today

**(Editor's note: the following is the text of the keynote lecture from this year's annual lecture series at St. Tikhon's Seminary.)**

Beginning in September in Alaska and continuing throughout the coming year in dioceses throughout this hemisphere, Orthodoxy will mark the two hundredth anniversary of its establishment on this continent. Hierarchical Liturgies will be celebrated, jubilee banquets will take place and lecture series will be delivered—all of them commemorating “The Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America.”

This milestone in the life of our Church needs to be acknowledged by more than pious prayer and liturgical ceremony, by more than a nostalgic look back into the past, by more than even the recounting of the marvels of a glorious history. We stand at the crossroads of a new millennium of Christianity and another century of Orthodox presence in this land; the future calls out to us—to replicate the accomplishments of those before us, to recapture the zeal of the founders of our faith here in America, to relive and re-present anew the Apostolic Mission given by Our Lord first to His disciples, then rekindled in the great missionaries of centuries ago and finally reborn on the shores of Kodiak Island in 1794.

The Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America is a challenge to us to rediscover the Apostolic Commission of Christ, to recall how it was transmitted across time in various lands converted to Orthodoxy and specifically in Alaska, and to renew its message and meaning as we of this very moment in time seek to bring the Light of Christ and His Church to this corner of a world darkened by sin and in need of the Savior. As we

mark this great anniversary and seek to meet the great challenge it presents to us, let us turn first to Him “to Whom all glory is due” to begin our journey of the Mission to America.

## The Words of Our Lord

By and large, the life of our Lord, His teachings and His miracles were first presented to the Chosen People of Israel, the Jews. Once it was clear that they rejected both the Christ and His Way, a path was opened for the conversion of the Gentiles.

Just before He ascended into Heaven, Jesus Himself told His apostles, “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 am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20). To convert all people was the Will of the Messiah Who died for the salvation of every person created by the Father. This is called the “Great Commission”; it was the original Apostolic Mission.

Saint Mark records these words as among Christ's final instructions to His followers: “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved . . .” (Mark 16:15-16). This mission to the world had been prophesied by our Lord according to His Beloved Disciple, St. John the Evangelist: “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there shall be one flock and one Shepherd” (John 10:16).

Finally, St. Luke echoes this very same sentiment, quoting Jesus' promise of Pentecost made to the disciples, recorded in Luke's history of the early Church, the Acts of the Apostles:



Father Michael Dahulich

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the very ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

## The Response of The Apostles

Such a Great Commission; such an awesome task. How did the apostles respond to the words of the Risen Lord? Once strengthened by the “power from on high” on Pentecost, their answer is obvious. That very same day, St. Peter began the work of the Mission with these words:

“Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through Him in your midst . . . this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, was crucified and killed . . . But God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it . . . This Jesus God raised up, and

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of that we are all witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you see and hear . . . God has made Him both Lord and Christ . . . And (Peter) testified with many other words and exhorted them, saying: 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation.' So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:22-24, 32, 36, 40-41).

Saint Paul, who had once been Saul, the persecutor of Christ's Church, wasted no time in spreading the Faith "to the ends of the earth" after his own conversion. In three whirlwind and worldwide missionary journeys, he personally established local Churches in various communities. His first journey with Barnabas took him to Cyprus, Perga, Antioch of Pisidia, and Lycaonia. His second, with Silas, brought him to Cilicia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, and Galatia; the Macedonian cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea; Athens (on the Areopagus) and Corinth. And finally, his third journey (and imprisonment) led him to Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus; Macedonia, Corinth; arrest at Jerusalem, prison at Caesarea, and to the capital of the Empire, Rome, and beyond. Rightly, he became known as the Apostle to the Gentiles.

The efforts of the other apostles were no less spectacular, to be sure. Tradition holds that St. Andrew traveled to Greece, the Balkans, and southern Russia; St. John, from Jerusalem to Patmos and Ephesus; St. James, to Spain; St. Matthew, to the Near East and Ethiopia; St. Simon Zelotes, to Egypt, Britain, and Persia; St. Jude, to Edessa and Persia; St. Thomas, to Mesopotamia, Parthia, India, and Malabar; St. Philip, to Hierapolis of Phrygia; St. Bartholomew, to Northern India, Arabia, and Armenia; St. Matthias, to Cappadocia and Ethiopia; while St. James had remained in Jerusa-

lem, caring for the Church there. The apostles took our Lord's commission so seriously and so zealously that they "turned the world upside down" and brought an entire Empire to its knees!

Saint Clement of Rome summarizes the Apostolic Mission in these words:

"And so, after receiving their instructions and being fully assured through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as confirmed in faith by the Word of God, they (the apostles) went forth, equipped with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, to preach the Good News that the Kingdom of God was close at hand."

Saint John Chrysostom reaffirms this when he writes:

"He (Christ) sent them to men throughout the world to be the common healers of their kind, to correct their way of living, to spread through every part of the earth the knowledge of their heavenly doctrines, to bring down the tyranny of the devils, to teach those great and unspeakable blessings, to bring to us the Good News of the soul's immortality, and the eternal life of the body, and rewards which are beyond conception and shall never have an end."

### The Early Christians: The New "Way Of Life"

But how did those who were mere followers of Christ's Way—the many disciples, the first converts of Pentecost and later all those who would hear the message of the apostles and join the Church—how did they respond to the Apostolic Mission?

Saint Luke, the historian among the Evangelists, is the source of our answer to this question. He assures us early in his Acts of the Apostles: "And they [who were converted and baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

Their loyalty to the Apostolic Faith and to the Mission of Christ's Church yielded much fruit: God blessed them with growth.

"And all who believed were to-

gether and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food 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 2:44-47).

Indeed, for the first Christians the Faith was not "a set of beliefs or a deposit of Tradition" but in fact "a way of life"—the New Way. This is confirmed by St. Luke, with regard to St. Paul's persecution of the early Church before his own conversion:

. . . so that if he (Saul) found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:2). Paul himself confirms this in his own preaching: "I (Paul) persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women . . . (Acts 22:4).

Yes, the response of the early Christians was to live the Christ-like life, the New Way of living: "It is no longer I who live for myself, but Christ Who lives in me; and the life that I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20). It was a life of prayer, sharing in the Holy Mysteries, hearing the Word of God, following its commandments, loving one another, caring for each other's needs, sharing one's blessings.

It was also a call to carry on the Mission, to share the Faith, to spread the Way, to continue to have the Church grow. How did it happen? The early Christians were themselves witnesses to Christ in their generation. The apostles transmitted the Mission on—first to Matthias, who had replaced Judas Iscariot as one of the Twelve: "Become with us a witness to the Resurrection" (Acts 1:22). That invitation was replicated for all—in the first generation of Christianity, and the next, and every subsequent one (yes, even to us). Consider the testimony of St. Ignatius of

Antioch at the dawn of the second century A.D.:

"We are of the fruit of His divinely blessed Passion—so that by means of His Resurrection He might raise aloft a banner for His saints and believers in every age, whether among the Jews or among the Gentiles, united into one single body in the Church."

### **Early Christians: Supporting the Mission**

Not only did the early Christians give witness to the Lord and to the Mission of His Church in the Way that they lived; they also provided assistance to enable the Mission to spread to others, to help the Church to grow, to meet its needs and those of its members. It would be very wrong for us to think of Mission and Charity funds as novel appeals of our diocesan bishop today; they were as real and as necessary in the Church's infant days as they are in this modern era.

Saint Paul provides ample proof of supporting the Mother Church in Jerusalem in her service to those in need: "but now I (Paul) am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem" (Romans 15:25-26). (Let us note that the "saints" are the living Christian believers, not persons who have gone to the Kingdom and have been canonized by the Church, as we tend to think of them today.)

That this kind of support was "the norm" of the early Church is likewise explained to us by St. Paul in his First Letter to the faithful at Corinth: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I (Paul) have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also. On the first day of the week, let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper . . ." (I Cor. 16:1-2).

Again, we read elsewhere that the support of the missionary needs of the Apostle to the Gentiles was supplied by believing Christians in the already established local churches:

" . . . for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied" (II Cor. 11:9).

And, finally, St. Paul praises for us the Church at Philippi for its outstanding support of the Mission, through the kind generosity of its faithful: ". . . I (Paul) am thankful for your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now . . . and you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only" (Phil. 1:5, 4:15).

Accepting the Gospel of Christ, living His new Way of Life, supporting the Mission—these were the hallmarks of the early Church.

### **Great Missionary Efforts**

These were replicated century after century, as the Church would grow in numbers. At various times and in different places, the Lord would "raise up" for the Church great missionaries after the great example of St. Paul to do His work—with the support of the faithful who prayed fervently and gave generously for the success of the Mission.

One of the great missionary efforts in our Church's history was the work of St. Nina. She was a witness for Christ among the Georgian people about 340 A.D. Her faith and her life taught others about Christ, such that the royal family there were touched by the Holy Spirit through her. Eventually, the King and Queen asked for clergy from Constantinople to teach and convert and baptize their nation, because of her efforts.

All of us know the story of Saints Cyril and Methodius, the Apostles to the Slavs. They were sent by Patriarch Photius of Constantinople to the peoples of the Moravian kingdom in the ninth century. A monk and an archbishop, they brought the Good News of Christ in the "language of the people," creating the Cyrillic alphabet for their converts-to-be, and setting the standard of operation for missionaries of generations to come. Eastern Europe became their legacy.

Saints Clement and Naum, in the

footsteps of Cyril and Methodius, did great missionary work among the Bulgarian people. Having accepted the Christian Faith through the zeal and efforts of Clement and Naum, now venerated as patrons of their people, the Bulgarian Church would be established by and attached for a time to the Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Again, who does not know the story of St. Vladimir, whose envoys knew not whether they "were in heaven or on earth" when they entered Hagia Sophia Cathedral in Constantinople? He was converted in Cherson in 988, had his sons baptized in Kiev, and multitudes were converted in the Dneiper River, at the hands of Greek clergy. Subsequently, Metropolitan Michael of Kiev and several bishops went to Novgorod and on into the interior of Russia as far as Rostov with the Gospel.

There is also the story of Saint Cosmas Aitolos. He was a missionizer who preached from village to village in Greece and in Albania, under the yoke of Turkish Moslem persecution, in the eighth century. He urged the Orthodox people to remain faithful to Christ in their belief and lifestyle, while living under militant non-Christians, who would have them apostasize from the Faith or die, and at whose hands St. Cosmas himself was martyred.

These are but a few examples from among the many, all of which cannot possibly be listed here. Together, they form the rich legacy of the Apostolic Mission throughout the centuries of the life of the Orthodox Christian Church in various countries throughout the world. Yes, indeed, the Church took the words of Jesus, found in Matthew 28:19-20, quite literally!

### **The Mission to Alaska**

It should come as no surprise to us, then, that the Greek mission to Russia would itself be replicated centuries later in the Russian mission across the Bering Sea to the land of Alaska and to the American continent—the specific focus of our Bicentennial.

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ennial Celebration.

This particular story begins with the discovery of Alaska by two Russian explorers, Captains John J. Bering and Alexis J. Chirikov on July 15, 1741. Five days later, on the Feast of St. Elias, the priest-monk Ilarion Trusov, assisted by Fr. Ignaty Kurzevsky, celebrated the first Orthodox Liturgy in America on the ship of Bering and Chirikov, the *Saint Peter*.

Forty-three years later, the Golikov-Shelikov merchant company would found a settlement on the site of the present city of Kodiak, for which Metropolitan Gabriel of St. Petersburg would instruct the Abbot Nazarius of Valaam Monastery to recruit missionaries for Alaska. On December 25, 1793, eight monks left St. Petersburg for America: Archimandrite Ioasaf, head of the mission; priest-monks Juvenaly, Makary, and Athanasy; deacon-monks Nektary and Stephan; and monks Joasaph and Herman. They arrived at Kodiak on September 24, 1794.

The purpose of the Mission was to provide pastoral care for the Russian Orthodox faithful who had traveled to Alaska . . . and to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to the native Aleuts there. The aim of the Mission was not to make Alaskans into Russians, but to make Orthodoxy "native," that is Alaskan. And the method of the Mission was not to teach the natives Russian, but to translate the Scripture and the Liturgy into Aleutian.

The concerns of the Mission were the total identification of the Church with the people and with their real needs, spiritual and material—and the defense of the native Aleuts against foreign exploitation. In time, the missionaries not only touched the hearts and souls of the Alaskans with Christ and His Gospel, but they established chapels for services and schools for the education of children and adults.

The Holy Synod recalled

Archimandrite Ioasaf back to Russia, to be consecrated the Bishop of Kodiak in the Irkutsk Cathedral in 1799. Enroute back to the Alaskan mission, however, Bishop Ioasaf and his companions were lost at sea.

By 1815, the Alaskan Mission had built a church in Sitka: the edifice would become the Cathedral for the first Orthodox Diocese on the American continent. Bishop Innocent, consecrated in 1840, became its first hierarch. And when St. Michael's Cathedral in Sitka was consecrated by him in 1848, the growth of the Church was evident as some fifty clergy were present.

The first edifice, the original "Mission House" in Sitka, became the first Orthodox Seminary in North America in 1845. And by 1860, statistics show the Church of Alaska included 43 parishes, 35 chapels, 9 churches, 17 schools, and 4 orphanages, as well as some 12,000 native Alaskan Christians. The Mission was well on its way!

When Innocent became the Metropolitan of Moscow, he did not forget the Mission; he established for it the Russian Imperial Missionary Society, founded in 1870 to provide funds for the continued support of the Alaskan Diocese (even after the United States had purchased the territory of Alaska in 1867).

By 1870, the Mission was well beyond Alaska into the heart of the American continent; that year, Bishop Paul consecrated the first Orthodox church in New York City. And in 1872, Bishop John transferred the seat of his cathedral from Sitka to San Francisco; and the future events of the Diocese of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands were to have their focus in the "lower 48" United States—as new movements led to an even greater expansion of Church life across the American continent.

### The Growth of the American Church

From the humble beginnings of the American Mission in Alaska two hundred years ago, today there are more than two thousand Orthodox

churches in the United States, at least one located in every single state. The use of English, the change in the calendar, and the efforts of evangelistic outreach have made possible the spread of Orthodoxy throughout this country, most recently in such areas as the south.

Recognition has come to Orthodoxy as "a major faith" in America, alongside Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Judaism. Our Orthodox seminaries, including and especially St. Tikhon's here in South Canaan, have been acknowledged in academic circles as renowned theological schools.

But the ultimate glory of the American Church is its list of Saints—pious, devout Orthodox Christians who accepted the Gospel of Christ, lived His new Way of Life and supported the Mission, and by their "life of faith" met the standards of canonization. These "imitators of Christ" include Herman of Alaska, Innocent, Juvenaly, Peter the Aleut, Nicholas of Zicha, and Patriarch Tikhon, the founder of this monastery and seminary. This American "cloud of witnesses" rests in the bleachers of heaven, cheering us on with their prayers and challenging us with the example of their lives as we struggle in the arena of this life.

### Imprecisions in the American Mission

As we celebrate this Bicentennial of Orthodoxy, however, we must acknowledge that not everything in this history of the American Church is as it should be. In honesty and truth, we need to take note of some imprecisions in the American Mission.

In the course of the past two centuries, particularly during the great influx of immigrants from Europe, and especially after the communist takeover of Russia and the persecution of the Church there, parishes were founded in this country contrary to the formula of "mission" common to the history and tradition of Orthodoxy. Parishes were, in fact, established in non-Scriptural, non-traditional, un-Orthodox manner—

founded on ethnic lines, organized as membership based on "dues," not organically linked as "the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church."

This has resulted in an Orthodox witness in America weakened by ethnic separation, uncanonical multiple jurisdictions, unnecessary administrative duplications and financial expenditures, and so on. This has also translated into parochialism—an understanding of "Church" linked to the local "building"—not to the Church's universal mission on the national (and diocesan) level. Instead of seeing the parish as a member of the diocesan family and the extended national church family, it views the diocese and the national church as somehow distant, foreign, "alien" elements.

All of this hinders the growth of Orthodoxy on this continent, the spread of the Faith, the establishment of new parishes, the possibility of bold new programs and institutions, and the evangelization of the "unchurched" and/or unbaptized Americans. It further fosters an "ingrown" development, by limiting some parishes and dioceses to "our people" alone rather than to the Gospel out-reach to the "ends of the earth," and by debating how "American" to make Orthodoxy rather than how to make America (more than 50% of which is "unchurched") Orthodox!

### **Ways to Recapture the Apostolic Mission**

The challenge before us, then, is to correct the imprecisions of our American Church situation, transcend its ethnic, jurisdictional, and parochial limitations and recapture, renew, re-present, and live the Apostolic Commission in our moment in time, here in this country. We need to claim as our own the faith, the zeal, the commitment of the first Christians who knew and loved the Lord Jesus with all their hearts, with all their souls, with all their strength, and with all their mind.

This can best be achieved starting with each of us being spiritually "re-

newed." His Grace, Bishop Herman, has called for such Spiritual Renewal in his diocese this coming year. Every Orthodox Christian needs to recommit himself or herself to the vows of our Baptism, to the new Way of Life Christ established. As we live fully the life that leads to deification ("theosis"), becoming "like God," we can effect such spiritual growth in our parish.

Indeed, our parishes need to rededicate themselves to the spread of the Gospel in their local communities. And our dioceses and the national Church need to reclaim the priorities of the Apostolic Commission, with the very zeal of the early Church.

### **Parish Outreach and Church Growth**

As our personal recommitment to the Apostolic Mission this Bicentennial Year, every individual's mission should be to bring others to Christ and His Church. Everyone of us knows at least one person—a friend, a relative, a co-worker—who does not have Christ and the eternal life He gives us. We need to bring that person to Christ, bring that person to our Church, as St. Andrew brought his brother Peter to Jesus, as Philip brought Nathaniel to the Messiah, as Andrew and Philip brought the group of Greek people to Christ.

Our parish recommitment needs to be one of outreach—to the unchurched (those who have no church and/or are not baptized); to the inactive or former members of our own parish who have, in a sense, become "lost" sheep; and even to the active participants in our parish life; to increase their closeness to the Lord and their service to His Holy Church. Many programs of Outreach are listed and detailed in *Church Growth and Evangelization: The Basis and the Basics* published by the O.C.A. It can serve as a blueprint for all our efforts.

On the diocesan (and national church) level, the goal needs to be the establishing of new parishes in areas where no Orthodox church presently

exists, specifically attempting to bring non-Orthodox Americans to the Faith. In this apostolate, each of us must give of our time, talent, treasure, and most importantly, our prayers, as we work together—bishops, priests, and laymen—to replicate the growth of the early Church, the great missions of Church history and the beginnings of the American Church in Kodiak, Alaska. What an awesome gift it would be if one of our established churches could help to establish another parish for the Glory of Almighty God and the Holy Orthodox Faith—through continual prayer, hard work, and kind generosity!

These parishes must be founded on the "models" of Mission in the rich Tradition of our Church, not on the imprecisions of the American experience. Our people must learn to give to the Church as the Scripture teaches: gladly, lovingly, generously, and proportionately. Until we have given the Biblical prescription of one-tenth of our income—that is, tithing—we have not yet given enough! Only on this basis can any new parish be funded properly! So too, the funding of diocesan and national church apostolates, mission and outreach programs, and parish renewal efforts must be grounded on the sound and solid Biblical principles of stewardship and tithing.

Naturally, programs of education will need to be created to promote all of the above-mentioned apostolates in the local parishes and on the diocesan and national church levels. Once again, our bishops, clergy, and laity will have to work together as we build upon the American Mission begun so humbly in Alaska and progress forward and Heavenward!

To make all or any of this happen, it will be necessary for us to continue and increase our efforts to encourage vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate, and the monastic life, in order to insure the future of the Church and her growth. As always, we need to pray: "There are children to baptize, the sick to heal, and the dying to care for. There is the Bread

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## The Apostolic Mission . . .

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of Life to distribute and the Word of God to teach. There are sins to forgive, and charity to be done in Your Name. Send Your Church in this hour and in every age 'vessels of clay' to be instruments of Your presence. Hear us, O Great High Priest, and have mercy."

In generations past, it was an incomparable honor to have a son serve the Church. For too many parents, today's priorities are material and financial concerns for their children. Parents and grandparents and parish family members alike need to realize the great gift they can foster—the vocation of their son, serving at the Altar of the Lord!

One final word: for all or any of the above to be achieved most effectively, all of us, in every parish, in every diocese, and in every jurisdiction, need to intensify every effort possible for the unification of Orthodoxy in North America into one single, canonical national Church. This is the only way we can bind up the weaknesses of our Orthodox witness in America, divided by ethnic separation, and stop the senseless administrative duplication and financial expenditures that hamper our progress and growth. But more importantly, it is the only way that we can really fulfill the Lord's Will for His Church. We must not forget His High Priestly Prayer the night before He gave up His Life for our salvation: "That they may all be one, even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that Thou has sent Me" (John 17:21).

As the ultimate fruit of the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy, let us not merely celebrate the Sunday of Orthodoxy together once a year, but let us celebrate the creation of the unity of Orthodoxy in one canonical national Church before the dawn of the next millennium of Christianity!

### In Conclusion

The Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America must be more than

just a celebration of the past and its glories, but also a look to the future of the Church and a recommitment to Christ and the Apostolic Mission—by individual Orthodox Christians, local dioceses, and the Church on the national level.

We are reminded of this and so challenged by the words of Patriarch St. Tikhon, so beloved in his tenure as Metropolitan of America and so special to this monastery and seminary, founded by his efforts:

"Is the Word of God good only in the old country and not in the entire universe? Is not the Church of Christ catholic? Is not the Orthodox Faith the very foundation of the universe?" (Sunday of Orthodoxy, San Francisco, 1903).

As we strive to do His Will for our Church in this country, in this jubilee year of celebration, may God help us! To Him be the glory forever!

—Priest Michael G. Dahulich

## St. Tikhon's Century Association Sponsors "A Night In Russia"



A Night in Russia Dinner.



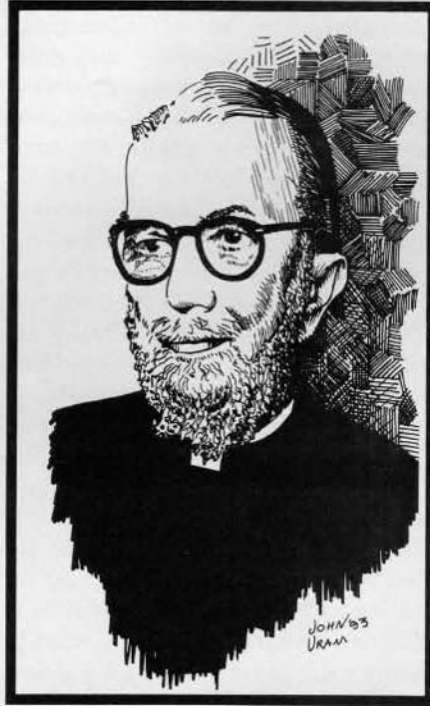
Seminarians serving as waiters.

The local members of St. Tikhon's Century Association sponsored "A Night in Russia" at St. Michael's Church Hall in Old Forge on November 14. Over 150 people supported this fundraising activity to help with the mortgage reduction of the Metropolitan Leonty Domitory. The fellowship was great and the food was excellent. A special thank you to all the volunteers who made this wonderful evening such a success.

## In Memoriam: Archpriest Georges Florovsky 1893-1979

It is fitting that the inauguration of the celebration of the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America coincides with yet another notable anniversary—the centennial of the birth of probably the most significant Orthodox theologian of our time, Archpriest Georges Florovsky, whose momentous contribution to Orthodox theology and to Russian culture achieved its greatest flowering, indeed, in the American period of his long and fruitful life. As Orthodox priest and theologian, Russian scholar and intellectual, committed yet uncompromising interpreter of Orthodoxy to the ecumenical community, Florovsky has become both teacher and inspiration to new generations of both American and Russian academics and theologians.<sup>1</sup>

Father Georges Florovsky was born near Odessa on the Black Sea on August 28, 1893 (O.S.), the fifth and last child of Archpriest Vasilii and Klavdia (Popruzhenko) Florovsky. Both of his parents had come from priestly families intimately connected with institutions of higher education: his father, a graduate of the Moscow Theological Academy, was to become rector of the Odessa Theological Seminary; his mother was the daughter of the professor of Hebrew and Greek at the Odessa Theological Seminary, while both of her brothers served on the faculty of the University of Odessa.<sup>2</sup> The older Florovsky children, in turn, also gravitated toward intellectual pur-



Archpriest Georges Florovsky

suits: the eldest, Vasilii (1881-1924), became a surgeon in 1906; his sister Klavdia (1883-1963) became associate professor of medieval history at the University of Odessa in 1915; and another brother, Antonii (1884-1968) became associate professor of Russian history at the University of Odessa in 1911.

The example of his family, Fr. Georges later recalled, was a major reason "why my life was a bit peculiar, why I started serious intellectual life very early . . . I was surrounded by adults, my parents, two uncles, my brothers and my sister—all interested or engaged in intellectual pursuits. I received a very intensive education just sitting and listening."<sup>3</sup> It was, indeed, the family's influence that not only affected his

attitude to school and Church, but also inspired his choice of vocation: "From an early age, I knew I would be a professor. It was the only thing for me, and in my view then, it was the only respectable profession. There were several professors in the family and I felt it was the thing for me."<sup>4</sup>

In October, 1919, G.V. Florovsky received an appointment as *privat dotsent* (associate professor) in the Faculty of History and Philology at the University of Odessa and commenced his academic career teaching philosophy. But it was not to be for long. In January, 1920, with the departure of the White Army from revolutionary Odessa, together with his parents and sister, he left Russia forever.

The European period of Florovsky's life (1920-1948) was intellectually and culturally stimulating, if materially difficult, permitting him to grow and mature as philosopher, historian, and theologian. In April, 1922, he married Xenia Ivanovna Simonova, and in the autumn of that year undertook his first teaching assignment at the Higher Commercial Institute in Prague. The following year saw the defense<sup>5</sup> of his Magisterial thesis on Alexander Herzen and appointment to teach at the Russian Law Faculty in the Department of the History of the Philosophy of Law. In September, 1926, G.V. Florovsky accepted a position as professor of patristics at St. Sergius Institute in Paris.

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<sup>1</sup> A most appropriate testimonial to the accomplishments and scholarly influence of Fr. Georges was the recent academic "Georges Florovsky Centennial Conference" sponsored by the Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Michigan, October 8-10, 1993. The Conference brought together scholars and theologians from the several and different fields of intellectual endeavor represented by Fr. Georges' scholarship, both from the United States and Russia. St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary was represented at the Conference by the author of the present article, who is Asst. Professor of Patristics and History of the Russian Orthodox Church, who also delivered a paper at the Conference.

<sup>2</sup> Better known as the "University of New Russia," or *Novorossiiskii universitet*.

<sup>3</sup> Cited by Andrew Blane, ed., *Georges Florovsky: Russian Intellectual and Orthodox Churchman* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1993), p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> The defense was "somewhat unusual," Florovsky reminisced, "in the sharp clash of opinions provoked and its consequent long duration." He was, specifically, faulted for "his staunch identification with the Orthodox Church and commitment to religious faith as the authentic starting point for all human endeavor, including philosophical enquiry;—and from that perspective and at this occasion—his sharp criticism of Alexander Herzen, the holiest of 'holy fathers' of the Russian revolutionary tradition." See Blane, p. 44.

## Father Georges Florovsky

*Continued from page 21.*

Patristic thought, which Florovsky began to study in earnest only in 1924, at the instigation of Fr. Sergii Bulgakov, "henceforth became his intellectual home—the foundation of his world view, the standard by which he judged and found wanting the course of Russian religious thought, the entry way to his understanding of the religious cultures of Greece and of England, and the source of his contributions to and criticisms of the Ecumenical Movement."<sup>6</sup> His lectures in patristics at St. Sergius resulted in the publication in 1931 of his monograph on the Eastern Fathers of the IVth century,<sup>7</sup> followed in two years by a second volume on the Byzantine Fathers of the V-VIII centuries.<sup>8</sup>

In 1932, in the fortieth year of his life, G.V. Florovsky was ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Evlogy, and assigned as assistant to Fr. Serge Chetverikov, chaplain of the Russian Student Christian Movement. Priesthood came almost naturally to Fr. Georges, given his father's vocation and his own choice of profession. "I somehow knew that one day I would become a priest. I always thought that it was natural for a theologian to be a priest . . . A theologian wants to teach, to propagate ideas . . . To do so effectively he must have some position in the Church, not simply that of an ordinary member . . . I did not very early consciously think a lot about becoming a priest, but in retrospect I see it and explain it this way."<sup>9</sup>

Florovsky's work with the Russian Student Christian Movement was to have profound personal and intellectual consequences. At the insistence of Anglican bishop Charles Gore, Florovsky had been invited in 1929 to attend and address the first official conference of the Fellow-

ship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, a cooperative Anglican-Orthodox undertaking of the British and Russian Student Christian Movements. His subsequent ordination to the priesthood, his competence in Patristics, his personality and wit, as well as his openness to the English-speaking Anglican world, clearly identified him as an uncommon spokesman of Orthodoxy, and eventually lead to his progressively deeper involvement with the Ecumenical movement. For a whole decade, until the beginning of the war in 1939, Fr. Georges was an habitual discussant and speaker at annual Fellowship conferences, as well as lecturer in Orthodox theology and the history of the Russian Orthodox Church at summer courses in the various theological colleges of Great Britain.

The year 1937 was a banner year in Fr. Georges' life. It saw the publication of the Florovsky masterpiece *Puti Russkogo Bogosloviia* [Ways of Russian Theology], which in the heady atmosphere of fervent religious nationalism prevalent at the time in Russian emigré society was seen by many to be contentious and divisive. Reactions to the book "polarized between those who lauded and those who damned, with more gathered in the latter camp. There was no middle ground. The main reason was the book's stern and uncompromising critique of Russia's religious past . . . However, friends and foes of the book did agree on one point. As Nicholas Berdiaev put it, in a twelve page review scorching with hostility, 'Herein is revealed an enormous erudition, a broad and extensive scholarship.'<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53. Fr. Georges later wrote to lu. Ivask: "I was accused—by both Berdiaev and Zen'kovskii, together with their underlings—of partisanship, of harshness of analysis—and judgment . . . Apart from Berdiaev, 'The Ways' were also attacked by the late Fr. Sergii Chetverikov (in a personal letter), from, of course, a different position. All illusions have been destroyed. There is—and was—no 'Russian theology,' everything has been denounced, and the reader is left at an empty trough. The only thing that remains is to seek refuge in the Optina hermitage and forget about theology. Perhaps it is not even necessary . . . In the concluding chapter of 'The Ways' I sketched out a program of theological renewal, but only foreigners paid attention to it—this chapter was translated into French. Our own people are hardly interested in theology—in the exact sense of the word—except perhaps those who recently converted to Orthodoxy from the Western confessions. Instead of rambling about 'Russian tradition' we should return to the Fathers. The way of Orthodox theological renewal is the way of neo-patristic synthesis." See: "Iz pisem o. Georgiiia Florovskogo lu. Ivasku," in *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizheniia*, no. 130 (IV, 1979), Letter dated 16 November 1968, pp. 49-51.

In August, 1937, as part of a Russian Orthodox delegation headed by Metropolitan Evlogy, Fr. Georges Florovsky attended the Second Conference on Faith and Order in Edinburgh. Appointed chairman of the "Ministry" sub-section of the larger section "The Church of Christ: Ministry and Sacraments," he became one of the drafters of the report on Ministry and Sacraments. As one of its concluding acts, the Edinburgh Conference was to elect Florovsky one of its seven representatives to the constitutive "Committee of Fourteen" charged with organizing the World Council of Churches (an additional seven members were elected by the Second Oxford Conference on Life and Work).

On September 29, 1937, Fr. Georges was accorded the singular distinction of an honorary doctorate of divinity from Scotland's venerable University of St. Andrews, bringing him much personal satisfaction and joy. Because, however, Fr. Georges had earlier been appointed to a theological commission investigating the charges of heresy directed against Fr. Sergius Bulgakov,<sup>11</sup> the honor bestowed on Florovsky by the University was greeted with some hostility by emigré circles, who saw in it elements of ecclesiastical intrigue directed against Bulgakov and an effort to supplant him in the ecumenical community.

The advent of World War II found Fr. Georges and Xenia Ivanovna in Switzerland, where he had gone for a meeting of the Continuation Committee of the Faith and Order Movement. Deciding not to return to Paris, they opted instead to go to Yugoslavia, where they would spend the war years, moving on to Prague in December, 1944. In December, 1945, with the assistance of Dr. Paul An-

<sup>11</sup> Fr. Sergii Bulgakov, as professor of dogmatic theology at St. Sergius Institute, was accused of teaching non-Orthodox beliefs in regard to Sophia, the Wisdom of God, which in Orthodox tradition is understood in Christological terms. Independently of each other, both the Moscow Patriarchate and the Synod in Exile had condemned Bulgakov's teaching as heretical. In response, Metropolitan Evlogii appointed an investigatory commission which was chaired by Fr. Sergii Chetverikov and included Fr. Georges Florovsky. Because this commission would not conclusively absolve Bulgakov of doctrinal error, both Chetverikov and Florovsky were isolated by supporters of Bulgakov, and thus inevitably were estranged from St. Sergius. The personal closeness of Bulgakov and Florovsky, however, did not suffer as a consequence of this external turmoil.

<sup>6</sup> Blane, p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> *Vostochnye Otsy IV-go veka. Iz chtenii v Pravoslavnom Bogoslovskom Institute v Parizhe* [Eastern Fathers of the IVth century. From the lectures in the Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris]. Paris: YMCA Press, 1933, 260 pp.

<sup>8</sup> *Vizantijskie Otsy V-VIII [w.] (Iz chtenii v Pravoslavnom Bogoslovskom Institute v Parizhe* [Byzantine Fathers of the V-VIII [cent.]. From lectures in the Orthodox Theological Institute in Paris]. Paris: YMCA Press, 1933, 260 pp.

<sup>9</sup> Cited in Blane, p. 57.



derson, his long-time friend and benefactor, and the Anglican church, Fr. Georges Florovsky returned to Paris on a diplomatic flight of a plane belonging to the Allies.

Life in post-war Paris was not especially eventful. Fr. Georges was reinstated at St. Sergius—though not without vigorous protest from other faculty—and appointed to teach in the subject areas formerly taught by Bulgakov, dogmatic and moral theology. Once again, he resumed his lecture tour and began to participate in ecumenical conferences, bringing understanding of Orthodoxy to the non-Orthodox.

The constituent Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Amsterdam from August 22 to September 4, 1948, not only represented a significantly new stage in the Ecumenical Movement, but propelled Florovsky to new heights as a theologian of world renown and an undisputed spokesman for Orthodoxy. Florovsky was elected to the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches and re-elected to the Continuation Committee of the Faith and Order Movement. On September 15, 1948, Fr. Georges and Xenia Ivanovna departed for America, where Florovsky took up a new post as Professor of Patristics and Dogmatic Theory at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, later to succeed Bishop John Shakhovskoy as its Dean.

Father Georges Florovsky arrived in America when he was fifty-five years old, a mature theologian and accomplished author. He was to continue here his distinctive and distinguished scholarly career for thirty-one more years, teaching, writing, and lecturing, not only in Orthodox theological schools (St. Vladimir's in Crestwood and Holy Cross in Brookline), but also at Columbia, Harvard, and Princeton.

From the earliest stages of his academic career, Fr. Georges was inspired by the vitality of America, which he saw as one of only two places on earth (his native Russia being the other) in which "the blow-

ing of the liberated spirit is heard."<sup>12</sup> In America, notes his friend and colleague at Harvard Divinity School, Florovsky "must have felt a special satisfaction in re-establishing contact . . . with a 'native' Russian Orthodox jurisdiction that went back to the missionary and colonizing work of that Church extending south in the eighteenth century to San Francisco from the Aleutians."<sup>13</sup> Fr. Georges was convinced that for the Orthodox Church, America was a land both of missionary encounter and theological opportunity. "In the New World mingling of all the ethnic groups that make up the Orthodox community he could see afresh the contours emerging of a devout American Orthodox Church that would eventually find its role not only in the powerful and expansive pluralistic society of the United States and Canada, but in the Orthodox communion at large."<sup>14</sup>

Scarcely a year after he had arrived in this country from Europe, in an address to the Annual Convention of the Federation of Russian Orthodox Clubs in Philadelphia, Fr. Georges challenged his audience to rethink their spiritual responsibilities to their country: "Have you really fulfilled . . . your spiritual obligation to your American home and nation? Have you brought all your treasures . . . which you have inherited from your forefathers and ancestors, into the common treasury of American civilization, of American life, of the American Commonwealth? Have you taught Americans from other backgrounds to respect the Orthodox Church? Have you taught them to understand the pure Orthodox faith?"<sup>15</sup> The realization of this challenge in American life, he fur-

ther observed, was to be illumined from within by the powerful conviction that the Orthodox Christian faith is not some exquisite museum object that is to be preserved under glass and behind locked doors, but a principle that can literally save the world. "Christianity is not a fragile thing," Florovsky declared. "It is not a delicate thing which must be protected. Christianity is a weapon given to men to be used in a resolute fight against evil and for the sake of truth on earth. It is not a delicate thing to be set aside. It is the strongest thing in the world. Do not be afraid! Learn that this heritage of the past is the power of the present and the hope of the future."<sup>16</sup> Florovsky himself was to continue to wield this weapon in spiritual and intellectual ascetic struggle "for the sake of Truth" to the very end of his life.

The years of World War I, followed by the Russian revolution and the resulting civil chaos and war, as well as the experience of the horrors of World War II, confirmed in Fr. Georges the perception that Western civilization is in profound cultural upheaval, that we are living in apocalyptic times. "We would contend," he writes, "that it is precisely the modern *Retreat from Christianity*, at whatever exact historical date we may discern its starting point, that lies at the bottom of our present crisis. Our age is, first of all, *an age of unbelief*, and for that reason an age of uncertainty, confusion, and despair. There are so many in our time who have no hope precisely because they lost all faith."<sup>17</sup> And while "it may be true that the modern crisis can be formally traced back to the loss of convictions," he observes, "the real root of the modern tragedy does not lie only in the fact that people lost convictions, but that they deserted Christ."<sup>18</sup> It thus becomes the task of theology not only to discern spiritual realities, but also to articulate this

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<sup>12</sup> *Iskhod k vostoku* [Exodus to the East], 1921. Cited by George Hunston Williams, "Georges Vasilievich Florovsky: His American Career (1948-1965)," *The Greek Theological Review*, XI, 1 (Summer 1965), p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>15</sup> Originally as "The Responsibility of Orthodox Believers in America," *The Russian Orthodox Journal*, v. 2, no. 6 (October 1949). Reprinted as "To the Orthodox People: The Responsibility of the Orthodox in America," *Ecumenism I: A Doctrinal Approach*, in *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, XIII (Buechervertriebsanstalt, 1989), p. 175.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>17</sup> "Faith and Culture," *Christianity and Culture in The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*, II, p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

## Father Georges Florovsky

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vision in an intelligible manner. "Now is already the time when theological silence, uncertainty, inarticulate witness, are tantamount to treason and flight before the enemy. Silence can cause trouble as much as a hasty or elusive answer. Moreover, unto him who keeps silent, his muteness can be poison and mean his downfall, and he becomes an accomplice."<sup>19</sup>

The failure of Orthodox Russian civilization—and the failure of Russian theology,—Florovsky contends, was as an example and warning to us in the West. Because the failure was, in essence, spiritual, it follows that cultural recovery is impossible, he argues, except through spiritual renovation and growth.

"The Revolution has revealed a hard and terrifying truth concerning the Russian soul, to wit, an abyss of ancient faithlessness and denial, of demoniac possession and of deterioration. This soul is poisoned, subverted, torn to pieces. Being possessed and seduced, beset by doubt and temptation, it cannot possibly be healed and recover its strength except through intense catechizing, through the light of Christian reason, through the language of sincerity and Truth, through the voice of the Spirit and through its power."<sup>20</sup>

Florovsky is not a pessimist, however. We find in him no rejection of the world or the civilization in which we live. "Our contemporary world, atheistic and ridden with unbelief," he ponders, "is it not comparable in a sense with that pre-Christian world, renewed with all the same interweaving of false religious trends, sceptical and anti-God?"<sup>21</sup>

"It is precisely because we are already engaged in the apocalyptic struggle that we are called upon to do work as theologians. Our task is to oppose a responsible and conscious profession of Christian truth to the atheistic and anti-God attitude which surrounds us like a viscosity . . . unbelieving knowledge of Christianity is not objective knowledge, but rather some kind of anti-theology. There is in it so much pas-

sion, at times blind, often obscure and malignant . . . Here again, theology is called not only to judge, but also to heal. It is necessary to enter to this world of doubt, illusion, and lies, in order to answer doubt as well as reproach. But we must enter into this world with the sign of the Cross in our heart and the name of Jesus in our spirit, because this is a world of mystical wanderings, where everything is fragmented, decomposed, and refracted as if through a set of mirrors."<sup>22</sup>

Orthodox theology has always been a theology of profound ascetic discipline and pastoral endeavor, never divorced from the living experience of the Church, of the Christian Commonwealth. Apocalyptic experience, however, sets before it a new set of challenges. Theology, warns Florovsky, "cannot be a mere product of erudition, it cannot be born of philosophical reflection alone. It needs also the experience of prayer, spiritual concentration, pastoral solicitude . . . [The theologian] must experience in himself, as through an intimate suffering, the entire problematic of the soul which believes not and seeks not, the problematic of voluntary ignorance and of ignorance not desired. The time is come when the refusal of theological knowledge becomes a deadly sin, the stigma of self-conceit and lovelessness, of cowardice and maliciousness."<sup>23</sup>

A return to Orthodox theology as formulated by the Fathers of the Church, to a correct understanding of the Church as well as of personal and individual freedom in the historical process, will, in Florovsky's understanding, enable us to overcome successfully not only the "failure of Russian theology," but also the spirit of pervasive and pernicious cultural pessimism which suppresses human creativity and causes modern humanity to lose a sense of its purpose on earth, essentially its sense of spiritual direction. "Man was created by God for a creative purpose and was to act in the world as its king, priest, and prophet. The fall or failure of man did not abolish this purpose or design, and man was redeemed in order to be reinstated in his original rank and to resume his role and function in the Creation. And only by doing this can he become what he was designed to be, not only in the sense that he should

display obedience, but also to accomplish the task which was appointed by God in His creative design precisely as the task of man . . . One must be careful not to exaggerate the 'human achievement,' but one should also be careful not to minimize the creative vocation of man. The destiny of human culture is not irrelevant to the ultimate destiny of man."<sup>24</sup>

The task which we in the theological community—but also across America, as Orthodox and as heirs of the traditions of "Russian theology"—now face can be framed very succinctly: it is the task of integration, of reconstruction of Christian society, of cultural creativity in harmony with the lived and living experience of all twenty centuries of Christian history. It is a task which has already been defined for us by Fr. Georges Florovsky: "Integration in the Church is through prayer, apocalyptic faithfulness, return to the Fathers, a free encounter with the West: these and other similar factors compose the *creative postulate* of Russian theology within the contemporary framework . . . We have not reached the term of our course, the history of the Church is not over yet, Russia [and America, we might add today] is not yet at the end of the road . . . The rigorous verdict of history must be transformed into a creative appeal, in order that we may achieve what remains to be done."<sup>25</sup>

—Archpriest Alexander S. Golubov

<sup>19</sup> "Faith and Culture," p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>19</sup> "The Ways of Russian Theology," *Aspects of Church History*, *Collected Works*, IV, 1975, p. 205.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 206-07.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 207-08.

**Plan To Attend  
The March For Life  
In Washington, D.C.  
On Friday,  
January 21, 1994**

You are urged to participate in the MARCH FOR LIFE. If you are unable to do so, then pray for its success. YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED.

+ Bishop Herman

On a beautiful fall day, area clergy wives held their semi-annual conference at St. Tikhon's Seminary. In attendance were the following Matushki and guests: Isabel Anderson, Lynda Anderson, Deborah Belonick, Mary Borichevsky, Diane Cranor, Suzanna Diehl, Dolores Dzury, Mary Fedoronko, Cynthia Horton, Eleanor Krell, Myra Kovalak, Karen Mahaffey, Gloria Martin, Doris Mason, Anne Pawlush, Eugenia Perich, Dorothy Sulich, Frances Vansuch, and Elizabeth Wyslutsky.

Invited back for a second time, Mother Xenia (the former Matushka Sochka) from Holy Transfiguration Monastery, continued her talk on prayer. This being the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America, Mother Xenia began her talk by sharing the story of Matushka Olga Michael from Alaska. Her life was one of unselfish giving and commitment to God, the Church, and all those around her. The wife of St. Innocent is also documented as one who gave of herself completely in her husband's life and mission work. She is commonly referred to as "the Beloved Katharine." Mother Xenia went on to remind us that we as priests' wives share a common bond with those who have served before us over these last two hundred years. We should look to these brave women, as well as to St. Herman and St. Tikhon as inspirations in our own work and in our time of need.

In comparing society from two hundred years ago to now, Mother Xenia noted that there are too many deviations and temptations surrounding us and our families which seek to destroy us as Christians. We must be aware of these and avoid the pitfalls. Noting that these temptations are extremely subtle, she compared Communist Russia planning rock concerts during Holy Week to our All-American, Sunday morning soccer matches. We wish to give our children "well-rounded" upbringings, but we must remember what is the very center of our lives—Christ and His Holy Church. Many times we see those around us whose children have

## Clergy Wives Hold Conference



grown and left the Church because the foundation was never laid in the home. Our prime job as Matushki is to be that—mother. Where does the life with God begin? In the home with the mother lovingly teaching her child his/her first prayers, beginning with making the Sign of the Cross. She noted it is never too late to begin, not only to teach prayer, but to pray ourselves. Now, more than ever, this is desperately needed in our mixed-up, "diverse" society.

In speaking about prayer, Mother Xenia expressed a need to be sincere and fervent. We need to find the words which we are comfortable with, words which will help us truly communicate with Our Lord. Otherwise, prayer becomes a meaningless task, done as a non-thinking routine. How do we begin? She quoted Mother Magdalene, "It is never too late . . . Begin with repentance . . . Begin from where we are . . . Ask God to repair." Mother Xenia continued by saying we must pray with our heart as well as our mind, standing before

God with words, or soundless. She suggested we try sitting before the icons in church and just look as a way to "clear our minds." Prayer would also help curb anger, which we must learn to control, no matter how stressful life becomes. It takes work to pray and we must be willing to work hard at it. After sharing many anecdotes and stories of saints, martyrs, and holy ones, Mother Xenia illustrated the beauty of simple prayer, as simple as "Lord Have Mercy," which we can recite silently anytime, anywhere, to help us in our daily lives.

After a relaxing luncheon with the seminarians, we returned for our afternoon session. Mother Xenia announced that, instead of talking about prayer, we **would** pray. So we did—singing together the **Akafist to Saints Martha and Mary**, beloved sisters of Saint Lazarus and followers of Jesus Christ. We also viewed a videotape made about Holy Transfiguration Monastery, showing its many functions as a haven to those Orthodox Christians seeking to become closer to God. We were all moved by the beauty of this insightful presentation. Mother Xenia finished her afternoon talk by sharing with us stories of her life as a wife and mother, as well as Matushka. All were invited to share personal stories and experiences. Many beautiful, heartwrenching, and humorous anecdotes were told about living in the world and how it affects us, as well as our families and the churches we serve. We concluded our talk by discussing how prayer can help us stay "in the world" without becoming engulfed by it. We concluded with a prayer to the Theotokos.

Our thanks to Mother Xenia for her inspiring message to us. We hold her dearly in our hearts. Many thanks also go to St. Tikhon's community, including: His Grace, Bishop Herman, Matushkas Dorothy Sulich, Isabel Anderson, Gloria Martin, and Fran Vansuch.

Our next conference is tentatively planned for Saturday, March 6, 1994, at St. Tikhon's Seminary.

—Matushka Myra Kovalak

*"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach  
the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

**(Editor's note: a retreat was held at St. Tikhon's Seminary recently for diocesan clergy. A report follows.)**

These beautiful words from the Prophet Isaiah (52:7) were used by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans (10:15) to emphasize that the opportunity to believe in Christ was, and continues to be, offered to all mankind.

How can man believe in Jesus Christ and the message of the Gospel unless it has been fully preached? Faith is founded on an authorized preaching, on the testimony of those who have been charged with the mission to make known the message of God. St. Paul alludes to the apostolic testimony of the early Church in proclaiming the glorious resurrection message of Jesus Christ, and quotes Isaiah to show that the "gospel" had indeed been preached to Israel. The world was, and is, able to hear about Jesus Christ because our Lord commissioned His Apostles to proclaim the "Good News." From the time of the apostles until today, this proclamation continues through the office of the priesthood.

On the day of his ordination to the holy priesthood, the newly ordained has the hand of the ordaining bishop held on his head as the bishop reads aloud the prayer: "... that he may be worthy to stand before Thy Holy Altar unblameably, to preach the Gospel of Thy Kingdom, to minister the Word of Thy Truth..." These words of the prayer indicate the course of pastoral action carried on by the priest through the Grace of Christ in the sacrament of Holy Ordination. It is the task of the priest to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and, in the words of the late Archbishop John of San Francisco, "to proclaim His truth



Father George Dimopoulos giving lecture.

to the world; to manifest the Truth as holy; and to show how it applies to all occasions and circumstances, to bear witness to Christian righteousness on every path of life."

In 1989, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America issued an Encyclical Letter *On Preaching*. The encyclical was written and published to emphasize the importance of the sermon. Just as our Lord considered preaching the truth one of His essential ministries (Luke 4:18-19), He calls on all his priests to speak the truth and reminds all of His ordained that the task set before them in today's world is to preach the same truth and to "feed the flock already in the fold, call to repentance those who stray, and add new sheep to the flock through Holy Baptism" (*Encyclical*).

Being ever so mindful of the important task of preaching, His Grace, Bishop Herman, following his three-year plan of spiritual renewal within the diocese, planned a series of clergy retreats focusing on the spiritual growth of the parish priest. Coming together for prayer and discussion with his clergy, His Grace is hopeful the retreats will help prepare the

clergy for the second year, which will focus on the spiritual growth of the parish. In announcing the most recent clergy retreat, His Grace emphasized that this retreat would give special attention to preaching and to doing whatever will foster the growth in life, faith, and spiritual understanding among the flock entrusted to the spiritual care of the parish priest. To this end, His Grace spent two days, November 10-11, at St. Tikhon's Seminary, with his diocesan priests reflecting on "The Priest as Homilist" with talks, discussions, and daily liturgical services.

Father George Dimopoulos, Professor of New Testament at St. Tikhon's Seminary and teacher of many of our diocesan clergy, delivered the keynote address. In his remarks, Fr. George employed the writings of the Holy Fathers in stressing the importance of the interpretation of the Holy Word, through the Homily. Throughout the history of the Church, the Sermon, reflecting the Word of God, has been expressed orally or has been written in letters. Often, the sermons were of a theological nature and theological opinions were expressed to the world in

either of these forms.

The Word of God, in the form of a sermon, penetrates the whole man as a double-edged sword (carrying Truth on one edge and cutting down falsehood with the other). The task of presenting the Word of God to the faithful must be taken very seriously and involves three stages: 1) Conception; 2) Development; and 3) Delivery.

Preparation for a sermon is imperative. Fr. George stressed this important requirement by quoting St. John Chrysostom, who admonished his clergy for not preparing sufficiently for their sermons. Today, the priest has a great responsibility for preaching—he must be concerned not only about **what** to preach, but **how** to preach.

When is the sermon conceived? Father George stressed the need to begin preparing the sermon for next Sunday immediately following the Divine Liturgy on the previous Sunday. Upon completion of his post-communion prayers and before he leaves the altar, the priest should open the Holy Gospel and read the lesson for next Sunday. The sermon seed has been planted in the mind of the priest, and throughout the course of the week, the preparation continues in the spirit of prayer.

Developing the sermon is an ongoing process. Time should be allotted every day for preparation. How? By searching the writings of the Holy Fathers and reading commentaries on the Gospel lesson. This helps to formulate ideas and place thoughts in their proper perspective. With this, the sermon continues to develop and contain within it the words to convince, inspire, heal, and help the faithful build and strengthen their lives and meet today's challenges by applying the Good News of Jesus Christ to their everyday life. How these words are communicated is the next stage—delivery.

Saint Basil the Great reminds the priest that in the sermon, "God is speaking through us." In other words, the sermon is not *our* words, but the Word of God. The source and words

for the sermon are found in Holy Scripture. Our Lord commands us to "search the Scripture" (John 5:39), and after we search the Scriptures we will find the meaning of the Holy Scriptures by turning to the Holy Fathers and the Tradition of the Church. The excellent orator and homilist, St. John Chrysostom, employed over eighteen thousand Old and New Testament references in his sermons stressing the importance of the Holy Scripture as the unique source for sermons. The Holy Scriptures are for men a most precious treasure house from which we can obtain all Truth. By reading the Holy Scriptures every day, we will learn the Word of God, and thus be able to give an answer to all who ask questions.

Father John Terrell, pastor of St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Wilmington, Delaware, led two sessions on the methodology and technique of preaching. Reinforcing the words of Fr. George, he presented the methodology of sermons—how to develop a good sermon.

Father John noted that our Orthodox faithful are no longer sheltered from influence of today's society. We live in a pluralistic society, in which the Judeo-Christian ethic is no longer at the center of one's life. A lot of other things are part of today's individual belief system and we need to provide the Word of God to our faithful so they will not subscribe to the ethic of today's world. As the faithful are being challenged to live Christ-centered lives, they need to experience the love of God. One way is through the sermon. The faithful need to see Christ's love in sermons. We look at the world around us and must approach it from the point of view of the Gospel. How is this accomplished?

Father John offered the following suggestions: (a) The priest needs to organize his time with careful preparation. Proper preparation means good delivery. It is important to have discipline and allocate the time for preparation. (b) Utilize patristic writings. There is a wealth of material available for use in sermons. (c)

Use clarity in sermons. It is not necessary to use theological words that people do not understand. It is more important that the priest preach intelligently, emphasizing the practical application of the Gospel lesson to the lives of the faithful.

Some practical techniques shared with the clergy include: use of an outline; a style which is direct and personal; delivery; gestures; eye contact; arm and hand movements; verbal and linguistic skills; vocal delivery; progress in delivery. Fr. John distributed handouts on delivery along with a Sermon Evaluation Form which can be used by the priest to help with organization, content, delivery, and over-all effectiveness.

His Grace encouraged his priests to heed the words of Fr. George and Fr. John as we assume the awesome responsibility of fulfilling our priestly call to "preach the Gospel of Thy Kingdom, to minister the word of Thy Truth." The faithful of our diocese want to be fed, need to be nourished, and deserve our best effort every time we preach the Word of God.

As the retreat drew to a close, the priests had a chance to reflect on the messages presented and the discussions held, and to meditate on the strong, powerful words of St. John Chrysostom:

"What then is it that I require of you? That each of you take in hand that section of the Gospels which is to be read among you on the first day of the week, or even on the Sabbath, and before the day arrives, that he sit down at home and read it through and often carefully consider its contents and examine all parts well, what is clear . . . We shall not need much labor to render clear the meaning of what is said, because your minds will be already made familiar with the sense of the words and you will become keener and more clear-sighted not for hearing only, nor for learning, but also for the teaching of others" (St. John Chrysostom, Homily XI).

—Archpriest Eugene Vansuch

# Education Bulletin

## The Role Of Christian Education In The Mission Of Our Church

(Editor's note: the following lecture was given at St. Tikhon's Seminary as part of this year's annual lecture series.)

This moment in history is an exciting time because we are not only remembering our history and heritage, but are being challenged by it, and even judged by it. In light of the fact that we live in a multi-jurisdictional and multi-denominational society where every belief is held up as Gospel truth, it is easy to forget that as members of the Orthodox Church, we are Christ's holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Being that, we have the mandate and responsibility and joy of sharing the true faith with every human being who is willing to hear it. Seasons like this Bicentennial remind us of our journey and purpose.

If our history teaches us anything, it is that education and mission are inseparable activities. They are linked with each other, depend on each other, and empower each other. To missionize implies that one teaches. The goal of teaching is to convert others from ignorance to belief, from falsehood to truth.

Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike are often amazed how missionary-minded our Church has been throughout the centuries. From Jerusalem, the Good News spread to Asia Minor, Africa, Greece, the Slavic countries, the Balkans, Russia, Siberia, China, Japan, Alaska, and finally, to America. The Church has been engaged in missionary activity since her beginning, not because mission work is one of many important ministries, but because the Church is, by nature, missionary. She follows Christ's lead and His work. Let me point out here that had the Church not been so mission-minded, it would have died in Jerusalem as a Jewish sect.

Jesus understood the link between education and mission. In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells us that He was



Father Stephen Belonick

sent by His Father into the world to save it (John 3:17). We could say without a doubt that He was the greatest missionary that lived, for He was sent to find, bring back, and reclaim a people who had lost their way. His missionary work continues to this day, for He seeks the lost and broken, the sinner and the oppressed. The Gospel tells us, however, that He began this missionary activity "teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 4:23). We know that He was an expert teacher because He spoke in a language that the common man could understand and He spoke with power and authority. The Gospel tells us that His followers and foes alike called Him "Teacher."

Likewise, before His ascension, Jesus instructed His disciples to "Go forth, 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 . . ." (Matt. 28:19-20). This mandate by our Lord clearly reveals that education and mission go hand-in-hand.

Let me offer you a few examples that will show the importance of this connection between mission and

education. In the Book of Acts, Peter and the apostles were thrown into prison by the Jewish authorities because they were teaching the people about Jesus Christ and His resurrection from the dead. But an angel came by night, released them, and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life in Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:12-21). The angel told them to go right back to the temple and teach. They obeyed. The apostles surely didn't influence the people by buying land and building an edifice; they influenced them by teaching.

The Book of Acts tells how the Deacon Philip was sent by the Holy Spirit to witness to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39). I'm sure you know this story. Philip found this Ethiopian eunuch reading from the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah. It was a passage which referred to the Suffering Servant, a prophecy about Jesus Christ. Philip asked the eunuch if he understood what he was reading. The eunuch replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" Philip became his guide and began to teach him all things in the Scriptures concerning Jesus Christ. The story ends with this man requesting baptism. Philip's presence and his teaching were necessary for the eunuch's conversion to Christianity, and for that matter, the conversion of all Ethiopia, because he taught who Jesus was and why He came to this world.

In a time closer to our own, we read of the missionary effort in Alaska. We find St. Herman teaching the natives the Word of God, preaching to them on the Lord's Day and on feast days, reading from Scripture and explaining its meaning to them. We find St. Innocent translating the Gospel and the services of the Church into the native languages of the people. These saints knew that before people can accept the message

and be converted, they need to understand the message, they need to be guided. St. Paul wrote in Romans, "But how are men to call upon (God) in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?" (10:14-15). The Church's mission is to send people to teach, so that others can hear, and by hearing, they may believe!

Some missionaries were very creative in their missionary efforts and we need to learn from them. St. Nicholas of Japan, for instance, in the late nineteenth century, organized an Association of Evangelists made up of native Japanese and sent them out to evangelize, while the Church supported them financially. He set up preaching places, and organized public lectures twice a month. He built schools, both secular and catechetical, and began publishing a magazine that dealt with moral, literary, educational, and religious subjects. He organized a philanthropic society, made up of Orthodox women from the city of Hakodate, to help people in need. When rivers overflowed in 1875 causing great damage to the small town of Ganuma, this society purchased rice and brought it to one hundred needy and poor families.

What is stopping us now from being that creative? Are we bound and held fast within the familiar models of education which we have known only in our lifetime? Are there new and creative ways to teach our Church school children, besides the normal "Sunday School" model? Can't we build and support Orthodox elementary schools, middle-schools, high-schools, and colleges, allowing Orthodox and non-Orthodox young people to see and understand the world from an Orthodox perspective? We need to think imaginatively. And as Fr. Michael said last week, we need to think big. Every Orthodox

person is responsible for knowing the faith. And when creative ideas come along which build up the mission, or when creative and specially gifted people in mission or evangelism are recognized in our midst, we need to support them.

How can we become missionaries like the examples I've mentioned? Certainly, we need instruction in the rudiments of the faith. We should be able to answer questions like "Who is God?" or "Why do we believe in God as Trinity?" We should be well-versed in salvation history. We need to know what the Scriptures say and be able to explain the sacramental and liturgical life. We need to be able to defend the dogmas and doctrine of the Church, or at least know what they are. We should be familiar with the history of the Church, the lives of some saints, and the writings of the Holy Fathers. We need to know the place of prayer and fasting in the spiritual life.

The time is past when we can excuse ourselves by saying that there are no books in English. Our seminary bookstores and libraries are filled with clear and understandable books on all of these topics. This basic knowledge is essential and fundamental. Certainly, we don't have to be professional theologians. No one is asking that of us. But all of us, young and old, male and female, need to be able to state what we believe as Orthodox Christians and be able to defend it.

In regard to this kind of education, I think we do a fine job in providing the resources. We have dedicated church school teachers, pastors in our parishes, and bishops who guide and lead us. Many parishes offer Bible studies and encourage the faithful to read the Scriptures daily. Parishes, deaneries, clergy associations, and seminaries offer educational programs throughout the year. Our seminaries continue the important work of producing Orthodox literature. The seminary libraries are won-

derful resources for Orthodox material. Many clergy and laity are involved in proclaiming the Orthodox word through the media, in both radio and TV. These resources and activities are essential, and we need to take full advantage of them. The question is—DO WE?

We can't stop here, though. The early Christians knew the stumbling blocks to true faith in the age in which they lived. They knew the negative consequences of the early heresies for their life of faith. St. John's Book of Revelation is a treatise warning the faithful of the evils and inner dangers of the Roman society in which they lived and worked, as well as an encouragement to remain faithful in the face of these dangers. The Fathers of the Church wrote volumes and preached continuously warning the faithful of the evil inherent in the heresies of their time. We too need to have some knowledge of the false teachings of our age because they are so prevalent, and so subtle. Do we have an answer to the temptations of the New Age movement, to the prevalence of humanism or secularism in our society and in our parishes? How do we respond to the temptations of American civil religion where relativism reigns and in which it is absolute heresy for any faith to say it has the fullness of the truth as we do?

We need to know the times in which we live and the belief structure of these times and have answers to them from our Orthodox perspective. Fr. Alexander Schmemmann of blessed memory called our time the "time of gigantic ideological struggle." And it certainly is. When was the last time we, as pastors, preached about any of these issues? I can honestly say that I haven't.

All of this is crucial for missionary work. St. Paul had to challenge the unbelief of those in the city of Athens, those who scorned any thought of resurrection from the dead, and those

*Continued on the next page.*

## Education Bulletin

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who worshipped the statue of the Unknown god there. He didn't convert all of them, but he did have a tremendous impact on some, namely St. Dionysius the Areopagite and others with him.

We face unbelief and a multitude of gods in our society, as well. What is our answer to this? In regard to this kind of education, I don't think we do as well. We need to produce clearly written books and brochures to define the heresies of our time and how we, as Orthodox, can challenge them.

Likewise, we need to know the Church's position on issues of our day such as sexuality, abortion, euthanasia, and biotechnology. Our world is playing with the sacred institutions of the family, marriage, and the sanctity of life. How to respond to this encroachment? How do we defend these sacred relationships? We are certainly grateful for the witness of Bishop Herman in his defense of the unborn. But what more can we do? Fr. Michael mentioned how Ss. Herman and Innocent built orphanages for the parentless. What is holding us back from doing the same, from taking the next step in housing those infants who are unwanted, and counseling their mothers?

Some of you may be saying to yourself, "How can I possibly know all that?—I never went to seminary." Well, I don't think that you need to be a seminary graduate to be a missionary. But we won't reach anyone if we can't even begin to express, in the simplest ways, something of our faith and our beliefs. We have a responsibility to do that.

I believe all people are hungry for the truth whether they know it or not. But when they come to us, or when we approach them, will we be able to share the basic tenets of our faith?

Providing information, however, is not the end of Christian education, but only the beginning. We must help people, "equip" people, "fine-tune" people to use the information we give

them. The role of Christian education in the mission of our Church is not only to bring people to baptism or conversion in the Lord. It is to teach them *how* to live out their baptism, *how* to live the life of faith, once they have received this great gift.

How can we do this? The most effective way, paradoxically, is to live out our own baptisms. When we live out our own baptisms, we will bring others to God. When we begin to dedicate ourselves to the Way, we will attract others to the Truth and they will find Life (John 14:6). Christian education in this sense means teaching people not only by what we say, but how we live. In the last verse of St. Mark's Gospel, we find these words: "And they [the apostles] went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it" (16:20). We can have the best education our Church can provide, we can have all the answers to the questions that those outside the Church raise, but if we don't live our faith, all the words in the world, all the answers that we have in our minds, will never influence a soul, because there is no life to confirm the words.

All of us have been called to be "ambassadors of Christ," as St. Paul taught to the Christians in Corinth, so that "God can make His appeal through us—His appeal to the world" (2 Cor. 5:20). Before we learn how to become ambassadors, however, we need to *choose* to be His ambassadors. He has chosen us. Will we choose to accept His invitation?

Saint Theophan the Recluse once wrote, "It is not yet a decisive sign of true life in Christ if one calls himself a Christian and belongs to the Church of Christ. [Jesus said] . . . 'Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven' [Matt. 7:21]. One can be counted as a Christian and not be a Christian. This everyone knows. There is a moment, and a very noticeable moment, which sharply is marked out in the course of our life, when a person begins to live in a Christian way."

In our baptism, we were given the grace to live our entire life under God's kingship. We committed ourselves to offering every aspect of our life to Him, that He would have dominion over all of it—every relationship, every trial, every beginning, and every end. Have we accepted this as His place in our lives? We can either choose to accept the grace of baptism in our life or reject it. By accepting it, we allow God to begin to work powerfully in us, making us His ambassadors.

It is not enough, therefore, to be baptized. It is not enough to know famous Bible stories, the life of Christ, or the history of icons. This knowledge is to help us to go farther—to *living* words of God and *living* icons. It is not enough to memorize what the gifts of the Spirit are or where to find them in Scripture. God calls us to enjoy them and to be filled with them.

Saint Herman's missionary message was powerful not just because he provided information to his listeners, but because he lived the message. St. Innocent's efforts were powerful and bore fruit, not only because he laboriously translated Scripture and liturgical services, but because he lived a Christ-like life. The natives saw in the lives of these saints, a life lived for God, a baptism being lived out. And that's what converted them. Faith and works together, instruction and incarnating the instruction—this is how our teachings produce missionary fruit. Gandhi is said to have made the comment about the Christian missionaries of his day, "If they had just lived the message they brought, all of India would be Christian today."

Missionary efforts are powerful, therefore, not by expecting to convert people by merely handing them a lot of facts about Orthodoxy, but by how the facts and information come alive in us. Christ didn't come to us providing a mass of information about the kingdom. He came to show us how to live the life of the kingdom on a daily basis.

Sophie Koulomzin, a pioneer in



Orthodox Christian education in North America, said once, "Christianity is not a system of thinking only. It is a life of feeling, of warmth, a life of the heart. There can be no Christian life unless it is rich in love, compassion, repentance, humility, enjoyment of and gratitude for the good things of life, and the awe of God." She went on to say that the "Christian life permeates the present, the immediate, for example, two boys playing marbles, a boy and a girl on a date," or how we deal with adversity or criticism—"none of this is irrelevant, or indifferent to our Christian life." When we live our life this way, God's life is powerful in us. We become "lights to the world" and the "salt of the earth." We truly become His ambassadors. His love fills us, and His grace abounds in us. And this attracts the human soul because the yearning for God has been implanted within each person on the face of the earth. Our words, deeds, and efforts will be powerful indeed.

There are thousands and even millions of people in this world, some whom you work with, live next to, associate with socially, who are hungering and thirsting for the righteousness that comes from God, and Him alone. Some recognize this hunger and thirst within themselves; some don't. Some may be baptized already, some may not. Many are members of non-Orthodox churches, many are unchurched. Some are members of our own Orthodox parishes. These are the people we have been called to missionize. And we do that by the grace of God, and living with Him and for Him.

Let me offer an example of what I mean from my own personal experience. As a young boy, I had a church school teacher whose name was Jim. Jim was an adult man with a family at the time of my church school days and had taught church school at my parish for a number of years. I can honestly say that I can't remember one thing Jim ever taught me about church teachings, the Bible, the services, or any other facet of Church life. I can't remember one thing. But what

I do remember was much more profound than any classroom talk he ever gave. What I remember about Jim was the way his face would light up when he talked about God, or Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit. What I remember is how he treated each of his students as his own. What I remember is how neither I nor anyone else could ever remember any derogatory word coming from his mouth. He was always joyful and peaceful, in love with God. Jim died a few months ago. In a sense, Jim was a true missionary, and he didn't even know it.

So we are Christian educators, all of us, by how we live the Christian life. How we do that influences people much more than we might think. The role of Christian education then begins with us—learning the great and marvelous treasures of Truth which have been handed down to us, defending these Truths, but most importantly, living them.

This brings me to my final point tonight. It is easy for me to say, "We need to live out our baptism." Any of you who have really tried to do that know how difficult it is. But for the grace of God, it would be impossible. Let us be grateful to our Lord for offering this grace to even attempt it.

But God has provided something to assist us. He has provided the community of the Church to help us in the process of working this out. The Book of Acts and the letters of Paul provide so many examples of how Christians who attempted to live out their faith were encouraged, strengthened, uplifted, admonished, affirmed, and corrected by the faith community. The New Testament gives us a glimpse of a community of faithful supporting each other in living out their baptism.

Last week, Fr. Michael pointed out to us Scripture verses which reflected a Church truly living a life of community. Let me just reiterate some of these. St. Luke records in the Book of Acts that the followers of Jesus Christ "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the

prayers." He goes on to describe that the "company of *those who believed were of one heart and soul*, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common" (2:42, 4:32).

Saint Paul provides another powerful image of the strength of this community in his first letter to the Thessalonians when he states, "Encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing" (5:11),—and in his letter to Colossae when he writes, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; *teach and admonish one another in all wisdom*, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (3:16).

What is striking in these verses is that these early images of Church life reflect a community in which people learned their faith not only by a monologue, that is, a sermon, or a teaching by one of the apostles, but by a dialogue. Both forms of Christian education were not present—monologue and dialogue.

The image reflected in our present Church life is very different, especially on the parish level. Usually, there is only a monologue. The pastor preaches, the pastor teaches. I am certainly not discounting the importance of this kind of teaching. It is biblical and part of the Tradition of the Church, extremely valuable, and must be maintained.

But where do we go from there? Even Christ's disciples had the opportunity in their togetherness to go through a process by which they would make their Lord's teaching their own. Can the Church, or should the Church provide a forum between the Lord's Days to help the faithful make the teachings of God their own? Is there any forum which helps the teachings of God to find a place in the heart? I think there should be. Perhaps the idea of parishioners gathering in small cluster groups, geographically located, meeting once a week or once every two weeks in order to read Scripture, comprehend, pray, and attempt to live in a Chris-

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## Education Bulletin

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tian way with the support of fellow Christians, is a possibility. This idea may seem revolutionary to some, but it seems that the early Church had this kind of forum. It was an organic, living forum which proceeded from their deep sense of community. I believe that we need to return to this in our day. This kind of sharing will strengthen us and help us to recommit ourselves to Christ and His Church.

On the national level at the All-American Councils, we are beginning to dialogue with each other. All of you were given an opportunity to participate in this dialogue at the last All-American Council in Miami, through the Council's Workbook which was sent to each parish. The results were very exciting.

On the parish level, though, I find that there is very little dialogue among the parishioners concerning faith issues. When was the last time any of us spoke about our relationship with God, its highs and lows, with anyone else in the parish? When was the last time any of us spoke to a parish friend about our spiritual journey, our doubts, fears, questions, or what we read in Scripture that day? When was the last time anyone of us were willing to listen? Certainly, we gather after Liturgy for coffee-fellowships, but we talk about the weather, sports, the stock market, the priest, the bishop, church politics, or parish finances.

When was the last parish meeting we attended where we spoke of spiritual issues that we face as Christians and not just the rising cost of fuel oil or the last time the church was painted? When was the last time our parish councils or annual meetings addressed church growth, stewardship, or the mission of the Church? When was the last time we read Scripture verses with each other and tried to apply what we read to our daily lives, and shared how that went for us?

We need, it seems to me, this kind of sharing, and always under the

direction and care of our priests and bishops, for the upbuilding of the Church. We are not separate islands coming to the Church to get our own personal, spiritual aspirin. It is a shame when people in the same parish community don't even know one another, or care to. Christ calls us to be a community, built on the foundation of the apostles, and knit together in love in the unity of the Holy Spirit. He calls us to take that love and extend it, share it, offer it to those who are hungry for it. A shared faith is a living faith, a growing faith. If we can begin learning to share our faith with each other as brothers and sisters in Lord, then we will learn how to share it with the unchurched. If we can become comfortable sharing our faith with our fellow parishioners, we will become comfortable sharing it with strangers. This is Christian education which is powerful.

Let me conclude with words by St. John Chrysostom, who was writing a commentary on St. Paul the missionary:

"For Paul did become a witness to Christ, and a witness as it ought to be; by what he suffered, by what he did, and by what he said. Such witnesses ought we to be, and not to betray the things we have been entrusted with: I speak not only of doc-

trines, but also of the manner of life. For observe: because he had seen, because he had heard, he bears witness to all men, and nothing hindered him. We too bear witness that there is a Resurrection and numberless good things: we are bound to bear witness of this to all men. 'Yes,' you say, 'we do bear witness and do believe.' How can you say that when you live to the contrary? . . . 'You shall be a witness,' it says, 'unto all men.' not only to the friendly, but also to the unbelievers; for this is what witnesses are for; not to persuade those who know, but those who do not know . . . We say, that we have heard Christ, and that we believe the things which He has promised: Then show it, by your works . . ." (Commentary on Acts 21:39-40).

Being followers of Jesus Christ means saying "Yes" to God, to turn over our life and will to Him. In Liturgy, we say, "We have seen the True Light, we have received the Heavenly Spirit, we have found the True Faith." The question is—have we? If we have, then God will be with us powerfully, helping us to be creative, fearless, speaking and acting in a way which will catch men. Then our mission will be successful and will be to His Glory.

—Priest Steven Belonick

*May the Blessing of Christmas  
Bring Peace and Joy to the clergy  
and faithful of our Diocese  
and to the patrons  
of our publication  
throughout the New Year.*

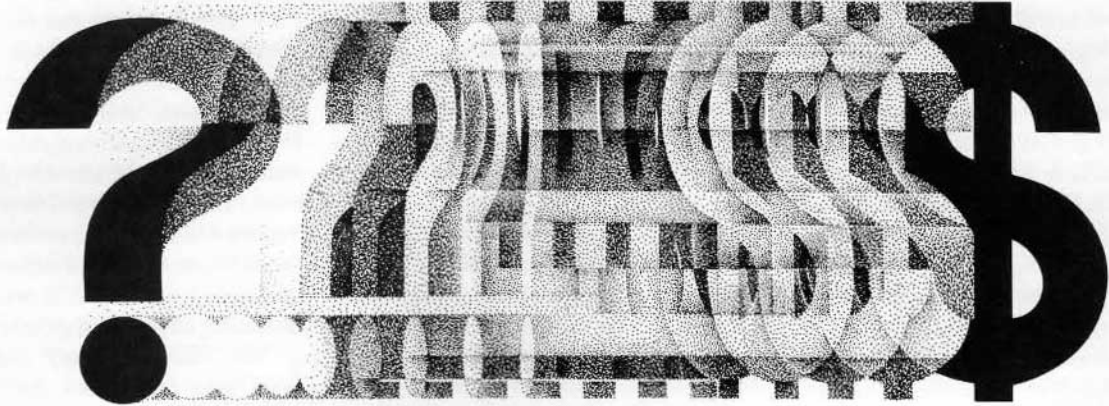
*The Editorial Staff of Your Diocese Alive in Christ.*

The deadline for our Easter Issue is March 14, 1994.

Please send all submissions to:

**Alive in Christ**, Diocesan Center, South Canaan, PA 18459

# The Choice



Relaxing in the recreation lounge of St. Innocent's parish hall after a pizza supper, forty-five faithful members of the youth group were awaiting the opening of their regular business meeting. The main item of business concerned the spending of the funds that had been collected during the past six months. Feelings were running high; three distinct divisions were obvious. At least a third of the members felt the group deserved an all-expense paid trip to the new theme park just an hour from town. About half of the boys were pressing for new sports uniforms and equipment for these teams. The remaining few were supporting an appeal from mission churches overseas—Africa, Mexico, Haiti, etc.

As soon as the kitchen was in order, everyone settled down for some serious thinking. Tom, the president, had the opening prayers and then plunged in.

"You all know what we're here to decide tonight," he started out. "Our treasury (it's a nice fat one for a change, thanks to a lot of good hard work by all of you!) is our topic. What to do with the money? And I know you guys well enough to realize that we have a *diversity* of opinions. So let's hear them all, discuss them seriously and honestly, without blowing up, and then come to our deci-

sion. Yeah, I know I'm talking a lot and maybe I am pushing the agenda a bit, but we *must* get this decided tonight. Barbara, what's your idea—to get things rolling?"

The vivacious social leader of the teens quickly stepped forward and smiled coyly at Tom. "You all know how hard we've worked to collect this money. Many of us thought we were doing it so we could have a great day at Eastern Funtown. We could use it too as an opportunity to invite some friends who don't belong to St. Innocent's—and show them what a great gang we are! I think it would be unfair if we didn't have this outing; we were working under false illusions!"

Barbara smiled at everyone, especially the boys, and flounced back to her seat amidst a good round of applause.

Tom wasn't an uninformed chairman, nor was he easily swayed by petulant charm. He merely smiled kindly as he said over the chatter, "Thanks, Barb, for sharing your ideas. Now let's hear from Brad."

The lankiest member of the group, six-foot-six basketball center, unfolded himself from his chair and ambled forward.

"We fellows feel pretty strongly about this situation. Our teams in the church leagues, well, we've had

good standings, but we sure look shoddy on the basketball court and ball field! So, for the sake of how we represent St. Innocent's, we feel, or should I say, we *want* to use the money for complete sets of new uniforms. We've checked it out and we've got enough! So I say, let's go for it!"

Cheers erupted from the team members scattered throughout the room. Brad sat down, satisfied with his short but succinct presentation.

Once again Tom took control of the situation with a rap of his hand on the table and quiet returned. "You presented your cause well, Brad. Thanks! I'd like to call on one more person to give us a third option to consider. Beth, it's your turn!"

All heads quickly turned and watched as a tall, attractive, immaculately groomed, dark-haired girl came forward. Beth was the group's musician and all respected her leadership in this field. Besides being a talented pianist and flutist, her voice always guided the teen choir in surprisingly good performances, but she rarely spoke up in their meetings.

"Thanks, Tom," Beth spoke clearly and deliberately. "I realize what I'm advocating really runs against what most of us feel we deserve after our hard work. But I'd like to share with you some insights I gained after vis-

*Continued on the next page.*

## The Choice

*Continued from page 33.*

iting my uncle who's in seminary this year. There I met a bunch of students from other countries in Eastern Europe, Africa, the Far East, Latin America. What a neat group of people and yet, what a challenge for them to be here. Separated from family and loved ones (some are married, but couldn't afford to bring wives and children), forced to deal with unfamiliar cultures and customs; unable to communicate well because of language barriers (though many spoke three or four languages); financially handicapped in most cases. Yet all were struggling here willingly and happily because they want to serve Christ and His Church with their lives. So I want us to consider seriously using our funds to help others, to put it where it will benefit more people than ourselves. Thanks!"

Beth left the front of the room in silence—no applause or cheers this time. Yet before Tom could say anything, bumptious Alec, who always had an opinion—informed or uninformed—on every subject, called out, "I'm sick of this sob stuff— Help others!—They don't have as much as we do! We're so privileged and they're so poor . . ."

"Yeah," chimed in Susie, "Why do we have to suffer just 'cause they're unlucky enough to be . . ."

"That's right," called out Joe, "We deserve to get some 'fruits from our labors!'"

Several others would have added their voices in agreement, as Tom stood waiting for calm, but the excitement died as John Mark, their youth director, quietly moved beside Tom. Everyone loved this man who gave so much of himself for them. Crippled with polio while attending seminary fifteen years earlier and forced to give up his dream of the priesthood, he nonetheless was such a radiant Christian that all, old and young, respected and loved him, and listened to his advice.

Abruptly the babble of voices subsided and everyone straightened up to hear his words. John Mark

began.

"You all know what I think of our group and its activities, of each one of you. I'm thankful we can all be together as Christians and are willing to be known as the gang from St. Innocent's. You really are my favorite people! But sometimes we need to look at even our favorite people—and ourselves—to see if we're really on track. Before we do any more discussing of money I want to tell a story. It probably isn't a new one to many of you . . .

"This story starts in the middle of Siberia about 170 years ago. It concerns a young priest who was 'on the way up!' Everything was falling his way—respected as a talented priest, clever craftsman, musician, married

to the girl of his choice, blessed with a young son. But then someone told of a need for a priest to go to a far-off place, to help people who didn't have churches, priests, even a Bible. Of course, this call need not concern him; let some other priest hear the plea. Yes, let some monk respond . . . He had too much going for him in his parish.

"But the call didn't disappear. Prodded by the Holy Spirit, this young man finally went to the bishop and said, 'I'm ready to go!' Ironically, the bishop hesitated to send such a young family thousands of miles over land and sea; he thought it was too hard. But *now* the young priest persisted.

"So TRAVEL they did—to their new home in Alaska. And *work* they

## Department of Religious Education Events

### Diocesan Education Conference Saturday, January 29, 1994

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church  
980 Bridle Path Road, Bethlehem, Pa.  
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

"Education: The Key to the Future"  
Speaker: Protopresbyter Alexander Veronis  
Annunciation Orthodox Church, Lancaster, Pa.  
\$5.00 Registration

### Winter Teen Rally

D.R.E. & Youth Department  
Friday, Saturday, Sunday - February 4, 5, 6, 1994

St. Tikhon's Seminary  
Retreat Leader: Very Rev. Robert Kondratich, Chancellor  
Orthodox Church in America

### Deanery Church School Workshops Saturday, March 12, 1994

All three Diocesan Deaneries will hold workshops on the same day. Locations will be announced. The theme for the workshops is "Pilgrimage to Pascha."

### Diocesan Essay Contest

The Annual Diocesan Essay Contest will run from **March 12, 1994, to April 30, 1994**. All parishes will be notified of the topic, rules and regulations for the essays.

did—baptizing, teaching, building, preaching; learning new languages, writing books, keeping scientific diaries, translating the Bible and the Divine Liturgy, leading many to the Kingdom of Heaven. This young priest, Father John Veniamenov, ultimately became the first bishop to Alaska. Laboring there until over seventy years of age, he was called back to Moscow to be the head of the entire Orthodox Church in that country. That young priest, who had been 'on the way up,' now reached the peak of church leadership! And his whole ministry had been one of SELF-LESSNESS! Others first! Even when he became the Church's top leader, he spent much energy in teaching people to think of others, to form a missionary society, and to help the poor young Church in the faraway lands. He left the rich heritage of *not thinking of self first—but of loving and serving others!* We know this person today (who died only about 115 years ago) as **St. Innocent, Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to America**, our own parish's patron saint!

"Reflect on him and his relationship to you! What if he had not come to Alaska? What if he had not been concerned with helping the young church, the faraway church—which spread to California, the midwest, New York? What if he hadn't cared? Where would we be today? What if there was no St. Innocent's parish? What if YOU didn't know Jesus?"

John Mark started to move to his seat. The room remained strangely silent. Even the most restless were still.

Pausing as he walked, John Mark ended his words. "So I ask you to think about this a bit more. What can you honestly say is the most important—a Funtown excursion, a splashy appearance at games, or helping someone learn about our Savior Jesus Christ? I truly believe you are smart folks who will choose the right thing. And don't be surprised at the unexpected things God will have in store for you . . ."

Several tense moments followed.

John Mark sat with his head bowed; Tom stood motionless by the table. And then suddenly, as if set off by an explosion, both Barbara and Brad jumped up. Each shouted, "Mr. Chairman, I move . . ."

Beth held her breath. Brad bowed to Barbara who continued, "I move that we give our \$3,000 to the missions project and that we ask Beth's uncle to help us decide where to send it."

Brad shouted, "I second that!" All cheered their approval to a unanimous vote! Beth hugged Barbara as John Mark concluded, "I knew you people wouldn't let me down—or should I say, you wouldn't fail the Lord Jesus!"

\* \* \*

During the Nativity Season of this Bicentennial Year of Orthodoxy in North America, what better choices can we make than those that follow the example of our New World missionaries who brought Orthodoxy here? Their unselfish love for Christ brought God's love and salvation to innumerable Aleuts, Tlingits, Athabaskans, Eskimos. It even helped bring Orthodox Christianity to us!

What Choice for CHRIST will you make this Christmas?

CHRIST IS BORN! GLORIFY HIM!

READ FROM YOUR BIBLE - Matthew 28:16-20 and Romans 10:13-15.

THEME VERSE - "And how can the message be proclaimed if the messengers are not sent out? As the Scripture says, 'How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!'" Romans 10:15 (TEV).

**Something to think about and talk over with your family:**

What does "Gospel" mean? What is good news?

Have you and your family ever made a choice which helped send out "Good News"?

What do you know about people today who are serving as St. Innocent did, far away from homes, in strange, faraway lands?

Have you ever thought of being a carrier of the "Good News"?

Our Savior, lovingly guide us to make choices that will share Your love with others and will bring honor and glory to You, now and throughout all eternity. Amen.

—Matushka Isabel Anderson

## ***"In the Footsteps of Saint Herman"***

**Diocesan Bicentennial  
Pilgrimage to Russia  
Led by Bishop Herman**

**Thirteen Day Trip to Russia  
Departure: July 24**

**Ten Nights Cruise With Visits to:  
Moscow - Uglich - Yaroslavl  
Goritsy - Petrozavodsk  
Kizhi - Valaam - St. Petersburg**

*The total cost is \$1,800.00 per person  
Diocesan Youth are encouraged to meet the  
Youth of Russia*

For more information and brochure please write:  
Diocesan Pilgrimage to Russia / South Canaan, Pa. 18459



# Saint Mark's Church Celebrates Twentieth Anniversary



Glory be to Jesus Christ! The parish of St. Mark's Orthodox Church in Wrightstown, Pa., celebrated its twentieth anniversary on Sunday, October 24, 1993. After a year of preparing for this glorious day, our joy was completed with the celebration of the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy by His Grace, Bishop Herman.

The mission of St. Mark's was started by a small group of Orthodox Christians whose goal was to establish a pan-Orthodox Church in the countryside of Bucks County. Members of that group still with St. Mark's today are: Valentina Kiriakidi, Janet Kalenish, Boris Borichevsky, Samuel Mervis, and Thomas Scheponik. Beginning on November 15, 1972, the founders and diocesan clergy, Fathers Daniel Ressetar, Joseph Mar-

tin, and Michael Hatrak, held meetings on how to start a mission church. They met in St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Doylestown until a church could be found to hold weekly services. Often services were held in individual homes during this period.

Father Vladimir Borichevsky was appointed Acting Rector in July of 1973 and served the first liturgy in the old historic Trinity Episcopal Church located in Buckingham, Pa. Thus, St. Mark's Church was established and this was to become the home of St. Mark's until 1988. Fr. Vladimir was a professor at St. Tikhon's Seminary during the week, but every weekend he, along with Matushka Mary, would drive down to Buckingham to hold services for the faithful. The parish began to grow

as more people learned of St. Mark's and Orthodoxy in Bucks County. Fr. Vladimir did much for the Orthodox Church in this area with his weekly radio program. In July of 1977, Fr. Vladimir was asked to serve St. Tikhon's Seminary as Dean of Faculty and could not continue to serve St. Mark's.

Father John Kowalczyk was appointed Rector of St. Mark's on August 1, 1977. The parish was growing. Fr. John's first action was to baptize and chrismate two infants in the parish. Fr. John also started to spark ideas to build a church, and fund raising committees were appointed. In October, 1979, Fr. John was transferred to Holy Assumption Church in Philadelphia.

Father Vladimir Borichevsky

again was appointed Rector and served until his retirement in 1986. The parish of St. Mark's is eternally grateful to Fr. Vladimir of blessed memory and Matushka Mary for all those miles they drove, through all those years, in every kind of weather to hold services and attend to the faithful.

While still a student in his senior year, Fr. Stephen Karaffa and his family began coming to St. Mark's on weekends to hold services. Fr. Stephen was appointed Acting Rector on June 1, 1986. The parish purchased a townhouse to serve as a rectory to house Fr. Stephen, Matushka Gayle, and their children. Fr. Stephen set a goal to build a church and pushed himself to that task with great zeal and persistence. The parish acquired a new property in Wrightstown, Pa. This property had a house to serve as a rectory and enough land to build a church.

Groundbreaking and the planting of a cross by His Grace, Bishop Herman, assisted by venerable clergy of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania, was accomplished in April of 1988. In the same month, Fr. Stephen was installed as Rector. In July, the clearing of the grounds was begun in preparation for the new church construction. By December, enough of the church was completed with furnishings to have a lesser blessing, and the first Liturgy was served in the new church on December 25, 1988, the feast of the Holy Nativity of Our Lord. What a blessing to receive from God! On October 14, 1989, our new church was consecrated by His Grace, Bishop Herman, assisted by venerable clergy of the Philadelphia Deanery and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania. A great celebration was held marked by the presence of the clergy that served at St. Mark's.

The church having been built and consecrated, Fr. Stephen began concentrating on increasing membership. Having our own facilities allowed the parish to do things that were not easily done before, such as

adult studies, flea markets, goods and services auctions, lenten retreats, choir concerts, and an improved Sunday School program. Much activity was taking place at St. Mark's because Fr. Stephen, Matushka Gayle, and the faithful were busy doing God's work.

Nothing of the world stays the same and St. Mark's was to have another change. At the end of April, 1992, Fr. Stephen was transferred to St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

in Nanticoke, Pa. For a few months, our parish did not have a full time Rector, but diocesan clergy served liturgy every Sunday, enabling the faithful to receive the Holy Eucharist.

As one door closes, another one opens, and in August of 1992, His Grace, Bishop Herman, appointed Archpriest Theodore Heckman as the Rector of St. Mark's Church. Again the parish welcomed a new priest

*Continued on the next page.*



George Nakonetschny tonsured Reader.



Hierarchical Divine Liturgy.

## St. Mark's

*Continued from page 37.*

with hope and anticipation that the church would move forward with growth, as it did in the past with former rectors. It did not take long for the parishioners to realize that they would not be disappointed. Fr. Theodore's preaching and teaching of the traditional Orthodox Church theology has generated new interest among the faithful and brought many new people to St. Mark's. Being an associate professor of Liturgical Theology at St. Tikhon's Seminary, Fr. Theodore presents his classroom lectures to his adult study class with fantastic success. Many nights there is hardly room for newcomers, but they manage to squeeze in. Father's sermons and his explanations of traditional Orthodoxy have been a great motivator for the faithful. It does not take long when talking with

Fr. Theodore for one to realize that this man truly loves God, and this, with all his efforts, has brought about an increase in spirituality in St. Mark's. With our own church for the faithful to gather in and a new rise in spirituality, St. Mark's was to make things even better as our twentieth anniversary was approaching.

In the fall of 1992, it was decided at the monthly church council meeting, with Fr. Theodore's blessing, to hold a twentieth anniversary celebration. Thus began the most exciting and fruitful year for parish participation in the history of St. Mark's. Plans were being made and committees forming. The spirit of harmony and brotherly love for one another certainly blossomed during the course of the year of preparation. Everyone worked hard together to achieve all the goals. Most positively the Holy

Spirit was in our hearts. How beautiful for the parish to work together and pray together; that's how a church family should be.

Finally, after much planning and preparation, the celebration weekend was upon us. Bishop Herman arrived in the late afternoon, accompanied by Fr. Deacon Nicholas Wyslutsky, three sub-deacons, and Martin Paluch. His Grace served Vespers for the faithful while Fr. Theodore directed the choir of clergy and seminarians present.

Sunday morning the weather was as nice as anyone could want. His Grace, Bishop Herman, was met at the rectory by the deacon, sub-deacons, and the choir. From the rectory, a procession led by the choir, directed by Thomas Scheponik singing the Tropar of St. Mark's, brought the Bishop to the church. During the pro-



St. Mark's parish family.



cession, three young girls, Stephanie Bohlender, Katharine Ren, and Holly Ren, followed behind the choir strewing flower petals before the Bishop. Entering the church, His Grace was greeted by Fr. Theodore with a cross, and by the church warden, Sergei Borichevsky, with bread and salt. The Bishop received a bouquet of flowers from Stephanie Bohlender.

After the Bishop was vested, the faithful went before His Grace to receive his Blessing. During the reading of the hours, the author of this article was led by two sub-deacons before Bishop Herman when His Grace bestowed upon him the high honor of being tonsured as a reader. (A moment I will never forget, for it brought happiness into my heart. Thank you, Vladika. *Eis Polla Eti Despota*).

Well over one hundred and thirty faithful gathered for the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Nearly all present that were Orthodox Christians received the Holy Eucharist from His Grace, Bishop Herman. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, Bishop Herman presented gramotas to Joseph Horoschak and Alla Nakonetschny for all their continuous work and dedication over the years to St. Mark's.

After the Divine Liturgy, refreshments were served outdoors. A fresh layer of fallen leaves served as a carpet as hors d'oeuvres and refreshments were served before the banquet began. The weather was most beautiful and comfortable, which made the day just that more perfect. What a joyous celebration it turned out to be!

The banquet began with ninety-six people present at the tables. The blessing of the food was performed by Bishop Herman, and all partook of a delicious meal. Father Theodore spoke briefly, sharing his joy at the cooperative spirit which had been evident in all the preparations for this day.

Matushka Mary was introduced

and related a few stories about Fr. Vladimir and how they traveled to St. Mark's all those years. She mentioned how the growth of St. Mark's was like that of a child. When she first came, St. Mark's was like an infant and she watched it grow to be a teenager and now, at its twentieth anniversary, it was like a young adult standing on its own two feet in the world.

His Grace, Bishop Herman was introduced, and he spoke of his experience with St. Mark's from its beginnings and how he had celebrated twenty years as Bishop this same year as St. Mark's anniversary. His Grace recalled many meetings and struggles he had dealt with at St. Mark's, some good, some disappointing, because sometimes goals could not be met. Today, however, he was happy to see St. Mark's doing so well, with the services well attended and a new spirituality in the church, the faithful working together and the church moving forward.

Thus concluded one of the most

beautiful, spiritual, and satisfying days in the history of St. Mark's. Many people have passed through the doors of St. Mark's; some have stayed, some moved on, but all were part of the make-up and character of this church. To all these brothers and sisters—God bless you and thank you, wherever you may be, for your contribution to St. Mark's.

St. Mark's Church has spent many years growing, learning, and building under the various priests who have served here. Each was unique, with his own talents and personality, yet each one was so necessary for St. Mark's to be here today. Each priest contributed his part by his humane capability and an unquenchable love for God to build a church for the worship of Our Lord.

St. Mark's would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to His Grace, Bishop Herman, for sharing with us in this joyous celebration.

*Eis polla eti Despota.*

—Reader George Nakonetschny

## Official

### Retired:

V. Rev. Claude Vinyard, former Rector of All Saints in Olyphant, was granted retirement, effective December 1, 1993. He is attached to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church, South Canaan, Pa.

### Ordained:

Peter Dubinin was ordained to the Holy Diaconate on October 10, and to Holy Priesthood on October 30, 1993. He is attached as a priest to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church in South Canaan, Pa. While completing his studies at St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary, he is assigned to care for the spiritual needs of All Saints Church in Olyphant.

### Parish Council Officers Confirmed

All Saints Orthodox Church - Olyphant  
 Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church - Harrisburg  
 Holy Annunciation Orthodox Church - Berwick  
 St. Stephen's Orthodox Catholic Cathedral - Philadelphia

# The Mission Of Sacred Music In Orthodoxy Spirituality

**(Editor's note: the following lecture was given at St. Tikhon's Seminary as part of this year's annual lecture series.)**

Glory to Jesus Christ!

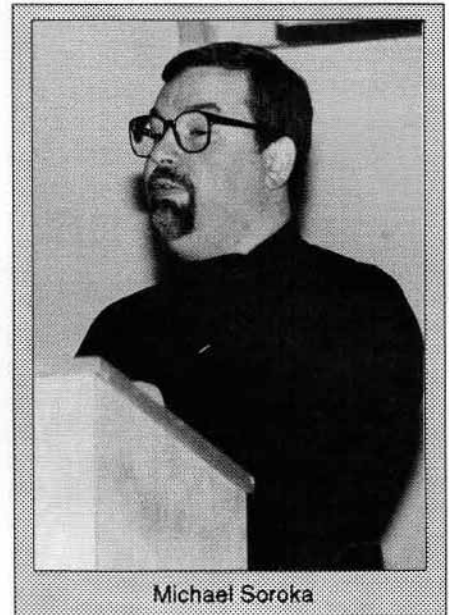
I feel honored, on the one hand, and humbled on the other, to be here with you sharing these words about our common work together—about our apostolic mission of prayerful song to America. Tonight's talk will deal with the ministry of sacred music in Orthodox spirituality. The Church has given us a precious gift: the gift of prayerful song! The Orthodox legacy of prayer and music inspires and challenges us in our work, worship, and mission as the assembled people of God. Music and prayer—prayer and music: they are forever linked to one another. They never cease to be an expression of the other.

I recall with fondness my visits to St. Tikhon's Seminary back in the late sixties and early seventies. I had the pleasure of being involved in the Orthodox Inter-Seminary Movement. We enjoyed these opportunities to glorify God together with one mouth and one heart and one mind, to receive together the precious body and blood of Jesus Christ and to gather together as one to "do the common work" of the Church—indeed, to worship together. We seemed always to remember with great joy the beauty of the services that the Church gave us as a gift—in whatever chant was sung. Common worship touches the soul—prayers, hymns, troparia, stikheras, kontakia, communion hymns, psalms, and in fact, all liturgical hymns touch the soul. God's Word becomes song as the Church prays, teaches, edifies, serves, min-

isters, fasts, feasts, and celebrates.

As the apostles went out and baptized all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—the Church grew. The Good News—the message of Jesus Christ—was spread to all the ends of the earth in various ways: evangelism, preaching, teaching, praying, serving, loving, working, and singing. As the Church grew, the Church never ceased to pray or to sing or to love. In many ways, the young, missionary Church reflected the Judaic model of liturgical worship. In other ways, it transformed it—it fulfilled it—it completed it with Christ's presence. From Jerusalem to all the ends of the earth, the Church spread the Good News—including its prayer and music—everywhere: Greece, Spain, Ethiopia, Egypt, Asia Minor, Persia, Mesopotamia, Britain, India, Arabia, Armenia, China, Japan, the Balkans, Russia, Alaska, and to America. Diverse, local traditions or customs reflected these native lands. Nevertheless, the faith remained the same everywhere. The Church never ceases to be apostolic—never ceases to educate—never ceases to be evangelistic—for she never ceases to spread the "Glad Tidings of Joy!" Likewise, she never ceases to pray and to "sing to the Lord as long" as she lives: "I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being" (Ps. 104:3).

Tonight, I will attempt to offer brief reflections about liturgical music and singing within the ongoing prayer life of the Church. For all sacred music—all liturgical singing or chanting, whether sung or chanted by one chanter, one soloist, many singers, the entire congregation, in



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monophonic (one part) Byzantine chant or polyphonic (many part) harmonic form—is, in its essence, prayer!

Some important questions may be posed at this time during our discussion. Why do we sing? Should we pray while we sing? In what spirit do we sing? How do we spread the "Good News" when we sing? Do bishops, priests, deacons, sub-deacons, chanters, readers, singers, and choir directors (along with the entire congregation) have a mission while offering praises to God in the assembly of the faithful? What type of music is appropriate in the Lord's Presence? At the Lord's Banquet? Did the Apostles sing? Did Christ sing? Did the early Church sing? Can instruments be used to accompany the human voice? Why does the Orthodox Church insist upon a *capella* liturgical singing—without accompaniment? Would it not be easier to bring in the organs and guitars in order to enliven and inspire our faithful, and maybe even "keep our singers and our congregations on pitch"? What about so-called popular songs of today: jazz, rock, country, or rap? Let's face it! They are popular! Should we try to make our hymns more "popular"—more "relevant"? Will we be evangelistic while spreading the Good

News if we brought guitars to Church for those who feel our hymns have "lost it"? Should we have soloists—friends of the couple—who sing favorite soap opera themes during our wedding services?

Please forgive the cynicism! I share these questioning words of exaggeration with you for a purpose. That purpose is liturgical and evangelistic "to its very soul": the Orthodox Church's mission of sacred song through spirituality is the same "yesterday, today, and tomorrow," for the Church's prayer life, doctrines, beliefs, Holy Tradition, Scripture, history, spirituality, and in fact, way of life are changeless and interconnected. Prayer and music—music and prayer: they empower one another through the liturgical cycles of the Church.

There is an eternal and changeless connection between sacred music and Liturgy; between music and the Eucharist; and between all prayer of the Church and all appropriate liturgical hymns. The angelic hosts and faithful on earth are joined together in one endless and joyful litany of praise, thanksgiving, and love in the Trinity. The Church prays through song! The Church expresses and outlines her history of salvation through song! The Church shares her way of life through song! The Church educates and teaches through song! The Church learns through song! The Church evangelizes through song! The Church honors the saints and the blessed Theotokos through song! The Church "magnifies the Lord" through song!

In prayer, the Church unites yesterday, today, and tomorrow through song! The Church unites all the known and unknown saints of the past, present, and future through song! The Church unites "All of Creation" in a glorious and endless "cloud of witnesses" through song! The Church defines her faith through song! The Church combats the heretics through song! The Church unites

the Old and the New through song! The Church unites all Orthodox believers through song! The Church unites the Temple and the "body of Christ" (His bride) through song! As we have just heard, the Church through song has much to accomplish: her common work and ministry of music has "no beginning and no end"—it is ceaseless, like the praises of the angelic hosts.

All liturgical singing within the Church is prayer! Melodies may change; rhythms may change; native languages may change; styles may change; composers, adaptors, and arrangers may change; chants may change; nevertheless, the WORD does not. In other words, liturgical texts as written by saints, poets, and hymnographers of the Church in language and form are somewhat "fixed" (within limits), while musical styles may vary according to local tradition—that is, as long as the music remains faithful to the text (that's the key!): faithful to the WORD! In Orthodoxy, this common prayer, psalm or hymn (the WORD) is always sung. It is only natural that the worship of God is always expressed in song. Formerly, the Jews expressed their thanks to God with the offering of animals sprinkled with blood (that is, sacrifices at the Temple). With the "new lamb"—the new "passover" of Christ, this form of sacrifice was abolished and replaced by a "continual sacrifice of praise, the tribute of lips that give thanks to His name" (Heb. 13:15).

Considering the fact that a Christian by his or her baptism is a "transformed servant or handmaid of God," so his or her praise of God through prayer and song should reflect this transformation. During the sacrament of baptism, immediately before the first exorcism-prayer, the priest says: "And may thy holy name be glorified in *him* together with that of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ and of thy life creating Spirit . . . let thine ears attend unto the

voice of *his* supplication. Make *him* to rejoice in the works of *his* hands and in all *his* generation; that *he* may render praises unto Thee, may sing, worship, and glorify Thy great and exalted Name always all the days of *his* life."

Powerful words indeed! That is our ministry—that is our mission as the Church calls us to sing: to use our God-given talents to praise Him, not to exalt ourselves. The Church calls us to be faithful to this ministry even if we are mad at the choir director! The Church calls us to remain faithful to this ministry of song even if we are not picked to be in the trio this year! The Church calls us to remain faithful to what, at one time in the history of the Church, was a tonsured office, considered among the orders of the clergy. A listing of Church "offices" in order of rank which comes to us from the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 343-381) reads: presbyters (priests), deacons, sub-deacons, readers, singers, exorcists, doorkeepers, and ascetics. While the singers were not among the higher clergy, they were nevertheless a distinct and elevated group, set aside for their task by a special rite of tonsuring. The same Council of Laodicea issued a decree (Canon 15) stating that "no others shall sing in the Church, save only the canonical (tonsured) singers who go up into the ambo and sing from a book."

This Canon was not meant to exclude the whole body of worshippers from responding at the appropriate and accustomed moments. The faithful had always sung the "Amen" and other dialogue responses such as "Lord, have mercy," "To Thee, O Lord," "Grant it, O Lord," and the like, as well as the responses at the Anaphora: "And with your spirit," "We lift them up . . ." and so on. In the earliest years, during the singing of psalms, there was a widespread practice of the whole body of the faithful singing simple refrains after

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each verse or section of the psalms. This practice was most likely the beginning of antiphonal singing (alternate singing between two choirs or between a soloist and choir). Antiphonal singing, however, soon became the predominant form of psalm singing, beginning as early as the first half of the second century.

Obviously, it would be the more elaborate musical portions which would require a specialized choir. And it was, no doubt, to protect and maintain the unique function of the choir that Canon 15 was formulated. At times, tonsured readers or chanters sang alone; at other times, only the tonsured singers (the choir) sang together; during other moments, soloists sang rather complicated praises, while the congregation repeated simpler *psalm* verses over and over again; and at still other moments, the entire assembly of God sang together the common prayer of the Church. All things were done "decently and in order," to paraphrase St. Paul's advice to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 14:40).

In the common prayer of the Church, the organic structure of the assembly is most adequately expressed in the raising of voices in common song (congregational singing). Although the voices are indeed diverse, it is "with one mind" that the Church prays. "It is truly a great bond of union that the multitude who form the assembly make up but one single chorus," wrote St. Ambrose. This same concept of unity in diversity is also brought out by St. John Chrysostom, who, describing the singing at the Church of St. Irenaeus in Constantinople, wrote: "The psalm which occurred just now in the service blended all voices together, and caused one single harmonious chant to arise; young and old, rich and poor, women and men, slaves and free, all sang one single melody . . . Together we make up a single choir in perfect quality of rights and of expression whereby earth imitates heaven. Such is the noble character of the Church."

Today, choir members in the Church are seldom, if ever, tonsured; they are not considered "clergy" in any formal sense. Yet their function remains as important and elevated as it was in the early Church. Membership in the choir must still be considered the high calling it really is. And singers today must not divorce their musical task from their own personal spirituality.

Music did not originate with man; it has always been inherent in nature. Pitched sounds in rhythmic patterns have empowered and enlivened God's creation from the very beginning. Since all sounds proceed from vibrations of something material, all "songs" in nature are, in a real sense, God's music. God has given all of creation life, and, in turn, His creatures offer "praise" back to their loving Father. Certainly, God has created everything "good" and music (or at least "good" music) expressed through natural sound has always been an important form of prayer—even before the existence of man. Let's listen to the sounds, prayers, sacred songs, and music as offered by God's creation according to Psalm 148:

"Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his host! Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens! . . . Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command! Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young men and maidens together, old men and children! . . . Praise the Lord!"

Man, the crown of creation, made in the "image and likeness of God," soon joins in this glorious symphony of praise with all of creation. The Vesper service of the Orthodox Church very appropriately and beautifully begins with the proclamation

of this evening psalm: "Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, who coverest thyself with light as with a garment, who hast stretched out the heavens like a tent, who hast laid the beams of thy chambers on the waters, who makest the clouds thy chariot, who ridest on the wings of the wind, who makest the winds thy messengers, fire and flame thy ministers" (Ps. 104). This psalm, which glorifies God's creation of the world, is man's very first act of worship, for man first of all meets God as Creator. Through the ages, man has continually offered sacred song in thanksgiving to God in worship and prayer. Sacred song, as part of formal church services, dates back to Old Testament times. As far back as 900 B.C., the Temple of Jerusalem included a special school for students of music who learned to sing the psalms of David. Sacred song became an important part of Christian services as well. We read that Christ and His disciples sang a hymn following the Last Supper before departing to the Mount of Olives (Mt. 26:30; Mk. 14:26). The psalms of David and hymns of later composition are now regularly sung at Orthodox services throughout the world.

The Jews took this ministry of singing and the chanting of psalms very seriously. They knew the Psalms of David by memory and their children learned them from generation to generation. When the Hebrew nation lived in captivity, their Babylonian captors required of them to "sing one of the songs of Zion." Just think of it! Pagan Babylonians interested in the psalms of David! They were aesthetically attracted to the "same hymns" that the Jews cherished so dearly. They captivated the attention of the Babylonians on a musical level alone. They did not live these sacred words; they enjoyed how they sounded. For the Jews, the psalms expressed and embodied the WORD of God; for the Babylonians, they were a form of entertainment.

Through the years, the inspired

Jews (believers in One God), trained singers to interpret the psalms appropriately through song in the great Temple of Jerusalem. They often used instruments—lyres, trumpets, lutes, harps, timbrels, strings, pipes, and cymbals—while offering praises to God. The curious Babylonians, however, wanted to be entertained—they wanted a performance. Within the minds and souls of the Jews, this was an insulting, offensive, and blasphemous request. How could they sing the sacred songs of God for mere entertainment and sport? Could they sing weeping by the waters of Babylon, thinking of their beloved Zion—Jerusalem? Psalm 137 begins with these words: “By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion . . . How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” The Jews answered, “We cannot!”

The early Christians continued the Judaic heritage of chanting psalms, adding gradually new hymns that were specifically Christian in content. The notion that sacred music developed only after the age of the early Church persecutions is quite erroneous. In fact, it was through psalms and hymns that the intense band of the faithful expressed their strength and joy in the Risen Lord during those long years of persecution. When the Church finally did emerge from the difficult era, her music continued to flourish as before.

In the early Churches, the music was entirely vocal. The seven ecumenical councils upheld this practice, and the tradition they established of singing *a capella* is still followed by most Orthodox churches. No accompanying organ or other instruments are used. The human voice alone glorifies God. There are a number of reasons for this. During the formative years of the Church, instruments were associated with the theater and circus; they evoked pagan and often immoral “emotions,” for they were associated with not-so-sacred activities at times. Even in the Western Church until the fif-

teenth century, instruments were not permitted. As late as the sixteenth century in the West, the organ was hardly more than tolerated, the music being still mainly *a capella*.

The Jewish worship of old had included them, but only as an accommodation to human weakness, to the spiritual imperfection of man under the old Law. St. John Chrysostom said, “David formerly sang in psalms; we today also sing with him; he had a lyre with lifeless strings, the Church has a lyre with living strings. Our tongues are the strings of the lyre, with a different tone, indeed, but with a more accordant piety.” Musical instruments are lifeless and mechanical; they introduce into worship a sensuous and theatrical element. They have no “soul” created in the image and likeness of God. The pure human voice—empowered and embodied in man’s heart, soul, body, will, mind, and spirit—is the sole worthy instrument in the more perfect worship of the “New Israel.” It should not be too difficult to understand the Church’s position! Even though instrumental music may appeal to one’s hearing and can, in fact, create a prayerful state, it is capable of producing only sound, not inspired words of praise, thanksgiving, mercy, forgiveness, instruction, edification, and enlightenment. St. Gregory the Theologian (325-391) states: “Let us take up hymns instead of drums . . . and theatrical sounds.” The Church Fathers, in accordance with the example of Jesus Christ singing with His holy apostles, severely forbade instrumental music as being incompatible with the character of prayerful, sacred song. St. Luke writes that after the Last Supper, Jesus Christ and His disciples “sang a hymn” and went out to the Mount of Olives and “as Jesus Christ was drawing near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, ‘Blessed be the King Who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the

highest!” (Lk. 19:37-38). Again, the Apostle Paul, writing to the Ephesians, tells them: “Sing and psalmodize to the Lord with your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father” (Eph. 5:19). And again, Paul, writing to the Colossians, tells them to thank God by singing “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Col. 3:16). And in his letter to the Hebrews, he quotes the psalm of David: “I will proclaim Thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the church I will sing a hymn to Thee” (Heb. 2:12). And *Acts* records that Paul and one of his chief fellow workers, Silas, are said to have sung as a means of worship: “About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoner were listening to them . . .” (16:25). Instrumental music accompanies, but sacred music edifies and teaches the body of Christ here on earth to worship the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Music, by its very nature, has power to uplift and transform the human heart. St. Gregory of Sinai wrote, “Singing (psalmody) has been given to us that we may rise from the sensory to the intellectual to the true.” St. John Chrysostom said: “Nothing uplifts the soul so much and gives it wings and liberates it from the earth and releases it from the fetters of the body and makes it aspire after wisdom and deride all the cares of this life as the rhythm and melody of sacred songs.” Theophan the Recluse, the great bishop and spiritual writer of the nineteenth century, said, “The purpose of sacred songs is precisely to make the spark of grace that is hidden within us burn brighter and with greater warmth. This spark is given by the sacraments. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual odes are introduced to fan the spark and transform it into a flame.”

If sacred song is to increase in us the grace of God, then those who treat it merely as esthetic pleasure or a “religious concert” are missing the point. It is supremely important

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that the singers in the Orthodox Church be pious and prayerful and that they strive at all times to sing not with the tongue only, but with the heart. Bishop Theophan continues: "It is necessary not only to understand the song, but to be in sympathy with it, to accept the contents of the hymn in the heart and to sing it as if it came from our own heart . . . In the time of the Apostles only those who were in such a *staté* used to sing; others entered into a similar mood and all the congregation sang and glorified God from the heart only. No wonder if, in consequence of this, the whole congregation was filled with the Spirit! What treasure is hidden in sacred songs if they are sung properly!"

Saint Athanasius asserted the same thing when he said, "Those who sing properly chant not only with their tongue, but also with their mind, and benefit greatly not only themselves but also those who desire to listen to them . . ." St. John Chrysostom, likewise, stated that: "Those who sing are filled with the Holy Spirit, just as those who sing satanic songs are filled with an unclean spirit . . ."

Singers, readers, and choir directors must be well qualified technically and well prepared spiritually. Their faith in Christ must possess the virtue of humility, and their singing must always be done in what the Holy Fathers term a state of "inner attention." Both extremes, singing carelessly and listlessly on the one hand, and theatrically or artificially on the other hand, must be avoided at all costs. Canon 75 of the Council of Trullo (A.D. 692) states: "Those whose office it is to psalmodize in the churches should not use disorderly sounds, nor force nature to shouting, nor adopt any of those styles which are unsuitable for the Church; but let them offer the hymns to God."

All hymns sung within the Orthodox Church are completely wedded to the text. The text, in fact, is paramount; the words suggest the musi-

cal style and rhythm. Since the Church knows of no sacred music without words, it is from the text and for the text that the melody proceeds. The music is a holy chant, not measured by any regular or contrived meter. There are, therefore, no hymnwriters who were simply professional musicians; they were rather liturgical poets whose chief task was neither music nor poetry, but prayer. They were without exception ascetical, mystical fathers. And the content of their hymnology is never "personal" or subjectivistic, but rather objective declarations of Orthodox doctrine. Each verse, each troparion, each stikheron is a marvelous poetic statement of the Faith.

Just as there is no liturgical music without words, so too there are during worship no words without music. Everything is chanted—all psalms, all gospel and epistle readings, the Creed, all hymns, everything. The phenomenon in American churches of merely reading, or of congregational recitation of portions of the services, are influences from protestant worship, having no basis or precedent in the whole history of Orthodox practice. In addition, though much of the liturgical music in use in Orthodox Churches today is harmonized, the traditional Byzantine and early Slavic chants were monophonic (one part—with the melody line only) with the addition at times of the drone or holding note. Polyphony (many parts, usually harmonized) appeared in Russia in the late sixteenth century. Later, the harmonies became more sophisticated as professionally-trained composers harmonized chants and wrote original music of a high degree of esthetic beauty. The process, however, became more and more dominated by "western" influence and opened the door to music for music's sake. Harmonized or not, sacred song is most effective when it is uncomplicated and directly expressive of both the text and the liturgical moment.

Every hymn, every note, every phrase and every verse must be rendered clearly, in an appropriate

tempo, and with accents natural and proper to the language. The Church must train well prepared choir directors, who possess a solid theological education along with a firm knowledge of the Church's liturgical rubrics. Parishes so often support mere "fill-in" directors who simply wave their hands. Parishes often do not train young readers or support junior choirs or active youth choirs. Congregational singing must be restored to its original form here in America in the twenty-first century in order to involve more of our "frozen-chosen" parishioners during the services in this shared ministry of sacred song. This requires a commitment of faith, of time, and of purpose from the priest, readers, singers, choir directors, and congregation. We *all* have seen the true Light. We *all* have received the heavenly Spirit! We *all* have found the true Faith. And we *all* have worshipped the undivided Trinity, who has saved us! Our shared faith never ceases—as our shared voices proclaim together, "Thy Resurrection O Christ our Saviour, the Angels in heaven sing; enable us on earth, to glorify thee in purity of heart."

All of us must be committed primarily to the Faith, to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit, if our praises offered to the Lord are to be worthy or pleasing to Him. Outside the Church, all singers must live a Christian life, full of faith, love, hope, charity, gentleness, kindness. Attendance at all the services throughout the liturgical year, weekly choir rehearsals, the training of readers and singers of all ages, vocal training, proper care of one's voice, section rehearsals, music appreciation, and the training of junior choirs, youth choirs, senior choirs, pan-Orthodox choirs, and the singing congregation—as well as, first and foremost, the nurturing of our spiritual lives through prayer, frequent communion and religious education—all are appropriate and essential God-given gifts, tools, and "weapons" (so to speak) needed to arm us in offering "hymns" that are

pleasing to the Lord.

Indeed, what hymns are “pleasing to the Lord”? Obviously, not all music glorifies God, venerates the saints and the Theotokos or edifies and educates man. In fact, today most music is used for entertainment, for dancing, or for “background” during work, driving, or shopping. There is even a large and lucrative segment of contemporary music that consciously is against God and which seeks to glorify the lowest instincts and appetites of man. And most distressing is the introduction of profane worldly styles of music in many churches. Such music neither glorifies nor elevates man: it often ignores, denies or is totally divorced from God. Occult influences, sexual overtones, violence, rebellion, blasphemous language, cultic and satanic influences, perversions, anti-Christian proclamations, murder and suicide and subliminal messages, as well as escapism, are tools and weapons used by “stars of today” to make their millions. Indeed, not all rock music and rock singers of today are “anti-praises” of God (so to speak). But we must beware! The Orthodox Church, throughout the centuries, has been extremely careful in this regard. Only approved texts and hymns—as accepted by the gathered Church at council or through her history of prayer and veneration—can be included within the complex cycle of liturgical services throughout the year. Only by combining all the texts and hymns as composed by the approved spiritual writers, poets, and hymnographers of the past and present, can the Church of today be faithful to her holy traditions.

The Orthodox Church gathers together a magnificent cloud of witnesses as a ceaseless chorus or symphony to God. St. John Damascus composed in the eighth century the *Octoechos* or book of eight tones and composed hymns to counter the heretical catchy tunes of the heretics as the Church defended her correct teachings and doctrines. He and the many other saints who wrote our hymns, are “stars” of Christian

hymnography who form one continuous string of treasures or musical “pearls” that live on through the centuries—indeed, they are endless because the prayer life of the worshipping community lives on forever.

All liturgical hymns reveal the faith which was once and for all delivered to the saints. It is through worship in song that the truth about Jesus Christ is known. Our mission is to preserve that legacy and fulfill its mission here in America through prayer, witness, and song. If we are one single singing community united in faith and prayer, why do divided Orthodox jurisdictions exist here in America? How can we spread the good news through prayer and song and glorify our Lord Jesus Christ in

clergy and laity alike—to “come and see.” We must invite the unchurched from all the ends of the earth to believe in Jesus Christ and to celebrate the WORD through song and prayer to “all of mankind.” Orthodox evangelization is an invitation to “come and see.” As our Church celebrates the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America, we should constantly be reminded of the story of St. Vladimir’s envoys who were converted by what they saw and heard in worship at the Church of the Holy Wisdom (*Hagia Sophia*) in Constantinople. They “knew not whether they were in heaven or on earth.” They proclaimed to Vladimir that they could not forget that beauty for truly “God dwells there among men.”

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*It is through worship in song that the truth about Jesus Christ is known.*

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proclaiming his death and confessing his resurrection while duplicating our divided efforts over and over again? We can worship together and sing together—and not simply during our nominal proclamations of united faith together during our Sunday of Orthodoxy Vesper services. Let’s worship together more often—for Saturday evening Vesper services or Sunday morning Divine Liturgies. Liturgical concerts can be scheduled along with Orthodox Education Days on a local basis—let us hope that the entire community full of men, women, and children will be invited “to come and see.” Our icons can be explained, our shared faith can be explained, and our hymns can be explained. Perhaps, pan-Orthodox senior choirs, or youth choirs, or junior choirs! Perhaps, pan-Orthodox local workshops for readers, singers, and choir directors! Unfortunately, we think small—as Father Michael very beautifully said two weeks ago. Our faith unites, our actions divide.

Evangelization through song is an invitation by all Orthodox faithful—

Will our friends, neighbors, relatives, and unchurched Americans be evangelized by what they see and hear at our liturgical celebrations during this bicentennial commemoration, so that they surely know that God is with us? Will they hear worthy praises in prayer and song to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Will they know not whether they are in “heaven or on earth?” Will they be inspired to praise the Lord—singing and exalting His name throughout the ages—by what they hear and see? And will our lives together be inspired in the presence of the Lord through prayer and song all the days of our life? Will we be faithful to the Church’s legacy of sacred song or not? Will we evangelize through song or not? Will we live, pray and sing as if God is with us? Will we be faithful to Him in everything we do, all the days of our life? To take Christ’s words seriously—to spread the Gospel of Christ in whatever way possible: faith, prayer, song, life—that is our ministry—that is our mission! That is our celebration!

—Michael Soroka



JOHN URAM '93

**S**ubmitting my soul to the mercy of God, and asking everybody's forgiveness and forgiving everybody, and remaining faithful to the Orthodox Catholic Doctrines up to my last minute, believing and professing myself; and submitting myself to the prayers of all, in sound mind, I have written this my last Will.

—Last Will and Testament of V. Rev. Alexis G. Toth  
July 10, 1907 Article 8

The Very Reverend Mitred Archpriest  
Alexis G. Toth  
1853 - 1909



These words of Father Toth in his last Will and Testament are a summation of an Orthodox priest's faith, who up to the last minute believed and professed the Orthodox Catholic doctrines. Father Toth was a teacher and enlightener of the Orthodox Faith in America. Father Toth was a missionary to the Slavic immigrants to America as well as a social advocate to the Slavic immigrant. He was an exemplary leader and central force in the development of the Orthodox Church in America. There were only a few Russian Orthodox churches in America at the time of his arrival from the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Within a span of twenty years, there were numerous Orthodox churches established due to Father Toth's missionary activities. Father Toth achieved the distinction of being the first Greek Catholic Uniate priest in America to lead his people to reunion with the Russian Orthodox Church. He has been held responsible for the return of thousands upon thousands of Uniate Slavic immigrants to the Orthodox Church.

Father Toth asks everybody's forgiveness and forgives everybody because it was a dark period of division, misunderstandings, court trials, and confusion during the era of 1885-1910.

Let us look at the life and work of Father Toth. The following is condensed from a study originally presented to the faculty of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary, Crestwood, New York, in March, 1971, as a part of a Master of Divinity thesis by Keith S. Russin.

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Alexis G. Toth, son of the Reverend George and Cecilia Toth, was born near Eperjes, Szepes/Spis County, Hungary (present day Slovakia) on March 14, 1853. Completing his elementary studies in the local preparatory schools, he attended the Roman Catholic Seminary of Esztergom for one year and the Uniate Catholic Seminary of

Unguar/Uzhorod for three years. Following in the footsteps of his father, he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in 1878 by Bishop Nicholas Toth of the Diocese of Eperjes. After his ordination, he served as an assistant in the parishes of Saros/Saris County and was eventually named rector of the parish church of Homroyd in Abauj. Later he assumed the duties of diocesan chancellor and was appointed in 1881 the Director of the Seminary of Eperjes and professor of Canon Law and Church History. Fr. Toth departed for America in 1889 upon recommendation of his bishop, John Valyi, to the American mission.

The American mission was composed largely of immigrants from towns and villages in Austrian Galicia, Carpathian-Rus, and Hungarian Ruthenia. These immigrants to the United States were ill-equipped to become part of the American scene. Like most minority groups without intelligent leadership and with dominant values toward the Church, the family and tradition, they were considered "undesirables." The greatest value among them for identity was religious traditions: the rites and customs of the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church, to which the majority of them belonged. The Church granted them a deeper sense of identity and afforded them an opportunity to worship in a language they could comprehend.

Father Toth as a leader began to organize the immigrants in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His arrival was during the era of The American Heresy in Roman Catholicism. There were no guidelines for unifying or centralizing the Greek Catholic Uniate Church in America. The Roman Catholic Church was deeply involved in settling its own problems of Americanization. Therefore, the Slavic immigrants' problems were indefinitely pigeonholed. The Greek Catholic Uniate Church was completely independent of any jurisdiction. Through many machinations and disappointments, Father Toth achieved the distinction of being the

first Greek Catholic Uniate priest in America to lead his people to reunion with the Orthodox Church.

### Father Alexis G. Toth Confronts Archbishop Ireland

The following is Father Toth's version of the encounter with Bishop Ireland:<sup>1</sup>

I was an Uniate when I came to America . . . I knew that here in America as an Uniate priest I was to obey the Roman Catholic Bishop of the particular diocese, in which I happened to work. The Unia demands this, as well as the various Papal Bulls, Brevets and Decretals as there was no Uniate Bishop in this country.<sup>2</sup>

When I came to Minneapolis, I was there awhile, when a Polish priest came up to me and he says, "You better come up with me, I introduce you to the Bishop of Minneapolis, of St. Paul, Bishop Ireland." This Polish priest was called away to some sick and I went up myself to see him. I had my priest's clothes on and I introduced myself and showed him my papers . . .<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, in my credentials—by *litterae accreditationis*—the following instruction was clearly given: "*Dilection tua debet, in cuius territorio habetur locus destinationis suae.*" The place of my appointment was Minneapolis, Minnesota, in the province of Archbishop Ireland. As an obedient Uniate, I complied with the orders of my Bishop, who at that time was John Valiy (Varley) and appeared before Bishop Ireland December 19, 1889, kissed his hand according to custom and presented my credentials, failing, however, to kneel before him, which, as I learned later, was my chief mistake. I remember

*Continued on the next page.*

<sup>1</sup> I believe the translation is from Father Toth's diary. Mrs. Oscar Larson of Minneapolis, Minnesota, a niece of Father Toth's, has possession of his diary today. The content coincides with Father Toth's testimony in the Court of Common Pleas in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Stephanko, "Bat'ko Amerikanskoy Rusi Pravoslavnoj," *The Russian Orthodox Journal*, Vol. 3, Number 1, (May, 1929), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> *Testimony, op. cit.*, p. 237.

## Archpriest Alexis

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that no sooner did he read that I was a "Greek Catholic," his hands began to shake. It took him fifteen minutes to read to the end after which he asked abruptly—we conversed in Latin:<sup>4</sup>

"Have you a wife?"

"No."

"But you had one?"

"Yes, I am a widower."

At this, he threw the paper on the table and loudly exclaimed: "I have already written to Rome protesting against this kind of priests being sent to me!"

"What kind of priests do you mean?"

"Your kind."

"I am a Catholic priest of the Greek Rite. I am a Uniate and was ordained by a regular Catholic Bishop."

"I do not consider that either you or this bishop of yours are Catholic; besides, I do not need any Greek Catholic priests here; a Polish priest in Minneapolis is quite sufficient; the Greeks can also have him for their priest."

"But he belongs to the Latin Rite; besides our people do not understand him so they will hardly go to him; that was the reason they instituted a church of their own."

"They had no permission from me and I shall grant you no jurisdiction to work here."

Deeply hurt by the fanaticism of this representative of Papal Rome, I replied sharply: "In that case, I know the rights of my church, I know the basis on which the Unia was established and shall act accordingly."

The Archbishop lost his temper. I lost mine just as much. One word brought another, the thing had gone so far that our conversation is not worth putting on record.<sup>5</sup>

The chaotic condition of the Church was the result of the lack of understanding on the part of all parties. There were no guidelines or

patterns for centralizing or unifying the Greek Catholic Church. The Roman Church was deeply involved in settling its own problems of Americanization, and therefore the Uniates' problems were pigeonholed.

Father Toth knew that he could function as a priest under the jurisdiction of his bishop in the old country. However, being a professor of Canon Law, he knew that he was uncanonical being outside the American hierarchy.

Father Toth stated that:

... [T]wo days after meeting with Bishop Ireland, the Polish priest Jacob Pocholsky, called on me. He spoke as if terror-stricken. "For God's sake, your Reverence, what have you done? The Archbishop writes me I must have no intercourse with you. He does not accept you as a regularly ordained priest, and I am under strict orders from him to announce this at the altar, forbidding your people to be ministered to by you or to take sacraments from you..."

This was my reply: "This is your concern. Do what you think is best. I shall not surrender one step and shall not be influenced by anything you and your bishop can do."

The Archbishop's demands were made public. He sent complaints to Rome, and my flock began to hear rumors which frightened them; the Archbishop, it was said, was going to send away their priest in ignominy, etc. In the meantime, I received letters from several of my fellow priests in the Uniate Rite, who wrote that there were a good many of us who had been treated by Latin Bishops and priests just as I had been. I informed the Uniate Bishop in Eperjes (Presov) of all this, asking his instructions, but he never answered me. Naturally so! As if an Uniate Bishop dared to contradict a Latin Archbishop. I wrote a second and third time, still without obtaining any reply. At last, I received from the Canon Dzubay the following instruction: "For God's sake, be patient; and if the Archbishop doubts that you are a faithful Catholic, let him know that

you are willing to take your oath on it!"

After a while I received another letter from him, proposing that I should write a detailed account of the way Archbishop received me and advising me to write very carefully, as the letter was to be sent to Rome. This I did, but later on, the same Reverend Dzubay informed me that the truth was too harshly stated in my letter for it to be sent to Rome. However, some measures had been taken and Rome was told that Latin Bishops must respect the Holy Unia.<sup>6</sup>

This whole encounter required patience and time to clarify the misunderstanding. Both parties petitioned the higher ecclesiastical authorities. Rome wanted to retain the Byzantine Rite for the maintenance of the Unia which was now transplanted to America, and also to appease the American hierarchy with their requests against the alien sectarian group.

In 1890, the Holy See issued a decree to its bishops in Russia Rубra. This decree was from the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in Rome (1890) which states:

1. That every priest in Europe desiring to come to the United States to do missionary work, must inform the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith for the Eastern Church of his desire, and the Latin Rite diocese in whose territory he intends to work, so that the Bishop of that diocese might be informed in advance.

2. Upon his arrival in the United States in America, this priest must present himself to the Bishop in order to obtain the faculties of the diocese.

3. The priest must remain within the bishop's jurisdiction.

4. The priests in the United States must be celibate, while those who are married men must be recalled to Europe.<sup>7</sup>

Needless to state, the decree did not ameliorate the contemporary

<sup>4</sup> Father Toth spoke Hungarian, German, Russian, Latin, and read and understood Greek.

<sup>5</sup> Stephanko, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Stephanko, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Sochocky, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

conditions. Father Toth organized a meeting of the priests from Hungary in America to meet and do something to protect themselves. "I was the chairman of the meeting."<sup>8</sup> The meeting was in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on October 15-27, 1890.<sup>9</sup> Father Toth states that the "protocols of this convention, the remonstrances of two Bishops,<sup>10</sup> and my own complaints were answered in a single letter from Rome, that is from the Propaganda Fide: all of us (priests) were to be recalled from America! What was to be done? I called my parishioners together and explained to them the sad position we were in, saying that under these circumstances, it certainly was best that I leave."<sup>11</sup> Some of the parishioners stated: "Let us go to the Russian Bishop—why should we always bow before strangers?" "All right," I said. "But where does the Russian Bishop live? And what is his name?" I only knew that in San Francisco there lived a Russian Consul."<sup>12</sup>

Father Toth obtained the necessary information and the Ruling Primate was His Grace Vladimir (Sokolovsky). (Bishop Vladimir was the Ruling Primate from 1888-1891.) Father Toth states that "having learned that the Russian Bishop resided in San Francisco, California, I made up my mind to do something which I carried in my heart a long time, for which my soul longed: that is, to become Orthodox. But how was it to be done? I had to be very cautious. The unfortunate Unia, the source of our decline and all our ills, had been part of our people too long. We had already borne that yoke on our shoulders for two hundred and fifty years. I fervently prayed God to grant me the power to make all this clear to my unenlightened parish-

<sup>8</sup> It appears that at this meeting the priests decided to present the problem to their parishioners and discussed whether to adhere to the Propaganda Fide or else to ignore it and continue as an independent Church.

<sup>9</sup> *Testimony, op. cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>10</sup> The other bishop who refused to recognize them was Bishop O'Hara of Scranton, Pennsylvania.

<sup>11</sup> Stephanko, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>12</sup> Stephanko, *loc. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Stephanko, *loc. cit.*

ioners.<sup>13</sup> Bishop Vladimir, therefore, wrote to Father Toth, asking if he was Orthodox or Uniate, and if he was a Uniate, whether he was interested in joining the Orthodox Church. Father Toth immediately responded and went to San Francisco to have a meeting with the bishop.<sup>14</sup> As Father Toth describes it:

"... [O]n February 11, 1891, I was commissioned to see the Russian Bishop of San Francisco concerning our matter. Bishop Vladimir not only accepted me, but came to us himself and received 361 of us into the Orthodox Church on March 25, 1891, the very Sunday of the Week of Triumph of Orthodoxy. Our people, now informed and enlightened, rejected the false teaching of the Church of the Popes, and we returned within the pale from which our forefathers were torn by means of deceit, flattery, hatred, and violence. Glory be to our God for His mercy."<sup>15</sup>

In the court testimony in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Father Toth said:

"I renounced it (United Greek Catholic) because the Roman Catholic bishop wanted to drive me out of my parish to which I belonged. The Roman bishop forced me to convert over to the Orthodox. I was driven to it. Therefore, I renounced my allegiance to the United Greek Catholic religion on the 25 March 1892 in Minneapolis before Bishop Vladimir and three hundred and sixty-five members of the Church."<sup>16</sup>

Father Toth and his parishioners were formally recognized by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church in October, 1892, into the jurisdiction of the Aleutian and Alaskan Diocese. The Holy Synod of Russia document dated July 14, 1892, reads as follows:

"The Ruling all Russian Holy Synod, becoming informed of the conversion and re-uniting with the Holy Orthodox Church of the Pastor and his faithful parishioners who emigrated

from the Carpathian Mountains into America, namely, 361 Russian Uniates and their pastor, Father Alexy G. Toth, joyfully raising their prayers in thanks to the Lord God upon the blessed occasion—impart Orthodox pastoral benediction upon the Reverend Father Toth and his parishioners, henceforth Orthodox Faithful.

+Humble Isidor

Prime and Foremost Member of the Holy Synod, Metropolitan of Novgorod and St. Petersburg."<sup>17</sup>

Father Alexis G. Toth gained the distinction of being the first Greek Catholic (Uniate) priest in America to lead his people to reunion with the Orthodox Church. Many of his contemporaries admired him for his courageous course of action; many remarked that they would have followed the same path had conditions and family circumstances not hindered them.

In December, 1892, Father Toth came to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, preaching to the immigrants and attempting to enlighten them as to the social and religious future in America. In Wilkes-Barre, the "time of troubles" became pertinent in the Court scene in 1894: *The Greek Catholic (Uniate) vs. the Orthodox Greek Catholic Church*.

The Greek Catholic Church,  
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, *et. al.*  
v.

The Orthodox Greek Catholic  
Church, *et. al.*

This litigation was for the purpose of settling the ownership of the church and its properties which included the church, parish house, and four lots, the total value being about \$10,000.00 The plaintiffs, the United Greek Catholics, acknowledged the Pope as their spiritual head, while the defendants, the Orthodox Greek Catholics, recognized the Holy Synod of Russia as their spiritual head.

The case was begun in May, 1894, in the Court of Common Pleas, Luzerne County, Wilkes-Barre,

*Continued on the next page.*

<sup>17</sup> *Dzuby, op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>14</sup> *Dzuby, op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>16</sup> *Testimony, op. cit.*, p. 259.

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Pennsylvania, and was placed before Judge Rice. Several weeks were consumed in taking testimony; the testimonies alone are about eight hundred pages long.

Judge Rice began the case and then was elected to the Superior Court bench, after which Judge Dunham of the Sullivan County district was called to finish the case. Attorneys John McGahren and Bennett represented the plaintiffs until Bennett was elected to be a judge, at which time Attorney W.E. Little was taken in the case. Attorneys John T. Lenahan, S.H. Strauss, and W.F. McGovern represented the defendants. The case was in court for seven years. At its end, the litigation had cost more than the property in dispute, but the case was looked upon as having set a precedent for similar cases involving Greek Catholic churches.

The testimony in this case is valuable in understanding the religious situation of the people involved in it. From their statements in court, it can be seen that they had no clear understanding of the theology of either faith, Catholic or Orthodox, and that their faith, therefore, was a "hybridization" of both, containing elements of each and having little clarity.

There was a great amount of evidence given by a large number of witnesses. The Orthodox testified that their beliefs and religious convictions had always been in accordance with the faith and practice of the Orthodox Greek Catholic Church. However, a majority of these witnesses stated that the teachings of Reverend Toth and the way he conducted services were exactly the same as those of Reverend Dzubay and Reverend Stetzovitch and the priests of the old country; in other words, of the United Greek Catholics. On the other hand, the Greek Catholics (Uniates) would call themselves Russian Pravoslav [Orthodox] Christians and profess the infallibility of the Pope of Rome. The witnesses of both parties

showed very great ignorance in regard to what they really believed and the differences in the faith and teachings between the churches.

All of the evidence shows that in outward appearance, in ritual, in symbols, in language, in the calendar dates of feasts, in names of feasts, and the like—particularly the liturgical aspect—the United Greek Church and the Orthodox Church are almost exactly alike. To the uneducated layman (in the dogma of the churches) there appear to be no discernible differences. In both churches the clergy are married; the liturgy is said in the Russian or Old Slavonic language; communion is composed of leavened bread and wine; the sacraments of baptism and confirmation are simultaneously administered by the priest; the altar is separated from the nave by an iconostasis; icons are venerated; the triple-bar cross is used; the Julian calendar is employed.<sup>18</sup> The Roman Catholic Church failed to give due consideration to the theological perspectives embodied within the Byzantine Rite. The Catholics simply did not realize that liturgical rites and theology are inseparable. Father Toth stated that in the old country, the United Greek priests neither taught nor dared to teach the people that the Pope of Rome is the head of the Church, for the reason that the union was made without the knowledge of the people and that they tried to keep the people in ignorance of it.<sup>19</sup>

### Testimonies

The plaintiffs (Uniates) claimed that they belonged to the Roman Catholic hierarchy under the direction of the Pope, and that their beliefs were those of the Roman Catholic Church. Some of their testimonies are as follows:

1. Q. Do you believe in purgatory?  
A. What is it?  
Q. Do you know what purgatory is?  
A. No sir, I don't know. I know a

<sup>18</sup> *Testimony, op. cit.*, pp. 248-251.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

grass, a certain weed, that is called jistus.

Q. Do you believe in the emaculate [sic] conception?

A. I don't understand it at all. I don't know what it is.<sup>20</sup>

2. Q. Do you believe in the emaculate conception?

A. I believe in such people as us and being sinless, being without sin, I believe in such a people as ourselves.

Q. Do you believe in purgatory?

A. I would tell you if I know.

What is that good for?

Q. Do you believe that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What do you mean by that?

A. That is holding everybody, if he would let go we would all vanish on earth.

John Fucilla,  
Testimony Vol. I, p. 193.

3. Q. Do you believe in the infallibility?

A. We are saying that the Holy Virgin is not a sinner.

Q. Do you believe in the infallibility?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Do you know the meaning of the word infallibility?

A. I don't know it any other way.

John Krajnyacsok,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 201.

4. Q. Do you believe in infallibility?

A. I don't know it. There is the priest for that I don't know nothing about it.

Q. Do you believe in the emaculate conception?

A. That belongs to a different religion even if I could read it I couldn't understand it.

Michal Waszily,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 204.

5. Q. What religion do you profess?

A. I am a Russian.

Q. Do you believe in infallibility?

A. I don't know what it is.

<sup>20</sup> Testimony of George Kacsur, *Testimony, op. cit.*, p. 135.

Q.What is the difference between Father Balogh's religion and Father Toth's religion?

A.I don't know. The difference is that we have to denounce our religion and I don't care to go into another religion.

Michael Deleman,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 221.

The United Greek Catholics (Uniates) did not know what their faith represented. They certainly were not Roman in their dogmas nor Orthodox in their practices and worship. They believed in Christianity but expressed it through means which led them into a religious limbo. Likewise were the Orthodox Greek Catholics who professed to adhere to the Orthodox faith. The following testimonies are from the defendants (Orthodox):

1. Q.Do you believe now or ever did believe that the Pope was the head of your religion?

A.No, sir.

Q.Who is at the head of your religion?

A.Jesus Christ.

Q.Did you ever hear of a church, the Orthodox Russian Greek Catholic Church?

A.What does Orthodox mean in our language?

Michael Zeznica,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 314.

2. Q.Who is the Pope of Rome?

A.I don't know anything of him. I never learned anything of him.

Q.Do you believe in the Holy Synod as a Russian Catholic?

A.I don't have to believe in the Russian Synod.

Q.When did you become a Russian Catholic?

A.When I was born.

John Krino,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 316.

3. Q.In what respect did you change your religion, do you know?

A.I don't know.

Q.Were you baptized and confirmed?

A.Yes, sir.

Q.Do you know what baptized and confirmed mean?

A.No, sir.

John Ivan,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 319.

4. Q.Do you recognize the Holy Synod of Russia as the head of your religion?

A.No, sir, we know only Jesus Christ being the head of the church.

Q.Did you ever belong to what is known as the Orthodox Russian Greek Catholic Church, either in the old country or in this country?

same ceremony.

Steven Sabatovics,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 368.

The Church was a symbol of security for a racial minority, rather than a community united in one faith. It appears that all the people from Russia Rubra wanted was a church in which they could meet their responsibilities and duties toward God, and a priest to guide them and to fulfill their spiritual needs—baptism, marriage, unction, confession, communion, and the like. These testimonies prove that the "Unia" was un-



Bishop Herman serves Panihida at Father Toth's tomb.

A.No. Greek Catholic Pravoslav Church.

Michael Hudak,  
Testimony, Vol. I, p. 392.

5. Q.Did you ever believe the Pope was the head of your religion?

A.I never heard and I never believed in the supremacy of the Roman Pope and I was taught by the priest at home and he never mentioned his name.

Q.What kind of a priest was Father Dzubay?

A.He was Russian Pravoslav.

Q.What kind is Father Toth?

A.The same, the same church, the same creed, the same priest, the

known to the lay people in the old country and was a thoughtless, haphazard, unexplained phenomenon of two religions, known as a union with the Roman Church.

By trying to fuse the Greek rite and the Roman dogma—two elements which were totally incompatible—the Union produced, rather than a cohesive whole, a religious hybrid.

As Uniates, they still called themselves Pravoslavs or Russian Greek Catholics. These were the names by which the Greek Catholic Church, whether united or disunited from Rome, was known in the old country.

*Continued on the next page.*

## Archpriest Alexis

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Most of the witnesses called themselves Pravoslav-Greek Catholics in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church.

The word "Pravoslav" in Russian means Orthodox. The Russian people use this term to designate the true faith as distinguished from that of the Roman Catholic Church. When the Unia was effected in the old country, there was no change made in the church which would cause the people to pay attention or to produce a new name.

### The Ruling of the Court of Common Pleas, Luzerne County, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

The Court of Common Pleas found that the original trust was created for the Greek Catholic Church of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, which they believed belonged to the United Greek Catholic Church. The court confirmed that the church was United Greek Catholic because when Father Toth came, he required or asked the people to renounce their belief in the doctrines and dogmas of the United Greek Catholic Church:

Surely men need not renounce allegiance or belief in something that never existed. Had they never been members of the church, they certainly would never have been required to renounce allegiance to it or to renounce a belief in its doctrines and dogmas. Then, too, in this very renunciation it begins with the assertion, "we as Uniates," etc. This means, we as members of the "United Greek Catholic Church." So every defendant has declared over his signature that up to the time of Reverend Toth's taking charge of the church, he had been a member of the United Greek Catholic Church . . . furthermore, the ancestors, not by their faith, but through severe persecution, were compelled to abandon the Holy Greek Orthodox Church and belonged to the "United"

churches.<sup>21</sup>

On July 20, 1899, the case was closed in the Court of Common Pleas with the following decree which was handed down by Judge Edward M. Dunham:

That the defendant, Reverend Alexis Toth, be restrained and perpetually enjoined from preaching or in anywise officiating as pastor in the church mentioned in plaintiff's bill and from occupying or using the said parsonage and from intermeddling in any manner with the spiritual or temporal affairs of the said congregation unless he shall be regularly made and appointed as pastor thereof by or under the authority of the "United Greek Catholic Church."

That the other defendants be strictly enjoined from permitting the said Reverend Alexis Toth in anywise to officiate as minister or pastor thereof without the consent of the same authority, and from interfering with or obstructing the proper functions of any regular priest or minister of the United Greek Catholic Church, whom the proper authorities of that church may appoint as pastor of the said church and congregation, and the defendants pay the costs incurred, neither party, however, to file any costs for the attendance of witnesses.<sup>22</sup>

However, the litigation was not yet completed. The Orthodox Greek Church, Alexis G. Toth, and other defendants appealed the lower court's decision to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

The appeal was granted for the appellants on the basis that "in independent congregations governed solely within themselves, either by a majority of its members or by such other legal organizations as they may have instituted for the purpose of ecclesiastical government, with no other specific trust attached to the property in the hands of the church, then that church is to be used for that

congregation as a religious society. Where there is a schism which leads to a separation into distinct or conflicting bodies, the right of such bodies to the use of the property must be governed by the principles which govern voluntary associations. If the principle in such cases is that majority rules, then the numerical majority must control the right to use the property."<sup>23</sup>

On the 25th of April, 1900, the Supreme Court affirmed the lower court's decision and the appeal was dismissed at the cost of the appellant.<sup>24</sup>

### Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church

After the long and expensive court case, Father Toth and his faithful parishioners began the construction of their church—Holy Resurrection. Many parishioners gave large sums of money as credit: for example, John Repa lent the parish \$5,000.00 which enabled them to purchase the land. The church was completed within a year of the Supreme Court decision.

The dedication of the new Russian Orthodox Church took place on May 29, 1901. His Grace, the Right Reverend Bishop Tikhon, dedicated the church, along with Archpriest Toth; Reverend John Nedzelnizky of Allegheny, Pennsylvania; Reverend Elia Klopotosky of Old Forge, Pennsylvania; and Deacon Yarosh.

Bishop Tikhon delivered a sermon about the curing of blind Bartimaeus by the Savior, and reminded the congregation that all needed the divine touch to remove spiritual blindness, and said that the beautiful edifice just dedicated was a means to that end. He urged the parishioners to show in their lives the same joyfulness that came to Bartimaeus through his miraculous cure. The Bishop also spoke of the blessings and helpfulness that came through true worship and love.<sup>25</sup>

Father Toth also delivered a ser-

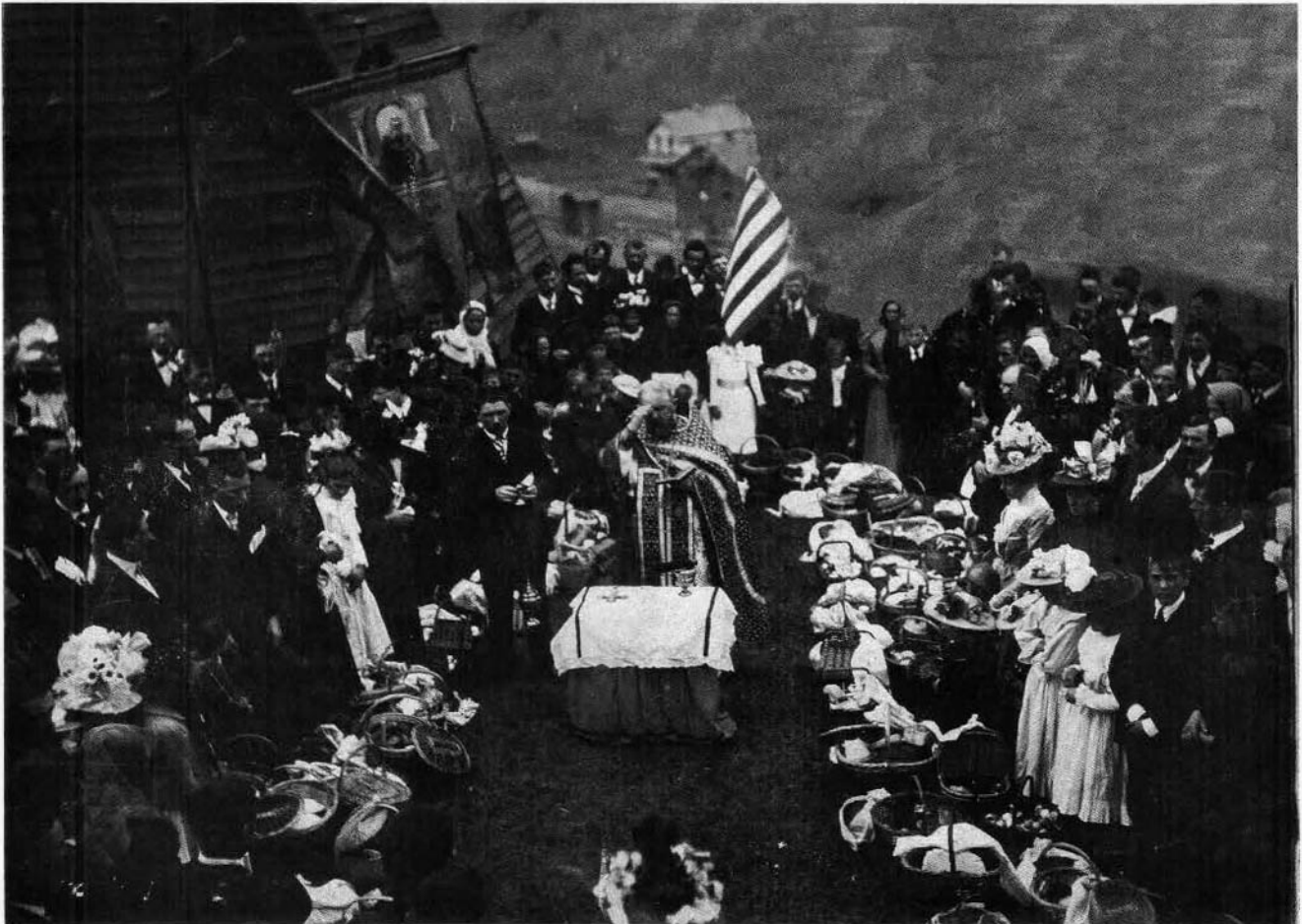
<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 439.

<sup>24</sup> Supreme Court Decision.

<sup>25</sup> "Russian Orthodox Church Dedication," *Wilkes-Barre Record*, May 31, 1901, p. 8.

<sup>21</sup> *Pennsylvania Supreme Court Reports, op. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 434.



Father Toth blesses Easter baskets in Wilkes-Barre.

mon. He reviewed the trials, hardships, and successes of the church, and said that this was the happiest day of his life, for it was the culmination of a hard-fought battle for a people and a principle that were dearer to him than his life. "Nothing of real value and lasting good comes to the individual or to the church unless it come through trial and tribulation and determined effort."<sup>26</sup>

Within three months after the completion of Holy Resurrection, the rectory was completed.<sup>27</sup> Then the cemetery plots were purchased in Plains, Pennsylvania. The value of

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> It appears that when the first service was in the new edifice, the faithful entered into the new church singing "Christ is Risen" which they sang while leaving the old church, and this is probably the reason for naming the church Holy Resurrection. (Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, *op. cit.*)

<sup>28</sup> Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church is a living memorial to Father Toth. The parishioners have become strong adherents of Orthodoxy and presently are constructing a new edifice on the same site on which Father Toth and his members built their church. The present cost of the church is approximately \$750,000.00.

the church and its property at this time assessed at \$35,000.00<sup>28</sup>

Father Toth was active in the community life of Wilkes-Barre. He was an honorary member of the Red Cross, for he contributed greatly to the support of the Red Cross during the Russo-Japanese War.

Father Toth was aware of the social needs of the immigrants of Russia Rubra, and was the initiator and organizer of a society for them. It appears that the most efficient means of aid and protection for the immigrants was these societies, which were formed for the express purpose of caring for the immigrants in both a religious and material aspect. Father Toth recommended that the Orthodox people should organize into one society. The resolution was

<sup>29</sup> Archbishop Nicholas had petitioned the Holy Synod of Russia to sanction this society, by which it was approved on September 17, 1895. (Stephen Jankura, "History of Russian Orthodox Catholic Mutual Aid Society of U.S.A., Diamond Jubilee," Wilkes-Barre, Pa., September 7, 1970).

adopted and the name of the organization was the Russian Orthodox Mutual Aid Society.<sup>29</sup>

Because of Father Toth's untiring zeal and effort, he received many honors. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination, Father Toth received from Czar Nicholas the Order of St. Ann and a jeweled mitre. The mitre represents the Order of St. Vladimir, the fourth highest order bestowed by the Russian Emperor for longevity of service. The Order of St. Ann represents high excellency in civil service, especially in the clergy. This order was instituted in 1743 by Elizabeth Petrovna. The Order of Alexander-Nevsky, also bestowed on Father Toth, was founded by Peter the Great and represents a high honor for distinguished service and meritorious effort and devotion to God and country.<sup>30</sup>

*Continued on the next page.*

## Archpriest Alexis

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Father Toth, because his opinion was respected, was called by the Russian peace representatives at New York City to speak with Baron Rosen in matters of importance to the Russian government. Father Toth could give a reliable statement and expert opinion in Russian affairs, being a student of political economy and those matters of state concerning Russia. He subscribed to forty-five newspapers, magazines, and periodicals published in nine different languages.<sup>31</sup> When Bishop Tikhon was recalled to Russia on business, he entrusted his work to the hands of Father Toth in whom he had the greatest confidence.<sup>32</sup>

### Father Toth's Missionary Work and His Death

Under Father Toth's leadership, Orthodoxy gained a firm foothold in America. His missionary work in the uniate parishes of Pennsylvania, with the help of willing followers, bore fruit in the form of seventeen Orthodox parishes.

From Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Father Toth's missionary work spread throughout Luzerne and Lackawanna counties and from there to all points in the state. The Wilkes-Barre parish was considered the Mother Church in that many other parishes grew from it. In 1907, Father Toth organized an Orthodox community in Edwardsville (Kingston), Pennsylvania, (St John the Baptist); in 1910, Holy Annunciation Church of Berwick was established by Father Toth. Also accepted into the Orthodox Church through Father Toth were communities located in Streator, Illinois; Allegheny, Pennsylvania; Osceola Mills, Pennsylvania; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Scranton, Pennsylvania; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Yonkers, New York; and many others.

<sup>30</sup> "Father Toth Honored," *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, April 27, 1903, p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> "Father Toth Does Not Believe News," *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, November 11, 1907, p. 6.

<sup>32</sup> "Father Toth Honored," *Wilkes-Barre Times Leader*, April 27, 1903, p. 6.

Whenever Father Toth was unable to teach the people and expand the Orthodox communities, his book *Where to Seek the Truth*, conveyed his ideas and thoughts about Orthodoxy. The book is composed of a series of questions and answers, comparing and contrasting Orthodoxy with Roman Catholicism. This book served many people as a form of catechism and strengthened the people's knowledge about Orthodoxy.

Father Toth's activity "has been thought ultimately responsible for the reunion of nearly a quarter million Slavic Catholics. He has been termed the Father of Orthodoxy in America because more than half of 400,000 Russian Orthodox followers in the United States are descendants of his converts."<sup>33</sup>

Right Reverend Alexis G. Toth

Father Toth's activity "has been thought ultimately responsible for the reunion of nearly a quarter million Slavic Catholics. He has been termed the Father of Orthodoxy in America because more than half of 400,000 Russian Orthodox followers in the United States are descendants of his converts."

died on Friday afternoon, May 7, 1909. He had been ailing for about five months. In an effort to regain his health, he had gone to Atlantic City, New Jersey, but returned to Wilkes-Barre, where he was confined to bed for two months. The cause of his death is unknown and is attributed to a complication of diseases. Before his death, he requested that his body be buried at St. Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania.<sup>34</sup> He had relatives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and North or South Dakota, and two of his nieces resided with him.<sup>35</sup>

His Grace, Archbishop Platon, was the celebrant at Father Toth's fu-

<sup>33</sup> "Father Alexis Toth," *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XIV (1967), p. 213.

<sup>34</sup> Last Will and Testament of Right Reverend Alexis G. Toth.

<sup>35</sup> "Father Toth is Dead," *Wilkes-Barre Record*, May 8, 1909, p. 15.

neral. Archbishop Platon, Reverend Buketov, Reverend Turkevich, Reverend Nemdovski, and Reverend Skibinski delivered eulogies. Archbishop Platon in his eulogy credited Father Toth as being the Father of the Russian Church in America, and mentioned the fact that his parish extended over a stretch of 1,800 miles—referring in this to his early labors in Minneapolis, Minnesota.<sup>36</sup>

*A man of God like Father Toth inspired the Slavic immigrants with confidence and boldness in the Holy Spirit to face the challenges of their faith in the New World, America. He dedicated his life to the Orthodox Church, as well as to its faithful. He sowed the seed whose fruit the Orthodox Church in America is reaping today. Father Toth in his last Will*

asks for our prayers: "... and submitting myself to the prayers of all." Let us pause and give thanks to Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for having Father Toth as our teacher, leader, and Father of our Orthodox Church in America. He guided the poor Slavic immigrants through the dark confusion of religious history in America with the shining light of his ministry to the undivided Orthodox Church.

**LET US PRAY THAT ARCHPRIEST ALEXIS G. TOTH WILL BE CANONIZED AMONG THE JUST AS EQUAL TO THE APOSTLES IN TEACHING, PREACHING, AND REUNITING TO THE FAITH OF THE FOREBEARS.**

—Deacon Keith S. Russin

<sup>36</sup> "Father Toth's Burial," *Wilkes-Barre Record*, May 10, 1909, p. 5.



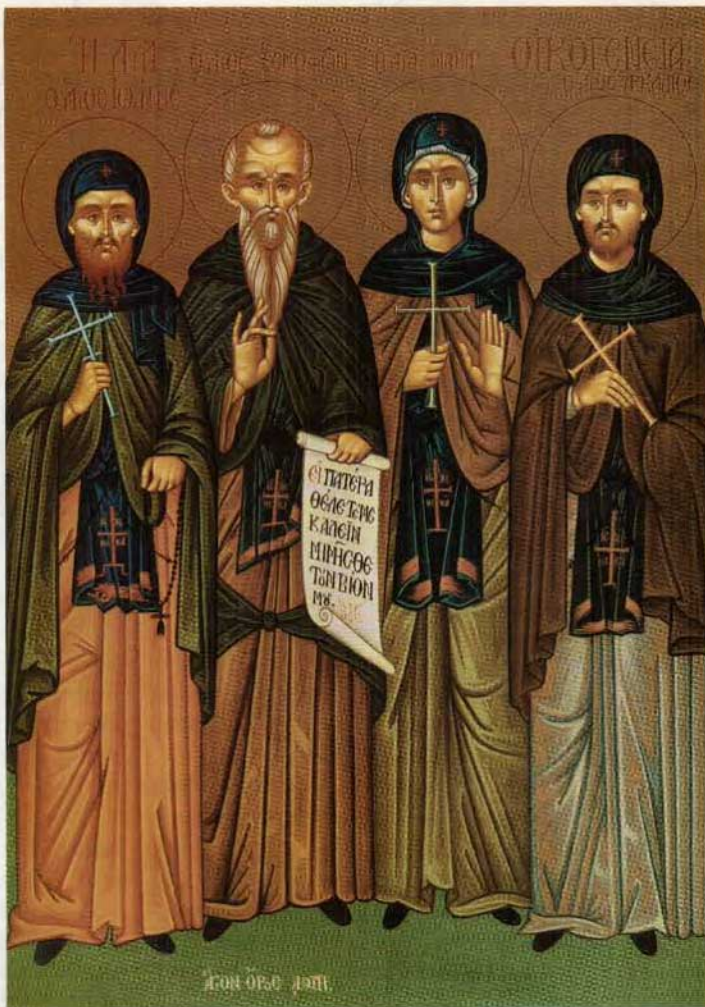
## The Life Of Saints Xenophon And Mary, And Their Two Children, Saints John And Arcadius

In this issue of *Alive in Christ*, as we continue our series on *Married Saints of the Church*, we will recount the story of another family in which every member of the family became a Saint in our Church—Saints Xenophon and Mary and their two sons, St. John and St. Arcadius, who are all commemorated on January 26. This is a particularly touching story, in which we see a tremendous example of parental love combined with steadfast trust in the mysterious providence of God.<sup>1</sup>

In the court of Constantine the Great at Byzantium<sup>2</sup> was a senator named Xenophon, a devout Christian, whose wife's name was Mary. They had two sons whom they loved as the apples of their eyes, John and Arcadius. These sons were destined for the study of the law, and after they had finished their education in Greek at home, Xenophon sent them in a ship destined for Berytus [Beirut, Lebanon], to be instructed in the great law school there. At the time of their departure, Xenophon was sick nearly

<sup>1</sup> This account is taken from the famous *Menologion*, a vast collection of Saints' Lives compiled by St. Simeon Metaphrastes of Constantinople in the tenth century. These Lives have been used liturgically in the Greek Church, and for centuries have played an important role in instructing and edifying the faithful. The present English text is a version which we have somewhat modernized (while trying to retain the elevated style of the original) from that given in *The Lives of the Saints*, compiled by an Anglican priest named Rev. S. Baring-Gould, and first published in 1872; revised edition (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1914), vol. 1, pp. 389-394. This Life will appear in our book, *Marriage as a Path to Holiness: Lives of Married Saints*, which is in the process of being published by St. Tikhon's Press.

<sup>2</sup> Since most Lives of Xenophon and Mary place them in the fifth or even sixth century, it is clear that the phrase "In the court of Constantine the Great" is either meant figuratively—since he was the one who founded the imperial city of Constantinople (in 330)—or it is a mistake in the manuscript.



to the point of death, and he bade them farewell from his bed.

The young men had not been many days at sea before a violent tempest burst upon them, and the ship was speedily reduced to a wreck. The brothers cast their arms around each other's necks, and kissing each other, said farewell. Then the wreck broke up on a reef [along the coast of Palestine], and in the havoc of the waves rending the fragile ship, they lost sight of each other.

However, it happened that both reached the land on broken pieces of the vessel, but they were cast up on the land so far apart that each supposed that he alone was saved. John

came ashore not far from a monastery, into which he was hospitably received, and where he was well cared for till he had recovered from the exhaustion resulting from battling with the waves for his life. In the monastery, John found a calm and a cheerfulness such as he had not experienced in the world; it seemed to him a peaceful refuge for the storm-tossed soul as well as for the shipwrecked body, and he resolved to remain there as a monk.

Arcadius had also come ashore. He made his way to Jerusalem, in great trouble of mind, having lost in the vessel all the money his father had given him with which to pursue his studies; and above all, he had lost his brother. Now alone and poor, he knew not where to go, or what to do.

Then, one day he came to a monastery governed by an aged abbot, who comforted him, and urged him

to despise worldly things, and to seek rest in God. Arcadius remembered how, as a little boy, he had heard his father talk about the peace of the cloister and the happiness of monastic life. He, therefore, gladly assumed the habit, and bent his head for the tonsure.

Now, at Byzantium, Xenophon had recovered from his malady, and he and his wife often spoke together about their absent sons. Not hearing any news of them, he sent a servant to Berytus to make inquiries. The servant returned one day while Xenophon was at court, so that the mother, Mary, was the first to hear of

*Continued on the next page.*

## Married Saints

*Continued from page 55.*

the loss of the vessel. Their servant said it was feared at Berytus that all on board had perished. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" [cf. Job 1:21], said she.

Evening came, and her husband returned from the court with a crowd of servants and torch-bearers. He found supper spread, and his wife awaiting him. He sat down, but noticing that she was grieved in spirit, and that her eyes were full of tears, he asked the reason. She changed the subject, and after a while, so as gently to break the news to him, she said that letters had come saying that the servant was on his way home . . .

"But the letters, where are the letters?" asked her husband, white with emotion.

"Surely you can delay reading them till tomorrow," said his wife. "Eat your supper now, at least, with a glad mind." Then her tears streamed down her cheeks.

Xenophon looked steadily at her, and asked in a low voice, "Is it well with the boys?"

Then she told him all. And Xenophon said, "The Lord's name be praised, who has given me such a prudent and self-constrained wife." And instead of giving way to his grief, he went to Mary and kissed her and comforted her, for now that the need for self-control was removed, all her mother's heart gave way in a passion of tears and sobs.

Xenophon and his wife had no rest. Were their children dead or alive? They felt that somehow they had to find out; so they resolved to go to Palestine to find them, whether alive or dead. On arriving at Jerusalem, they visited the holy places, and prayed everywhere that if it were the Lord's will, they might see once more the faces of their sons.

One day they were astonished to see in the streets a servant whom they had given to the youths, and who had accompanied them on their ill-fated voyage. Now this man was

standing before them, wearing the clothing of a monk. Xenophon fell down reverently before him, and when the man, greatly embarrassed and ashamed, implored him not to do so, the nobleman replied, "It is not you I reverence, but your monastic habit." Then the man told him how the ship had been wrecked, and how nearly all had perished, but he, escaping to land, had become a monk. But he knew nothing more about their sons.

Three years had passed since John and Arcadius had sailed from Byzantium, and the parents began to despair even more about them, when one day they visited the monastery of the abbot who had received Arcadius. The old man, having heard their story, knew at once that one of their sons was with him, and from what he had learned, he conjectured that the other son was alive in another monastery in the region. He, therefore, urged them to be of good cheer, assuring them that their sons lived, and he invited them to meet him on a certain day upon Mount Calvary, by which time he would be supplied with further information.

Now it happened that John was then in Jerusalem visiting the scenes of Christ's Passion. The elderly abbot sent for him and spoke with him, and soon learned that his speculations were correct, and that this man was indeed the brother of the monk in his monastery.

Arcadius at this moment arrived. The abbot said to John, "Brother, what is your history? Please relate it to me."

So John began, "I am the son of wealthy parents in Byzantium, who sent me with my brother to Berytus, to study law; I loved my brother as my own soul. He was dearer to me than my life. On our voyage a storm fell on us, and the vessel was wrecked; then my brother Arcadius and I—"

Here Arcadius trembled, and extended his hands, and fell at the feet of the abbot, and stammered forth, "It is my brother, my brother!" And when John heard his voice, he knew this was his brother. They had not

recognized each other until this moment, for their heads were partly hidden in the hoods of their monastic clothing, and their faces were greatly altered through fasting. And the brothers lifted up their voices and wept, and embraced each other with exceeding joy.

Then the abbot said, "My sons, I bid you to be silent and restrain yourselves. Your parents are coming this way, and too great joy falling too suddenly upon them may be more than they can bear. Therefore, I say unto you, refrain yourselves awhile."

Hardly had he finished speaking, when Xenophon came walking up the Mount of Calvary, leading Mary. They were much aged by care. They came with their wistful eyes fixed on the old abbot, and scarcely regarded the monks who followed him, for their thoughts were on what he had to tell them. They cried, "Where are our dear sons, Father?"

Then the abbot said, "Rejoice, my children, rejoice and praise the Lord! Your sons are found. Now go and prepare a feast, and I will come shortly with my two disciples whom you see here, and when we have eaten, I will bring your sons to your arms."

Now when Xenophon and Mary heard this, they were filled with joy, and they quickly made ready a feast, and the abbot came, he and his two disciples, and they sat down and ate. But all the while, as Arcadius and John heard the dear voices of their father and mother, they shook with suppressed emotion, and turned their heads aside, and bowed them on their breasts, that the tears might trickle unseen. And as they ate, the conversation turned to the holy lives of the ascetics in the monasteries and lavras of Palestine.

"Oh," said Xenophon, "how peaceful and glad of heart are all here; I think the word of the prophet is fulfilled, that the desert should bloom as a rose [Isaiah 35:1]. Right glad should I be, were my dear boys to seek such blessed places of heavenly consolation, and lying down in these green pastures, there find rest."

"But if they were to do this, you

would be deprived of their company," said the abbot.

"That matters not," said Xenophon. "If I could but see their faces again, and know that they had set their hearts on God alone, I should be comforted."

"And now," said the abbot, "let one of these monks speak, and say why he has entered on the monastic life."

Thereupon, Arcadius began with faltering voice: "I and my brother here present were born at Byzantium, of good Christian parents, and the name of the one was Xenophon, and the name of the other was Mary . . .

Upon this, the father and mother uttered a cry, and ran, and they were locked in the embrace of their children.

The abbot stood by and saw with joy their tears and kisses; and after a while he said, "Give glory to God!" So they raised their hands and eyes to heaven, and praised Him who had brought them together again.

But now that Xenophon and his wife had found their children, they felt that there was nothing more for which they cared on earth, so they also went into solitude, and served God in fasting and prayers night and day. Thus, the whole family labored with one heart for one end, the salvation of their souls and the glory of God. And though separated in body, they were united in heart, and now they dwell together in the Paradise of God.

#### *Kathisma, at Matins, Tone 8*

Keeping vigil in the commandments of the Master, you educated your sons and wife in the same manner, O blessed Xenophon, and with them you inherited the royal dwellings on high, leaving behind the tempest of manifold temptations. Wherefore we piously praise you all, and honor you with love, and faithfully cry out: "O all-blessed God-bearers, intercede with Christ God, that remission of transgressions be granted to those who with love keep festival in your holy memory."

—Drs. David and Mary Ford

### Bishop Herman participates in the inauguration of the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America



Bishop Herman reads the Gospel in St. Innocent Cathedral in Anchorage, Alaska.



Bishop Herman and entourage in Eklutna Village in Alaska.



Bishop Herman at the Cathedral in San Francisco, California.

# The Orthodox Family As The Bridge For The Mission To America

(Editor's note: the following lecture was given at St. Tikhon's Seminary as part of this year's annual lecture series.)

Glory to Jesus Christ!

Our topic this evening is indeed an important one: "The Orthodox Family as the Bridge for the Mission to America." It has all kinds of possibilities. It can be taken in numerous directions because it has four significant component parts: Family, Bridge, Mission, and America. Each of these can be substantially developed to address a myriad of issues. But it is their combined value—their interconnectedness—the very structure and order of the terms taken together which speaks directly to who we are and what we are about as Orthodox Christians living in contemporary America.

Now before we try to bring all these component parts together, let's be sure that we have consistent working definitions so we can compare apples to apples—to make sure we're talking about the same things. Every culture, every people, even every church has a unique vocabulary. Orthodoxy is no different. Usually the first question from non-Orthodox who visit our church for a service is "What is a Theotokos?" We hear it so often, it is so much a part of our worship and liturgical life, that perhaps we take it for granted that everyone understands it. This is not the case. And this speaks directly to our Mission to America, doesn't it? *We need to be able to relate and share our faith in meaningful ways and understandable terms with our neighbors.*

Even among "our own" we must make an effort to understand our unique vocabulary. I've been trying in our parish discussion group to emphasize and explain the daily commemorations in our church cal-

endars; the fact that the Church daily remembers saints who have much to teach us concerning our faith. The church calendar is our daily contact with our faith. It shows that indeed, as we priests so often preach, Orthodoxy is not just a religion, it's a way of life; daily life! We should all learn from these daily commemorations.

But in order to do this, we need to understand our own vocabulary. What is a *hieromartyr*, what are *relics* and how do they get transferred, what is a *stylite*—who are all these saints we remember every day? What does it mean when it says "the second finding of the head of John the Baptist?" (I remember Father Borichevsky, of blessed memory, once saying, "No wonder our church is in such disarray today, we keep losing our head.")

This all speaks to our topic. As Orthodox Christians, we have no chance to evangelize America unless we first evangelize our families. And we have no chance to evangelize our families unless we first evangelize ourselves—unless we first understand the nature of *our* faith, *our* saints, *our* calendar, *our* Scripture, *our* vocabulary.

Consider the word **family**. How we hear it battered about in our society today! Special-interest groups are altering the very definition of the family in order to make it a term which is "politically correct." We hear all sorts of adjectives being attached to it: single-parent, foster, dysfunctional, abusive, "vanishing." We even today hear the epitome of "political correctness" and civil liberties fostered in the term "homosexual family," illustrated in the New York public school textbook, *Heather has Two Mommies*. These are all contemporary renderings of the word "family"—each one with connotations generated to satisfy personal special

interests and opinions. Now the question is, "Whose terms do we use?"—those of the secular society of that of the Church?

Thank God that we have the Church, and all that this implies, to guide us through this quagmire of



Father Daniel Kovalak

confusion. We are able in all things to look to our living tradition which, in the words of the late Father John Meyendorff, "consists in defining the problems of our day and giving answers in accordance with the requirements of the one Truth of Christ's Gospel."

Our Holy Synod of Bishops offered an entire series of moral affirmations at the Tenth All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America back in July, 1992. These were incredibly important to our living tradition. I hope everyone has read and studied them all. If not, get your hands on them. We have to continue to circulate these affirmations as widely as possible.

Among these affirmations was one which offers the Church's working definition of the family: "The family of father, mother, and children, with the extended family of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, is to be

supported and protected as the basic condition of life for human beings in this world. Children are to be provided with the fullest and deepest experience of secure family life and activity. The family is not to be idolized as an end in itself, thereby becoming an obstacle rather than a means to healthy and holy spiritual life in communion with God in the Church." There you have it. The Church has spoken. This is what family means in our Orthodox vocabulary, to Orthodox Christians. And this is the *pivotal component* of tonight's presentation—the family. Before we proceed in any further discussion, we must say AMEN—consent—to what our Church has affirmed. Now, with this understanding as a basis, we can briefly consider the other components of our theme.

What is a **bridge**? A bridge is that which is essentially a passage over something that connects two points. I would suggest that in terms of this talk, the bridge can be interpreted in a couple of different ways.

In the spiritual sense (which should always come first), it concerns the bridge between God and man. This is undoubtedly Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, Who, as St. Paul said to the Philippians (2:7) "made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant and coming in the likeness of men." Jesus Christ is the one and only bridge which connects man to God. He is, in the Latin, the *Pontifex Maximus*, the "Great Bridge-Builder" between God and man. He is the fulfillment of Jacob's Ladder which unites earth to heaven, the fulfillment of the connection between the Old and New Testaments and the fulfillment of man's search for communion with God; as He Himself said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

Now more specifically in terms of our topic, the "bridge" is that which connects our knowledge of God through Jesus Christ over the passage of time, connecting one generation to the next in a timeless, perpet-

ual continuity of faith in God's revelation to man. And it is precisely in this process where *the family* is the bridge, *the link between generations*.

Now if this all sounds too abstract, too theoretical, or too theological for you, let me say it plainly: if you and I don't teach our kids about Jesus Christ, no one else will. I don't care how good your Sunday School program is, I don't care how many religious videos you watch, how many youth retreats you send your kids to, or how many programs and ministries the Church, on whatever level, offers. If parents don't teach their kids about Christ, no one else will. Because you see, all the information that any "program" can impart will be absolutely useless unless it takes flesh in the home—the domestic church. Every class, craft project, Bible story, and yolka will be meaningless unless it is connected in the home. The family is the bridge that must make that connection.

This is not to be taken lightly because it is the God-ordained responsibility of parents. Listen to Deuteronomy 6:4-7: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might. And these words, which I commanded thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk to them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." This is a commandment of God. Where does it say here or, for that matter, *anywhere* in the Bible, that "thou shalt depend upon the church school to instruct your children" or "thou shalt wait until thy children are old enough to understand things for themselves and then they can make their own decisions about God"? It doesn't say that at all. The commandment is "thou shalt diligently teach thy children." We cannot expect ONLY the Church to be the bridge. The family must be. In fact, the family must be that bridge which *connects the Church to the children*

*and the children to the Church*. Otherwise, nothing will make sense to them.

How many examples we have in this regard from the lives of the saints! We have to share these with our children. Take for example, St. Sophia, whom the Church commemorates on September 17. She was a widowed mother of three daughters, Faith, Hope, and Love (or if you prefer, Vera, Nadezhda, and Lyubov). Here was a pious Christian woman trying to build that bridge with her daughters in the midst of the hostile, pagan environment of Rome in the early second century. When the Emperor Hadrian intensified his persecution of Christians and they all feared for their lives, Sophia told her daughters, "Your heavenly Lover, Jesus Christ, is Inexpressible Health and Eternal Life. When your bodies are slain by torture, He will clothe you in the garments of incorruption and the wounds on your bodies will shine like the stars of heaven."

Sophia and her three daughters went to be tortured arm in arm never forsaking Christ. They were beaten, they were stabbed, they were thrown into boiling tar, and finally beheaded. But the incredible thing about them was this: tradition records that Sophia's daughters were very young. Faith was twelve years old, Hope was ten, and Love was nine. What does this have to tell us about building the Bridge in the home?

How many times we (especially priests) hear today, "Oh, our children are too young to know. Just let them go to Sunday School (once a week when we don't have any other engagement), color pictures, and have fun. They can go on hayrides and dances now and we can teach them about Christ later." It is this kind of pervasive thinking that has virtually crippled the Church for too long.

How many of us have shared with our children, "Christ as our Heavenly Lover"? How have we shared with them the sacrifices of those who *gave their lives* rather than forsake Christ? How do we *connect* the lives

*Continued on the next page.*

## The Orthodox Family

*Continued from page 59.*

of such saints to our childrens' lives as Christians? In praising St. Sophia, the Church sings that her daughters were to her like "three buds of great holiness." Not even teenagers yet, and they gave their lives for Christ! What kind of "buds of great holiness" are we producing today? What's happening in the family which is charged with connecting this faith with the next generation? The family must be strengthened and encouraged to accomplish this. The family is the key—the home is "where it happens." How many of the lives of the saints begin with the words "was raised by pious Christian parents"?

You know we're so concerned today about *destructive things which we*, as children, inherit from our parents. We hear a lot about inherited abusive behavior, addictions, and even disease. When I visited the doctor a while ago and he told me my cholesterol was unusually high, the first thing he asked was, "Is there a history of high cholesterol in your family?" (He should have asked how much junk food and potato chips do you eat!) But, you see, such is the case. Perhaps we should ask this question in terms of our theme: "*Does Christ run in your family?*" If we can truly respond in the affirmative, the process by which the family is the bridge for our mission to America is self-evident! "Does Christ run in your family? Does His Life penetrate yours? Do His Body and Blood mingle with yours?" We need only to look at Holy Communion and our faith and understanding of this Holy Mystery to respond to these questions.

Now let's look at the two remaining components of this spiritual equation: **Mission** and **America**. Since the first lecture in this series concerned itself primarily with Mission, I'm going to assume that you have a pretty good handle on this topic. I would simply again like to offer Christ's "Great Commission" merely as a reminder of our mission as Orthodox Christians. Matthew

28:19-20: "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 things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. Amen."

Just a couple of brief comments. First the command to "make disciples." We are not just to "get new church members," we are to "make disciples." We are not to be as concerned with getting or keeping people "on the rolls" as we must be to teach them to be followers of Jesus Christ! Here as we all know well, love is the key. Christ said "By this all men will know that ye are my disciples, if you have love for each other."

Next, notice the connection with how this is to be accomplished—specifically through *teaching*. And who is primarily responsible for teaching (remember God's commandment in Deuteronomy): *parents*.

Finally, I want to focus on "all nations." There is a misconception here that "all nations" refers basically to our evangelizing some third-world culture. But Christ's words are *panta ta ethne*, which literally means all tribes, colors, races, classes, and clans—*ethne*, from which we derive "ethnic." In other words, there is implied here a family group as well as national groups. So our "mission" must be directed not only to uncivilized peoples living in some far-off place, but to our own *clan*, our own *tribe*, our own *family*.

Our mission to America must begin with our mission to those living under the same roof. Only when we build this bridge among our family members can we build it with other families within the family of the Church, and then with the family of America. This is the logical progression of our mission wonderfully articulated by St. Paul: "Now therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19).

Now the final component: **America**. Here is the land in which we

have been planted to build that bridge of Christ. This is the land where two hundred years ago, Orthodoxy, if you will, "crossed the bridge" from Russia to plant firmly the Cross of Christ, thus formally establishing the Church on this continent.

What about this land in which we are to carry out our mission? It is a nation whose priorities are essentially contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the majority of whose population denies absolute truth and the reality of the devil; and whose "dream" is a living icon of the parable of the Rich Fool. It is a land which, according to a survey, is more concerned with the questions "How can I lose weight?" and "Where can I park my car?" rather than "Who is Jesus Christ?" It is a society in which though ninety-four percent of the population claim to believe in God, forty-four percent of them are "unchurched"—that is, for the majority of believers, no one has ever built a bridge connecting God with the Church. It is a land whose patron saint, according to Fr. Peter Gillquist, is "The Lone Ranger"; where religious faith and spiritual life generally "scratch a place that doesn't itch." How often we must feel, as Orthodox Christians, like the exiled people of God who ask in the Psalms: "How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" Does this nation need the bridge of Jesus Christ? You bet your life!

Do you need proof? Every day in America, 2,750 children learn that their parents are divorcing, 1.3 million children come home to an empty house after school, 500 pre-adolescent children begin using drugs and alcohol, 90 children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care, and about three children will die from the effects of child abuse—all within every twenty-four hour day. These are the fruits of the religion of *secularism*, the faith that idolizes and worships the god of self; whose only authority is the one in the mirror; whose faith is expressed largely in the rugged individualism that characterized the ancient Jews without a leader. "In those days there was no

king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6).

Now it is not my sole intention here to relentlessly badmouth America—evidence speaks for itself. But I would suggest to you that the reason that America is the way it is, is that families—yes, even Orthodox families—have built the wrong bridges! We have been so concerned with adopting America's agenda that we have neglected the Bridge of Christ and His Church. We have been so preoccupied with building bridges of prosperity and "happiness" that we have rejected the bridges of sacrifice and humility. And we have in our Church become so worried about Americanizing Orthodoxy that we have forsaken our mission to Orthodoxize America.

Why is this so? Our mission hasn't changed. Our "bridge" hasn't changed. Our understanding of the family hasn't changed. What's going on, then? This leads into the next portion of this presentation. I would offer the view that we must make a conscious effort to work especially on what I'll call two suggestions or recommendations for strengthening the Orthodox family to be that bridge for our mission to America.

My first suggestion is **obedience**. (Not a real popular concept in our day, is it? That's why we need to concentrate on it.) Let's first return to some fundamental principles—not of man, but of God. Take a good hard look at the Ten Commandments which as even Ted Koppel said are NOT "Ten Suggestions."

Let's hope we all know essentially what they say: Don't have others gods, don't worship stuff, don't forget the sabbath day, don't swear, don't kill, don't commit adultery, don't steal your neighbor's stuff or his wife, don't life. We would do well to reflect on the commandments seriously and often, but, more important than reflecting on them we must obey them.

Now reviewing the commandments as one unit, we can see that they can be divided into two parts; the first part, commandments one

through four, which deals with man's relationship to God, and the second part, commandments six through ten, which deals with man's relationship to man.

Now which commandment connects the first part to the second—what is the bridge between man's relationship to God and man's relationship to his neighbor? It's the middle commandment, the fifth. What does it say? "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exod. 20:12). There it is, smack dab in the middle like a jewel in a crown. There's the **family as the bridge—God ordained!**

Saint John Chrysostom says that the fifth commandment is the first commandment with a promise; that

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*Christ revealed Himself first in a miracle which celebrates family life: marriage.*

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it is "only after we honor our parents that we can do anything good for the rest of mankind." He offers an incredible sermon on this which you can find in his book *On Marriage and Family Life*. In his Homily number twenty-one, he expounds on Ephesians 6, where, before repeating the fifth commandment, the Apostle Paul says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." There it is again: *obedience*.

Why should obedience seem to be something so foreign to us as Orthodox Christians? If Christ is truly our example and model in all things, let us consider His life. The Church does all the time. For example, on every feast of the Virgin, the single thread which weaves its way through the fabric of the feast is obedience: not only Mary's obedience to the Divine Will of God, but the obedience of Christ Himself to His Father. Look at the epistle reading for these feasts: "And being found in appearance as a

man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8).

You see, God subjected Himself in obedience in the Person of Jesus Christ. But further, not only was Christ obedient to His Heavenly Father, but to His **earthly family**. Think about this. There is little in the Gospel concerning Christ's youth. He was born, then disappears. He shows up at age twelve in the Temple, then disappears again. He doesn't reappear again until the marriage in Cana of Galilee when He begins His miracles and the disciples believe on Him. What a message of family life this is: *Christ revealed Himself first in a miracle which celebrates family life: marriage*. Anyway, what do you think Christ was doing for all those

so-called hidden years—sleeping, watching TV, playing Nintendo? He was being obedient to His earthly family. He was active in "family life" which, according to one scholar is "the God-appointed training ground for human character."

You see, parents are God's representatives to children. This follows from the order and structure of the Ten Commandments, doesn't it? An ancient Oriental proverb says, "The first deities which the child has to acknowledge are his parents." If God is to be obeyed, parents must obey God so children will obey them!

The problem with obedience today (as I see it), lies in the issue of *authority*. *Authority must flow through the ranks from a common source*. What is that Source? God. What an icon we have of authority within the structure of our Church; how the Church deals and, traditionally, has always dealt with various

*Continued on the next page.*

## The Orthodox Family

*Continued from page 61.*

doctrinal issues and questions. A child has a question. He takes it to his parents. Parents take it to the Church—the parish. The parish, through its spiritual father the priest, takes it to the Bishop. The Bishop takes it to the Synod of Bishops. Finally, where does the Holy Synod take it? In our God-ordained structure, they take it to God! This is our line of authority within the Church.

In the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, how did the early Church solve problems? Same way. And ultimately, in their proclamations they say: “It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us” to do such and such. Every bad decision made in the Church (and over the centuries through today we have made our share) has been caused by a breakdown in authority. So, too, in the family—when authority breaks down, so does the family. All authority must find its source in God—who is LOVE—and nowhere else. And the reason we are obedient to such authority is because it is exercised in love, not in fear. Do you obey someone because of what they might do to you or because you love them? There’s a difference.

Love is lacking in our society—the love of which the Gospel speaks. Our public school system is in shambles because, we are told, there is no discipline. Well, *discipline flows from authority and authority flows from love*. The same is happening in our families. We’re so concerned about letting our children “do their own thing,” “being part of the crowd,” being popular with their peers, that we have given them authority over their own lives. We parents need to retrieve that authority. It is ours by the Commandment of God. But we can only do that by realizing that it comes from God. We are only entitled to authority if we ourselves are obedient to Him. As parents, the only way we can demand obedience is if we practice it. Let’s build this bridge with our children.

My second suggestion to strengthening the bridge of the family is **mod-**

**eration**. Here again, what are we passing along in terms of “success” to our children—in terms of what our lives should be filled with and what we should strive for? It did no good for the Rich Fool of the Gospel to build bigger barns because his soul was required before he could put his plan into action. We, too, must not allow “stuff”—plans, strategies, or stock portfolios to be worshipped. But we perhaps unknowingly offer these types of bridges to our children.

There is a limit to how much ice cream one can eat, how many presents we can give children for Christmas, and how many bedrooms we need in our homes. There is a limit. And the limit is set by our response to one of two questions: “How much satisfies the need?” and “How much is needed to satisfy?” I mean, I don’t know about you, but I can only use one bathroom at a time. But what are we teaching our children about our priorities in life when these are precisely the kind of decisions which seem to preoccupy our existence?!

We’ll spend countless hours “up the mall,” searching for just the right shirt, wedding present, computer game, or whatever. We’ll spend little time searching the Scriptures. We’ll spend hours in line waiting to see an R-rated movie and complain when the Liturgy runs over one hour. We’ll spend enormous amounts of money on entertainments and vacations and when we throw a dollar bill in the charity basket at our parish, whine in front of our children that the Church is always asking for money. And we wonder why our children are “crazy”; why they need counseling, why they suffer from severe anxiety and depression. Christ said “Do not worry saying ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ . . . But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:31, 33).

Moderation is the key here along with the priority of seeking first the Kingdom. Everything must be seen in terms of the Kingdom of God. This is called *stewardship*. We are in a

real sense stewards of our children as well as our time, talents, and treasures. No, we don’t condemn every activity our children are involved in. But there must be limits, moderation. There’s a time for everything, according to the Bible. There’s a time to laugh and play, a time to weep and mourn, a time to live and a time to die.

Isn’t this exactly the point that the fasting discipline and the lenten seasons of the Church attempt to drive home to us? They provoke us to examine how much in our lives is necessary, and how much is luxury—how much will satisfy our needs and which needs must be satisfied—how much we “consume” and how much we need to be sustained. Though this makes incredible sense to practice this discipline within our Church, why is it so difficult for parents to share this—by virtue of their authority—with their children in the home when it comes to any Friday and we hear, “Mom, do we have to eat perogi again?!”

Consider for a moment what memories you have of your own childhood. These are the bridges I’ve been talking about. What did your parents give to you? Chances are you don’t remember at all the kind of wallpaper your parents spent hours picking for your bedroom. You couldn’t care less about the brass toilet fixtures you dad installed when you really wanted him to play baseball with you. You maybe don’t even remember where you went on a vacation in a given year, if at all. But you do remember being together as a family; how you related to one another, rejoiced or suffered with one another. These memories are the bridge materials.

I found this great definition of a family. I don’t know who said it, but I think it’s good. “The family is the God-chosen group of human beings with whom I must intimately live the life of Christ, that is the agony of the Cross and the joy of the Resurrection, often simultaneously.” Boy, doesn’t that say a lot of what we remember of our childhood—of our



families! The agony and joy. If somehow we could relate it all to our life in Christ.

I remember a priest telling me the story of one of his parish families driving home after the midnight services on Pascha. A little five-year-old will never forget it. Today she's thirty-five, and still remembers the first time she saw the sunrise, on the day of the Resurrection. What a beautiful family remembrance. You see, there's the connection. There's the bridge. Why do we need to be so obsessed and impatient in achieving worldly success at our children's expense? We need to practice moderation.

Armand Nichols writes in his book *Family Building*, "If a mother of 25 with two children, two years apart, gives full time to rearing them until they are 18, this leaves her with two-thirds of her adult life to follow whatever interests she desires." He concludes by asking "Is this too great a sacrifice?"

We cannot teach our children about the truly important things in life—God, the Church, the Bible, the Sacraments, etc.—without moderation in worldly things and love in all things. Those parents whom we hear crying today, "Look at this kid, I can't do a thing with him!" are so crying because they haven't done a thing with themselves. As with authority, so with moderation. Only those who have learned to obey, can learn to command. Only those who practice piety can teach it.

Saint Theophan the Recluse in his wonderful book entitled *Raising them Right* says this: "The Father and Mother as it were disappear into the child and put their whole soul into its welfare. And if their spirit is penetrated with piety, it cannot be that in some way this will not influence the soul of the child."

Last Sunday, in our Churches, we heard again the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus from Luke 16. Above all else, it is a parable of Our Lord which illustrates the consequences of the sin of negligence and indifference. The poor man Lazarus,

having as his friends only the street dogs who licked his sores while he sat at the rich man's gate. And the rich man who feasted sumptuously every day on everything the world holds dear, never consciously lifting a finger to help the beggar. They both die. Lazarus goes to the bosom of Abraham, the Rich Man to the torments of hell. The moral of the story is that the rich man was condemned because he refused to take responsibility for the one in need on his doorstep. His sin was, as St. John Chrysostom would say, a "sin of omission"—the failure to accept an opportunity to do good.

This indicting parable is a real challenge and warning to us. Consider this: if the rich man was condemned for neglecting his responsibility to an unknown beggar on his doorstep, what can we expect eternally for neglecting our responsibility toward the children who live under our roof? To throw them a crumb every now and then won't bring us salvation. Only in sharing with them *now* Christ, the Bread of Life, will we show that we are responsible parents.

This month our Orthodox Church in America draws our attention to Vocations in the Church. We must realize that each and every one of us possesses unique gifts and talents which can be utilized, not only for our Mission to America, but in our working out our salvation. We know the priesthood is a special calling, a *unique* vocation in the Church. And we know this because, generally speaking, we clergy are on the front lines of Christ's work in the world. As you are all aware, the severe clergy shortage presently being experienced in our Church requires the nurture of Orthodox Christian sons.

But the real point of considering vocations is that it is precisely "on the front lines" where every one of us should be. We all have a vocation in the Church; a purpose to fulfill; a special task to accomplish. If anything that I have said makes any sense, you realize that *parenthood is also a priesthood of sorts*. Children are God's precious gifts to us which

we, whether we want to or not, are called to shape like a piece of clay. Whether that shape ultimately becomes a deformed piece for the rummage sale or a beautifully crafted piece of art depends on how we mold it. That is our vocation as parents. And it is also our common vocation as members of the household of God who are responsible not only for our own children, but in a very real spiritual sense, for each other's children.

What we think, say, and do concerning Christ and the Church will be ultimately what they think, say, and do. What we know about God, they will know. What we believe about Christ, they will believe. How we are involved with Christ and the Church will dictate how they are involved. Oh sure, there will be other influences—ideas and people—who will help to mold them. There will be both positive and negative forces which will undoubtedly influence their development and maturity in Christ. And perhaps by the Grace of God they will turn out alright in spite of our shortcomings as parents. But the bridge is ours to build in the Orthodox home. The continuity of the Orthodox Faith is ours to carry and pass on at this time and in this place of history. Though America may appear to be moving further away from truth, the Bridge remains ever-existing and eternally the same: the way, the truth, and the life which is Jesus Christ.

The only way that the Orthodox Church will fulfill her mission to America is through the bridge in the Orthodox family. The only way that Christ's Gospel message can echo through this land is if it echoes in the hearts of our children. Because the only way that man can find any meaning whatsoever in this life, is in his contemplation of eternal life: "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only True God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3). To Him be glory, honor, and worship, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

—Priest Daniel Kovalak

## Christmas Meditations Old And New

Christ is born, glorify Him. Christ from Heaven, go to meet Him. Christ on earth, be lifted up. Sing to the Lord, all the earth. And that I may join the two in one word: Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, because of him who is of heaven and is now on earth. Christ in the flesh, rejoice with trembling and with joy; with trembling because of your sins, and with joy because of your hope. Christ of a virgin. Live as virgins, you mothers, that you may be mothers of Christ. Who does not worship Him who is from the beginning? Who does not glorify Him who is also the End?

Again the darkness is past. Again the Light is made. The people that sat in darkness, let them see the

Great Light of full knowledge. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things are becoming new. The letter gives way, and the Spirit comes to the fore. The shadows flee away, for the Truth has come upon them. Melchisedek is now fulfilled. He that was without a mother (being begotten from the Father before all ages) now becomes without a Father (being born of the Virgin). The laws of nature are upset. The world above must be filled. Christ commands it. Let us not set ourselves against Him.

Clap your hands together, all people. For unto us a Son is born, unto us a Child is given, and the government shall be on His shoulders . . . Let John the Baptist cry aloud: Prepare ye the way of the

Lord! And I too will cry aloud about the power of this Day. He who is without flesh has become incarnate. The Son of God becomes the Son of Man. Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, today and forever! Let the children of Israel who seek signs be scandalized. Let the Greeks who seek wisdom speak of folly. Let all the heretics talk till their tongues ache. They shall believe when they see Him ascending up into the heavens. And if not then, when they see Him coming out of the heavens to sit in judgement.

Therefore let us keep the feast, not after the manner of a pagan festival, but in a godly way.

*From the sermon on the Appearing of Christ by St. Gregory the Theologian*

"When the three Wise Men saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy!" (Matthew 2:10).

As we are reflecting on the Nativity of Jesus Christ, we find ourselves confronted with the fascinating witness and testimony of the Three Wise Men. These Three Wise Men from the East journeyed far following behind a star.

St. John Chrysostom rightly points out that this was not a normal star. It shined by day, as well as by night, and its movement was different from that of the other stars. This star would shine with a radiant power of divine illumination. The Wise Men beheld it as a revelation of wisdom, and their hearts were lifted and inspired with hope as they pondered its meaning. They pursued the star in the way described in Proverbs 2:3-10:

*Yes, if you cry out for insight,  
And raise your voice for understanding,  
If you seek it like silver  
And search for it as for hidden treasures;  
Then you will understand the fear  
of the Lord*

*And find the knowledge of God.*

*For the Lord gives wisdom;  
From his mouth comes knowledge  
and understanding;*

*He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;*

*He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,*

*Guarding the paths of justice  
And preserving the way of His saints.*

*Then you will understand righteousness and justice*

*And equity, every good path;  
For wisdom will come into your heart,*

*And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.*

The Wise Men decided to follow the star to wherever it led them. When they started out on that long journey, they began as disciples of the star; but when they arrived in Jerusalem, at the court of King Herod, they had become transformed into heralds and apostles for the star.

Just imagine for a moment sharing the thoughts and feelings of those Wise Men as they left the court of King Herod. As their first thoughts

turned them inward as they reflected over their newfound role of messenger and the response received from their message, their meditation was quickly followed with excitement as they realized that they were messengers of Truth and that they were drawing closer to understanding the full meaning of the Truth. And then they looked up and beheld again the star. Feel their hearts leap within them . . . feel the tears streaming down their cheeks . . . feel the rate of their breath quicken . . . feel their knees buckle as they kneel on the ground keeping their eyes on the star . . . feel the joy rising from their innermost being . . . their bodies trembling . . . weeping exceedingly with deep joy.

At that precise precious moment, those Wise Men received the Gift of Faith. Their response to the Gift of Faith was an Epiphany of Joy. When they found Jesus, they fell down and worshipped Him. They presented their treasures as gifts to him. Their adoration transfigured them into priests of celebration.

We, the Faithful, sense a profoundly intimate connection with them.

—Br. Barnabas (Day)

# North American Orthodox Seminaries Discuss Globalization

Recent events in the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union have had a significant impact on Orthodox educational institutions in North America. Sharing mutual concern for this complex issue, representatives from eight North American Orthodox seminaries met on October 1, 1993 in Tarrytown, N.Y., to discuss globalization—the impact of these events on theological education in North America—and the accompanying unprecedented challenges which now face the seminaries. The conference, sponsored by St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, was funded by a grant from the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment.

Since 1989, many of the North American Orthodox theological schools have experienced an influx of students from the formerly communist-controlled states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. For example, foreign student enrollment at St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, N.Y., now comprises twenty percent of the student body, and at St. Tikhon's Seminary in South Canaan, Pa., twenty-six percent.

The significant increase in foreign student enrollment has raised financial challenges because the students from the former communist countries must receive full funding from the host schools. Moreover, the assimilation of large numbers of East European students has at times proved difficult because the students are not accustomed to western ways of life and education.

Several North American theological schools have received pleas for assistance from churches and seminaries in Eastern Europe and Russia. The seminaries and schools now being opened in these previously atheistic societies lack both trained teachers and educational materials. Until recently, there were no catechetical



Seated, l. to r.: Bishop Seraphim, OCA Synodal Commission on Theological Education; Metropolitan Christopher, St. Sava, Libertyville; Bishop Yurij, St. Andrew's. Back, l. to r.: Dr. Roman Yereniuk, St. Andrew's; Dn. Hratch Tchilingirian, St. Nersess; Fr. John Kowalczyk, St. Tikhon's; Fr. Thomas Hopko, St. Vladimir's; Fr. Alkiviadis Calivas, Holy Cross; Fr. Luke Mihaly, Christ the Saviour; Fr. Thomas Kazich, St. Sava, Grayslake;

books on Orthodox theology, and those now available are few, expensive, and not wholly adequate.

The conference focused on ways that North American theological institutions might be of assistance in the development of faculty and educational tools for Eastern Europe, as well as how most effectively to adapt to the increased numbers of these students in their own schools.

One result of the conference was the opportunity to examine each seminary's responses to globalization in both its practical and theoretical aspects. There were calls for further cooperation in this area among the North American Orthodox seminaries and a commitment to hold future meetings.

Participating Orthodox institutions in the globalization conference included Christ the Saviour Seminary, Johnstown, Pa.; Holy Cross Seminary, Brookline, Mass.; St. Andrew's Seminary, N.Y.; Winnipeg, Manitoba; St. Nersess Seminary, New Rochelle, N.Y.; St. Sava's Col-

lege of Theology, Libertyville, Ill.; St. Sava's Seminary, Grayslake, Ill.; St. Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, Pa.; and St. Vladimir's Seminary, Crestwood, N.Y.

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 Paula Lahutsky  
 Fred B. Larry  
 Nicholas & Judy Lezinsky  
 Kyra, Matthew, & Peter Lezinsky  
 Olga Logechnik  
 Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey C. Lovell  
 Peter & Mary Madensky  
 Mr. & Mrs. Randall Marsh & Family  
 Mary McKay  
 Eugenia Meilinger  
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Metz & Family  
 Mrs. Maria Mihailoff & Family  
 Mrs. Helen Mohr  
 Irene Momrock  
 Jack & Barbara Monarek & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Mudri  
 Mrs. Theresa Nalepa  
 Nicholas Nayko  
 Nick's Brother  
 Bill, Susan, & Elizabeth Nielson  
 Barbara Nicholas  
 Robert & Ellen Novatnack & Daughters  
 David & Susan O'Shura & Sons  
 Mr. & Mrs. Alexander Ostapenko & Family  
 Mrs. Helen Perlow  
 Mary Petrovich  
 Julia Pipok  
 Nicholas G. Pippis  
 Mrs. Anna Prohidney  
 Mr. & Mrs. Walter Pummer & Family  
 Pauline Radchick  
 Dr. Gregory & Rosalie Radio  
 Scott Radio  
 Keri Radio  
 Matushka Margaret Resselar  
 Laura Riley  
 Valerie Ristvey  
 Mr. & Mrs. George Ristvey  
 Gordon & Valerie Roberts  
 Matthew, Alexander, & Nicholas Roberts  
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Roman  
 Alex & Gregory Roman  
 Mr. Michael Rosko  
 Gary & Nadia Saba  
 Nancy A. Sabol  
 John Saharuk

# GLO RIFY HIM!

Mr. & Mrs. Michael Sawaryski  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sawarynski  
Mr. & Mrs. James Seifert & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Senick, Jr.

Anna Senyak  
Mary Silfies  
John & Helen Skibo  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Slivka, Eric & Peter  
John Smakula  
Florence Smakula  
Laura Smakula  
Margaret Smakula  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Stafiniak & Family  
Miss Michele Stafiniak  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Stellato & Family  
Boris & Vera Stoiancheff  
Julia Strohl  
Anastasia Symanovich  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Symanovich  
Russell & Ola Tatusko  
Wash & Helen Telepchak  
Martha Wagner  
Louise Walker  
Catherine Witko  
Barbara Wolfel  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Yergey & Stacey  
Mary Zakocs  
Rosemary Ziegenfuss

## HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Catasauqua

Fr. Gregory & Matushka Cindy Horton  
Tatiana, Maximus Horton  
Sebastian, Benjeman Horton  
Joseph & Mary Horoschak  
John & Sandra Miller  
Dr. S.J. Salivonchik  
Olga Salivonchik  
Andrew Brusko, Sr.  
Richard & Mary Baker  
Sue Cressman  
Kathy Baker  
John & Mary Yuhas  
Michael & Vincentine Brusko  
Alexander Suda  
Chris & Mary Ann Rowe & Kate  
Edward & Pauline Bachert  
Louis & Betty Hilt  
Helen Suda  
Robert & Rebecca Romanchak  
Robert & Cheryl Steck  
Mildred Bowski  
Scott & Dana Morgan  
Mary Zbur  
Verna Teman  
Susan Greitzer  
Lucy Wasco  
Richard & Jean Garrison  
David & Janice Cudlic  
Laura & David Cudlic  
Michael & Tanya, & Michael S. Gaston  
Charles & Helen Gaston  
Nikolya & Vincent Fugazzotto  
Andrew Brusko Jr., Altar Boy  
Maximus Horton, Altar Boy  
Dan Miller  
Mary Grason & Stephen  
Ronald & Brenda Acker  
Andrew & Pat Brusko  
Eva Fox  
Michael Hertz  
Helen Cudlic  
Sophie Stempak  
Susan Tzope  
Dorothy Smickley  
John & Anna Miller  
Fred & Sophie Long  
James Basara  
Peter & Laurel Kendianis  
George & Harriet Mazur

Jerry & Donna Stankiewicz Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Gudaitis  
Mr. & Mrs. Vladimir Dutko

## HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Williamsport

Very Rev. Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak  
Daria & Natalia Kovalak  
Barbara & Leu Shatle  
Elsie Skvir Nierle  
John Kovich  
Mr. & Mrs. Minas Hiras  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Stefanick  
Yvonne & Nathan Bohlander  
Doug, Patti, Jennifer & Dougie Brown  
Dr. Vladimir & Maria Petorak & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Marnoch  
Michael & Carol Serwint & Family  
Chris Sinatra  
Zielaskiewicz Family  
Jim & Mary Chelentis  
John J. Sam, Jr.  
Nancy Pashchuk & James Chuta  
Eva Koutroulelis

## ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Wrightstown

V. Rev. Theodore Heckman  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kiproff  
Mr. & Mrs. Boris Borichevsky  
Helen Bulley  
Damian & Brian Borichevsky  
Jeanette Ruano  
Lucy Znak  
Janet Kalenish  
Elena N. Polakow  
Valerie & Nicholas Polakow  
Vera Nakonetschny Gambone  
Joseph Horoschak  
Walter & Elizabeth Labick  
Margarete Mauger  
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Polyniak  
Charles Super  
Kevin & Mary Ann Swan & Family  
James & Monia Pitra  
Sonya & Ed Miele & Children  
Delores L. Marmaluk  
Peter, Sandy & Stephanie Bohlender  
Connie, Karen, Zachary Borichevsky  
George & Alla Nakonetschny  
Judith, Charles, Scott, Joseph Rybny  
Peter, Heather, Katie, Holle Ren  
John & Joyce Hawranick  
Kyra & Philip Duran  
Helen Paulin  
John Wanko  
John & Elizabeth Sherbin  
Irene & Sergei Arhipov  
William J. & Mary H. Zaroff  
Valia Kiriakidi  
Michael, Anthony & Steven Nakonetschny

## ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Wilmington, DE

Fr. John, Mary & Kyra Terrell  
Peter & Delores Karawulan  
William & Alice Dryden  
Elaine Varallo  
Stephen & Jean Bodnarczyk  
Bill & Marie Herman & Family  
Rev. Fr. Mark & Jan Koczak  
David, Chris, Kristin & David Roberts  
Jane Gasser & Children  
Edward, Karen, Ana, Tim & Leah Hojnicky  
Stephanie & Ed Hojnicky  
Lee, Georgia, Steven, Aaron & Rachel Hojnicky  
James S. & Olga S. Riley & Family  
Mary Tuneff

Edward & Holly Brehert, Zachary  
Catherine & Ruth Trimble

## ST. MARY'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Coaldale

Father Paul & Matushka Borick  
Mr. & Mrs. John Bench & Family  
Nettie Bench  
Helen Berezniak  
Harry Bialis  
Mary Bybel  
Mr. & Mrs. Max Bubernak  
Helen & Donald Butts  
Stephanie Chmel  
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Conarty  
Mr. & Mrs. David Christmas & Daughters  
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Chwastiak  
Richard Chwastiak  
Nicole Chwastiak  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Danchak  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Davis  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Drozdak  
Irene Drozdak  
Mr. & Mrs. William Evetushick  
Rose Harkins  
Olga Hebda  
Catherine Hedes  
Anna P. Horoschak  
Joseph & Olga Kash  
John & Dorothy King  
Wash & Helen King  
Mrs. Anna Kononchak  
Helen Lanzilotta  
Rose Lisella  
Michael Lorchak  
Ted Lorchak  
Mary & Frank Lutash  
Olga & Ben Macalush  
Pauline Maholick  
Marie Maholich  
Ann Maliniak  
Kay & Paul Maliniak  
Helen Ostrosky  
Helen Philipovich  
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Pisko  
Petrina Poko  
Irene & Jack Puschak  
Stephen Redash  
Harry Redash  
Andrew Redash  
Nancy Ruggeri  
Paul & Helen Sheers  
Ann Slanta  
Daniel & Alice Skripnek  
Olga Sidoriak  
Martha D. Teno  
Olga Weiss  
Harry Wyshosky  
Mary Zemanik  
Michael Zemanik  
A Friend

## ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Coatesville

Very Rev. Dimitri J. Voytilla  
Robert Barlow  
Yvonne Barlow  
George Babich  
Samuel Babich  
Vera (Babich) Hatcher  
Suzanne Baker and Family  
Nina and David Berry  
Karen Campbell  
Valerie and Jim Fox  
Mr. & Mrs. John Gbur  
Gregory G. Godun  
Joette Grieco and Family  
Helen Handoe  
Dennis & Nanette Hare Family  
Anna & Nicholas Ruczhak  
Valentina & Richard Roop

# CHRIST IS BORN!

Michael Sarosi  
Georgette Sarosi  
Peter Sarosi  
Maria Toth and Family  
Steffie Szymanski  
Anna Wilson

## ST. ANDREW'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Dallas

Very Rev. Michael Lepa  
Florence M. Brin  
Margaret Yankoski  
Mrs. Robert T. Rhodes  
Rebecca Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. John Penman

## ST. JOHN'S RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

### (OCA)

### Dundaff

Rev. Fr. Dionysius & Matushka Sweicki & Family  
Joseph Shipsky  
Catherine Conick  
Robert & Eileen Dance  
Anne Janusz  
(In Memory) of Mary & Thomas Mikolaichik  
Mary Ann Congdon  
George, Delores, Danielle, & Laureen Sheypuk  
Louise & Henry Gosh  
Mary Allen  
Donald Zablotsky  
Mr. & Mrs. David Krenitsky & Elizabeth  
Patricia Zimowski  
Eugenia Congdon  
Gregory Congdon

## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Edwardsville

Rev. Fr. Emilian D. Hutnyan  
Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan  
Natalia Hutnyan  
Julia Sitar  
Tillie Panco  
Helen Moncovich  
Tatianna Radsavitch  
Michael Kolinchock  
Olga Morgan  
Eva Kopko  
David Price  
Frank Hulanick  
Sandra Ferrance  
Katherine Malcolm  
Anna Romanchick  
Carol & John Sitar  
Sherry & Sandra Medivitz  
Irene Mucha  
Dawn Mielhe  
Mary Rock  
Helen & George Piskorik  
Helen Sharock  
Ann Pengrin  
Cunius Family  
Wanda Wanko  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Kulick, Jr.  
Elizabeth Fera  
John Fera  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Rilko  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Ervin  
In Memory: John & Androna Berdy  
Mr. & Mrs. William Deletcinich  
In Memory of Betty Berdy  
Mrs. Anna Dutko  
John Berdy  
Natalie Duduk  
Alexandra Duduk  
Elena Duduk  
Sergei Dutko  
John & Audrey Supina  
Elizabeth Dutko  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Gulich  
Mary Yova

Gingo Family  
Anna Billek  
Donald Kulick, Sr.  
Police Chief, Ronald Roberts  
Mary & Michael Dorish  
Michael & Marina Dorish  
Patricia & Peter Borsanian  
Shirley Sitar Medivitz  
Dora Deroski  
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Kobusky  
Veronica Balent  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Thorik  
John Kotis  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Mazur  
Mary Scott  
Mr. & Mrs. John Lukatchik  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Lukatchik  
Nikki Ann Roll  
Lucille Dragan  
Martha Gingo  
Mary Ellen Gulich  
Margaret Ronall  
Edward, Elaine, Jason VanCamp  
Betty Morgans  
Kopenis Family  
Wozniak Family  
Olga Stapay  
Evelyn Stapay  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Swetts & Son  
Kathy & Steve Harmanos  
Michael & Kyra Harmanos  
Julia Roschak  
Helen Kozemchak Wasco  
Frank Gingo  
Helen Wartella  
Mary & Sam Stanchak  
The Adamski Family  
William Talpash, Jr.  
Michael Skopic  
Rita & Russell Dugan  
Robert & Irene Husted  
Jean R. Kutzer  
Florence & Peter Mazur  
Michael & Margaret Hoidra  
Ann Slavinski  
Marie & Peter Souchick  
Lorraine Brader  
Anna Bowanko  
Julia Roschak  
Julia Capp  
Sandra Williams  
Lorraine Niedjaco  
Eva Balash  
Mary Pisaneschi  
Marion Crane  
Ted & Helen Bischak  
Ann Lukatchik  
Helen (Kopko) Chavrid  
Beatrice Kowalskie  
Sylvester Dugan  
Mary Hazinski

## HOLY ASCENSION RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Frackville

V. Rev. Paul & Matushka Ropitsky  
Sophie Osenbach  
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Lesko & Family  
Nicholas & Marge Tatusko  
Mr. & Mrs. George Kania & Family  
Mary Torick  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Kuchta  
Mr. & Mrs. John Semanchick  
Michael Dyszel  
Anna Eppert  
Sergius Chrush  
Joseph & Olga Chrush  
Margaret Kuchta

Mr. & Mrs. William Urban  
Sophie Chrin  
Marie & Peter Weremedic  
Mary Sagan  
Olga Williams  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Dikun  
Mrs. Tessie Billie  
Mary Burock  
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Smarkanic  
Barbara Examitas  
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick Kleman  
Mary Krutz  
Ann Jordan  
Myron & Helen Polanchyck  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Trynosky  
Mrs. Eva Mucha  
Mr. & Mrs. John Pellcock  
Russell Lahutsky  
Mary Diffenderfer  
Dr. Robert & Mary Lou Bricker  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Bricker  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Dura  
John Cooper  
Olga Purcell  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Martin  
Mel Martin  
Paul Martin  
Ann & Alex Peleschak  
Anna Sowchak  
Nancy Sowchak  
Mary & Nancy Reed  
Marge & Joe Pasquali  
Anna Dudash  
Tillie Zigabylo  
Anna Andrusychin  
Mrs. Mary Hancher  
Miss Mary Hancher  
Mrs. Catherine Motz  
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Morash & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. David Braskey & Family  
Lee Halenda  
Olga Hreshko  
Dr. James L. Hreshko  
Mrs. Mary Zokuskie  
Theresa Basara  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Stoppi  
Mr. & Mrs. John Podany, Sr.  
Zachary, Nicholas, Gregory, Christopher Wilson  
William & Mary Kessock  
David, Gregory, Daniel Kessock  
Michael Andrucyshin  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Holowaty  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Fletcher  
Michael Patrick  
Peter Chwastiak  
Carole Sagan  
Julia Beltrami  
Mrs. Rose Rounds  
Nancy Sluzevich and Son  
Anna Bendinsky  
Peter and Barbara Pelak  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Cuitic & Family  
Larisa Holowaty  
Vera Timko  
Mr. & Mrs. John Malinchok  
Mr. & Mrs. Victor Sherkness  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Malinchok  
George Thomas, Jr.  
Eleanor A. Thomas  
Anna Yaticilla  
Mr. & Mrs. George Thomas

## CHRIST THE SAVIOUR CHURCH

### Harrisburg

Rev. Fr. Michael & Olga Kovach  
Rev. Fr. Daniel & Theodora Ressetar  
Mr. & Mrs. James Antonio & Sons  
Patti, Dan, Michael & Andrew Bromley  
Mr. & Mrs. Sylvester Barbu  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Cole

# GLO RIFY HIM!

John Caba, Jr.  
 Mary & George Cvijic  
 Paul J. Dotsey  
 Mrs. Tusha Dernbach  
 Suzanne Demchak  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Fetsko  
 Angela Georgias  
 Razvan Gramatovici  
 Ron & Libby Hancher  
 Vicki, Jim, Michael, Matthew & Jessica Henry  
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hadginske & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Hancher, Jr.  
 Mr. & Mrs. James Hardenstine & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Wilbert Hand  
 Symeon & Rebecca Jekel  
 Mr. & Mrs. George Kaznowsky  
 John & Lydia Kachur  
 Alysha & Kristina Kachur  
 Mr. & Mrs. Gary Kneiss & Family  
 George & Evelyn Krempasky  
 James Krut, and Melissa & Angelica  
 Marilou & George Klipa  
 Ruth & William Kantor  
 Eli & Sonia Mioff  
 Mr. & Mrs. Timothy McMahon & Family  
 Roger & Ellen Miller, and Andrew  
 Mr. & Mrs. Adam Mallick  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Mallick  
 Sue B. Mandell  
 Dr. & Mrs. Joseph Norato  
 John & Mary Ellen Osuch & Family  
 Kathy & Buck Pankiw  
 Stephen Pawlak  
 Paul & Betty Pellegrini  
 Matushka Anna Prislipsky  
 John, Lisa, Matthew & Molly Pylypciw  
 Mr. & Mrs. William L. Risser  
 Joe Russian  
 Matushka Margaret Ressetar  
 Nicholas Ressetar  
 Alexander Ressetar  
 Candi & Greg Ressetar  
 Dmitri & Sophia Ressetar  
 Harry & Dorothy Sysak & Family  
 Wilma & Nick Sutovich  
 Mark, Melissa, and Ryan Sutovich  
 Kevin Sutovich  
 Russell Sass  
 Basil & Irene Sumple  
 Larry & Megon Smith  
 Mrs. Helen Tatusko  
 June Taleff  
 Ron, Judy, Holly, & Noelle Webb  
 Mildred Wolfe  
 Susan Wolfe  
 Alice Yankosky  
 Deborah & Lawrence Zedlovich  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Zuro & Nicholas

## ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Jermyn

Fr. John & Matushka Kowalczyk, Sophia & Nicky  
 Fr. Gabe & Matushka Petorak  
 Debbie & Barry Bernosky, Paul & Rachel  
 Wendy & Serge Bochnovich & Family  
 Karen & Robin Bonda  
 Mary Bowan  
 Willard & Sue Brown & Family  
 Eddie & Eileen Brzuchalski  
 Dennis & Sonia Buberniak  
 Valerie Buberniak  
 Denise Cobb & Kyle  
 Delores Dreater  
 Kathryn Fedirko  
 Donald, Rosalie & William Fives  
 Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Franchak  
 Steve & Rose Franchak  
 Pauline & Nick Frenchko  
 Peter & Delores Frenchko  
 Joseph Getzie  
 Nick Getzie

Peter Getzie  
 Bessie Guzey  
 John & Lucille Guzey  
 Dorothy & Basil Haholach  
 Andy & Dorothy Hanchak  
 Bill & Joan Hanchak  
 Mr. & Mrs. Alex Hockin  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Hockin & John  
 John & Debbie Jaye & Jonathan  
 Olga & Joe Jaye  
 Mary Jubinsky  
 Dorothy Keklak  
 Rose Kelechawa  
 Julia Kitchura  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Klapatich & Sons  
 Henry & Jeremi Korpusik  
 Mary & Henry Korpusik  
 Basil Krenitsky  
 John & Eva Krenitsky  
 Joseph & Theresa Krenitsky  
 Irene Kupinski  
 Helen Lahey  
 Daria Lehman  
 Mr. & Mrs. Sam Mattise  
 Myra McInnis  
 Andrew & Anna Michalczyk  
 Alice Mosley  
 Buddy & Barbara Nayduch  
 Mr. & Mrs. Miles Neutts  
 Michael Orinick  
 Justine Orlando  
 Barbara Palubniak  
 Tillie Palubniak  
 Antoinette Petorak  
 Mr. & Mrs. George Petorak & Joshua  
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Petrilak  
 Martha Pollock  
 Willard Puzza  
 Anna Rusiniak  
 Mary Rusiniak  
 Mary Joan Rusiniak  
 Martha Scopelliti  
 John Sernak  
 Mary Sernak  
 Willie Sernak  
 Paul & Delores Sernak  
 Ron & Lorraine Sernak  
 Delores Serniak  
 Julia Serniak & Tom  
 Steven & Dolly Serniak & Allison  
 Mrs. Ralph Sloat  
 Marilyn & Jerry Soroka & Children  
 Emily Stawisky  
 Helen & Gene Strosky  
 Irene Swirdovich  
 Damian & Stephen Telencio  
 Chap. Lt. Col. Peter & Martha Telencio  
 Millie, Bob & Rebecca Telep  
 John & Yvonne Wargo & Family  
 Mary & Michael Wyziak  
 Mary Zielinski  
 Betty Zrowka  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joe Zrowka

## ST. VLADIMIR'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Lopez

Hieromonk Michael Thier  
 Metro McCobin  
 Mary McCobin Neddoff  
 Nanette & Robert Carter  
 John & Elizabeth Caccia  
 Edward John Enright  
 William & Cora Enright & Sons  
 Tillie Oresko  
 Paul & Sandy St. Germain  
 Paul & Catherine Snider  
 Nicholas & Helen M. Kachmarsky  
 Rosemary Kachmarsky  
 Michael McCobin

Irene Mager Kreshuk  
 Olga Seresko  
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Kachmarsky  
 Craig Kachmarsky  
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Matychak  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Dworsky  
 Stephanie Neuffer  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Maximiek  
 Mary Seresko  
 Olga Rodka  
 Robert Rodka  
 Mary Christini  
 Mr. & Mrs. Demetri Hubiak  
 Edward J. Wawruk  
 Mary Saxe  
 Mary Kravetz  
 Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Kravitz & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Vanderpool  
 Helen Fullerton  
 Leo Mattichak  
 Mary Puzo

## HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Lykens

Fr. Michael & Matushka Hatrak  
 Matthew & Natalie Hatrak  
 Suzanne Smeltz  
 Nadia Sass  
 Elisabeth Sultzbaugh  
 Andrew J. Sultzbaugh  
 Gayle & John Sultzbaugh  
 Mrs. Kathryn Lapicky  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Hrina  
 John & Chris Coles  
 Nancy & John Coles  
 Fannie Sass  
 John & Mary Mehalco  
 Dr. & Mrs. Alexander Pianovich  
 Ann Mahoney  
 Judy & John Sweikert

## SS. PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

### Minersville

Fr. Michael & Matushka Hatrak  
 Matthew & Natalie Hatrak  
 Susie Frew  
 Joe & Mildred Visintin  
 David & Georgene Studlack & Family  
 JoAnn Brinich  
 Luke & Teresa Oakill  
 James & Anna Antonio  
 Elsie Herman  
 Mary Wartella  
 Anna & Nick Wyslutsky  
 Helen Polinsky & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Pasuzzo  
 Christian Michael Pasuzzo  
 Anna Olexa  
 Madeline Bonchalk  
 John Bonchalk  
 Mr. & Mrs. Harry Oakill & Family  
 Mary Oakill  
 Helen Weidner  
 In Memory of John & Mary Honyara

## ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH

### Mt. Carmel

V. Rev. & Matushka Evans & Michael  
 Pearl Winnick  
 Mary Zeluskey  
 Mary Moroz  
 Anna Gondal  
 Joe & Sandy Tosca  
 Vera & Stanley Zbicki  
 Jean & Chris Mathias  
 Helen Sorocka  
 Costy Melnick  
 Leon Markovich  
 Olga Thomas  
 George Bortnichak  
 Peter J. Horoschak

# CHRIST IS BORN!

Johanna Vastishak  
 Cath. Shaffchuk  
 Eva Roushinko  
 Christine Buchkarik  
 Pearl Livanis  
 Mary Shields  
 Stephan Leschinsky  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Revak  
 Adam Leschinsky  
 Margaret Olaf  
 Catherine Hardnock  
 Dorothy Beckus  
 Peter Yastishak  
 Florence Bubernak  
 Amelia Markovich  
 Mr. & Mrs. Walter Sebasovich  
 Julia Bushick  
 Christine Bushick  
 Anna Raber  
 Mr. & Mrs. Bernie Malkoski  
 Anna Panikarchuch  
 Charles Chidovich, Sr.  
 John Chidovich  
 Mrs. Mary Homicz  
 Mrs. Anna Buckwash  
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Paduhovich  
 Charles Chidovich, Jr.  
 Valentina Wood  
 George Winnick  
 Valerie Winnick  
 Julia Barnes  
 Russell Alexicko  
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Yonkovic  
 Olga Berkoski  
 Mr. & Mrs. Ernie Hill  
 Kim Winnick  
 Helen Timpko  
 Marie Cuff  
 Mary Kandrot  
 Nancy Kandrot  
 George Panikarchuck  
 Sophie Horoschak

## ST. JOHN'S ORTHODOX CHURCH Nanticoke

Fr. & Matushka Stephen Karaffa  
 Joe & Mary Paprota  
 Jay & Marge Sokol  
 Michael & Pearle Zupko  
 John Pihanich & Ellie Kapitula  
 Mr. & Mrs. James Oram  
 Joe, Joey, & Jill Paprota  
 Mary Hunchar  
 Leo & Mary Misewich  
 John & Theresa Klos  
 Paul & Olga Sulewski  
 Helen Zukowski  
 Dorothy Fagula

## ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH Old Forge

Fr. David & Mat. Karen Mahaffey  
 Nikolas Mahaffey  
 Michael Mahaffey  
 Seth Mahaffey  
 Kyra Mahaffey  
 Fr. Theodore Orzolek  
 Fr. Eli Krcnitsky  
 Michael & Margaret Jadick  
 Michael & Pauline Spitko  
 Eva & Michael Pregmon  
 Sandra & Daniel Pregmon  
 Helen T. Krenitsky  
 Nicholas & Mary Halchak  
 Ann Peregrin  
 Lovie Peregrin  
 Mildred Wozniak  
 Rose & Paul Mizerak  
 Anthony Bellenzeni, Sr.  
 Anthony Bellenzeni, Jr. & Family  
 Mary & William Pregmon

Cushner Family  
 Martha, Paul & Paul Andrew Tumavitch  
 Sonia Tyrpak  
 Helen Perry  
 Jos. & Ann Marie Maciejowsky  
 Roseann & Robert Ziembra  
 Mary Adamiak  
 Tillie Augustine  
 Mr. & Mrs. William Condon  
 Helen Chesniak  
 Fred & Maria Ostroski  
 Nick Lezinsky  
 Sandra & John Barsigian  
 Theresa & Helen Polanchik  
 Mr. & Mrs. Alex Jadick  
 David Jadick  
 Walter & Anne Marie Ermolovich  
 Anna Zupko  
 Margaret & Jacob Barsigian  
 Jean & Mike Wasco  
 Mr. & Mrs. Steve Polanchik  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Jadik  
 Sophie Pronovich  
 Neal & Ann Freeman  
 Ken & Lisa Gula & Family  
 Mary Rishko Tervo  
 Mary Russell

## ALL SAINT'S ORTHODOX CHURCH Olyphant

All Saints Senior R Club  
 All Saints Junior R Club  
 V. Rev. Claude & Matushka Vinyard  
 Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Boga & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Bonczar & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. John M. Boyko  
 Olga Boyko  
 Helen Bryer  
 Mr. & Mrs. David Brzuchalski & Family  
 Mr. & Mrs. John Chukalochak  
 Mr. & Mrs. David Crea & Daughters  
 Helen Dzwonczyk  
 Joseph Dzwonczyk  
 Mr. & Mrs. James Foley & Son  
 Mary Jane & Tanya Gilbert  
 Irene Glowatz  
 Olga Grancey  
 Mary Guman  
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Holowatch  
 Vera & Natalie Hoyniak  
 Mr. & Mrs. Harry Hunyak  
 Anna Klemko  
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 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Puza  
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 Linda Stuchlak  
 Mrs. Julia Voloshen  
 Mrs. Dorothy Wansacz  
 Mrs. Veronica Wansacz

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 Alexandra Butchko  
 Jonathan, James, Julie & Richard Cesari  
 John and Josephina Chichilla  
 Michelle Chichilla  
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 Mike Evanina  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Fetchina  
 Kyra Fetchina  
 Olga Fetchina  
 Marie Grabania  
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 Olga Kuzmick  
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 Mr. & Mrs. William Wasser  
 Mary Radick  
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Burch  
 Peter & Elizabeth Hetman  
 Michael & Jennie Harb  
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 Nina & Nicholas Horsky  
 Dr. & Mrs. Timothy Horsky & Timmy  
 Nicholas & Mary Suchniak  
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 Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Kolesnik & Family  
 Mrs. Helen Plunkett  
 Olga Russin  
 Olga & John Gazak  
 John & Kate Cox  
 Nicholas, Alexander, Andre Cox  
 Lydia Magee & Matthew  
 Catherine Paulasack  
 Mrs. Baba George  
 John & Helen Szulak  
 Anna Burdziak  
 Dorothy Crossan  
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 Heinz & Tamara Poessi



# GLORIFY HIM!

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Ed, Mark & Nicole Lampreich & David Kane  
Joseph & Barbara O'Brick  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephan Pron  
Helen, Stephen & Mark Davis  
Arnold, Katherine & Anna Jensky  
Larry, Connie, Jon, & Chris Skvir

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Mrs. Helen Wokulich  
Mrs. Julia Zewan  
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Wassill Draovitch  
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Steve Pelak  
Mary Zuk  
Leah Chrush  
Stella Kadingo  
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Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Matsick & Family  
Mr. John McGanka  
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Mr. John Melniczek  
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Ms. Camille Palese  
Mrs. Olga Palese  
Mr. & Mrs. Karl Osterburg  
Michael & Teresa Savage  
Mr. & Mrs. David Scheese  
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Mr. John Serman  
Miss Mary Anne Serman  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Sichak & Family  
Ms. Gloria Spitko  
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Mrs. Catherine Terenchin  
Ms. Cheryl Terechin  
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James & Mary Anne Braun  
Maria Kathleen Braun  
Olga Buberniak  
Olga Carvey  
Mary Chupeck  
Sam & Nadine Demianovich  
Helen Dorval  
Olga Gallick  
Helen Hrichuk  
Esther Kowalsky  
Stephen Kowalsky  
Thomas & Elaine Kravetsky  
Lori. Lynn & Kimberly Kravetsky  
Helen Kutch  
Michael & Theresa Luczkovich  
Julia Mazza  
Anastasia Mikulak  
Michael & Julia Mikulak  
John & Mary Okorn  
Walter & Marie Proch  
Marion & John Proch  
Walter & Mary Anne Proch  
Christina Maria Proch  
David & Daria Roat  
Jo Ann Somple

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Very Rev. & Matushka Daniel K. Donlick  
Dea. Nicholas & Matushka Elizabeth Wyslutsky  
Matushka Mary Borichevsky  
Matushka Dolores Dzury  
Matushka Dorothy Sulich  
Reader Gregory Sulich  
Galina Abolins  
Mary Andreychik  
Eva Babich  
Marge Barna  
Olga Barna  
Olga Dzury  
Betty Figura  
Drs. David & Mary Ford  
Mr. & Mrs. William Huniak  
Julia Jacewicz  
John & Helen Kuchmanich  
Katherine Lazorach  
John & JoAnne Paluch  
Mr. Martin Paluch  
Julianna, Maria & Michael Tihanich  
Harry Warholick

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Rose M. Kennedy  
Hildegard Scheibner  
Ann O'Leary  
Martha Dorosh  
Donald and Ann Bock  
Vladimir & Betty Demianovich  
Peter Hurchick  
The Dubois Family: Raymond, Janice, Amy, Alex

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Taisia & Alexandra Perich

John & Mollie Smarsh  
George, Danielle & Larissa Pahomov  
John & Audress Krowzow  
Anastasia Jabkowski  
William & Barbara Bone  
Daniel & Taissa Drobish & David  
George & Debbie Taylor & Sons  
Alexis, Elizabeth, Madeline & Robert Campbell  
Dorothy Sissons  
Serge & Svetlana Taptykoff  
George & Debra Taylor & Family  
George & Christen Krugovy  
Frank & Judy DiMaggio & Family  
Millie Sokol  
Andrew & Mary Anne Toroney  
Mildred Chipchak  
John & Nadine Prokop  
LuAnn & Don Motel  
Anna C. Woodring  
Janie M. George  
Mary Zawawski  
Mary & Bill Kessler  
Julie & Walt Chernoug  
Olga Pishtey  
Albert Fernandez  
Francis Plaska  
Anne Troyano  
Anastasia & George Plisko  
Anne Boris  
Nita Harris Siciliano & Sons, Peter & Mark  
Mr. & Mrs. Alan Pcsolyar  
Matushka Mary Fedoronko  
Deborah & Tom & Emily Bradley

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Father & Matushka George Pawlush  
Andrew Dennis  
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Golubiewski  
Mr. & Mrs. Marion Sowyrda  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Sanders  
John Pawlak  
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Latzman  
Liz & John Gurka  
John Jr. & Elizabeth Goobic  
Holy Trinity Altar Boys  
Mary Skordinski  
Helen & Peter Welgo  
William & Mary Gurka  
Ralph & Nettie Kompinski  
Mary Petro  
Mrs. Helen Zavada  
Joseph Klemash  
Lydia Cross  
Mr. & Mrs. Ted Sovyrda  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Stchur  
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew King  
Helene Emerick  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Pawlak  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Gozick  
Mary Salmay  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Lisko, Sr.  
Mary Bankos  
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Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Goobic  
Mrs. Michael Goobic  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Krill  
Marianne Krill  
Pearl Tutko  
Elaine Benczkowski

**CHRIST IS BORN!  
GLORIFY HIM!**

Marie Karawulan  
Harry & Emily Wjick  
Paul, Marianne, Barbara & Julianna Newmeyer  
Peter Melnik  
Elizabeth Melnik  
Jean & Robert Zapora  
Mary & Mom Guretsky

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Wilkes-Barre**

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Father Deacon Sergei & Matushka Kapral  
Father Deacon Keith S. Russin  
Mr. & Mrs. D.H. Anderson  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Berlozan  
Justine & Jim Borino  
Seminarian Andrew Buleza  
Laverne Chapman  
Marguerite & Tom Czekalski  
Bernard & Esther Dancheck  
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Lovey Drahus  
Mrs. Mary Drahus  
Mr. & Mrs. John Dulsky  
Charlene Faust  
Mrs. Michael M. Felch, Sr.  
Vladimir Glowatsky  
Dolores M. Grabko  
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Holak  
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Humko  
Anna Hutz  
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hutz & Son  
Sandy, Julieann & Nick Kapelan  
Matthew & Anna King  
Sandra King  
Mr. & Mrs. Vladimir Konstantinovich  
Marge Kotarski  
Vera & Ray Kravnanski  
Matushka Eleanor Krill  
Mr. & Mrs. William Kozey & Son  
Mrs. Steve Krill, Sr.  
Mary Krupack  
Olga Layton  
Olga Marich  
Sam Macekura  
Mary Onufer  
Sam & Rose Ostopick  
Michael & Nancy Pieck  
Betty Polk  
Laura & Greg Polk  
Mrs. Helen Pryor & Family  
Elizabeth Reese  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Romanuski  
Mrs. Frank Romancheck  
Simon S. & Anna Russin  
Margaret Sapp  
Andy & Florence Skordinski  
Peter & Anna Sokola  
Rose Sorochak  
Evelyn Suhoski  
Ann Swanko  
John Swanko  
Elizabeth Takach  
Joe & Myra Tarantini  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Tempalski  
Stella Terpak  
Agnes Timchak  
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Mr. & Mrs. Edward F. Wysocki  
Mary Zakosky  
Mr. & Mrs. John Zimich & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. Orlando Zingaretti  
John & Doris Zoranski  
Kyra E. Zoranski

**All In The Diocesan Family**

**BETHLEHEM  
Holy Nicholas Church**

**Baptisms and Chrismations:**  
Zachary James Mazur, son of George and Kathy Mazur, August 22; Alison Elizabeth Saba, daughter of Gary and Nadia Saba, November 13.

**Anniversary congratulations:**  
to Andrew and Mary Mudri on their celebration of their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary on November 28.

**Parish activities:** The Sister-Parish Committee held a successful Ethnic Food Festival benefit for our sister parish in Klin, Russia. The proceeds will provide items needed and requested by our sister parish for mission and evangelism work in Klin.

The Lehigh Valley Sr. "O" Club sponsored a successful Christmas Bazaar on November 6 and 7. The Sr. "O" Club provides regular support for all of the parish's works and ministries.

The Church School honored Mrs. Sarah Jubinski on her retirement from the office of Treasurer and Religious Sales Manager for the Church School Program. Sarah has also served many years as a former Church School teacher. In appreciation for her devoted service, she was honored during the Church School coffee hour in October, and a icon commemorating the Bicentennial of Orthodox Christianity in North America was presented to her by Father Eugene Vansuch and Mrs. Maxine Marsh, who is the Church School coordinator.



Sarah Jubinski presented with icon at St. Nicholas Church, Bethlehem.

**CATASAUQUA  
Holy Trinity Church**

**Baptism:** Michael Gaston, son of Michael and Tonya Gaston, August 15.

**Weddings:** Scott Morgan and Dana Miller were united in marriage on August 21; John Miller and Anna Girling were united in marriage on October 2.

**Parish activities:** The parish hosted the Annual Holy Unction service on the Feast of Ss. Cosmas and Damian, during the evening of November 1; the service was attended by various neighboring clergy and faithful. Father Emilian Hutnyan from St. Michael's Church in Edwardsville gave an inspiring sermon on healing. All present who were given the sacramental anointing with Holy Unction were also anointed with Holy Oil from the tomb of St. Job of Pochaev.



St. Mary's Church, Coaldale, Annual Patronal Dinner.

## COALDALE

### St. Mary's Church

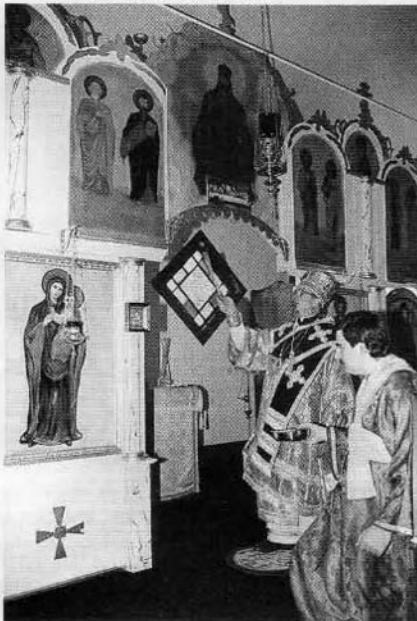
**Parish activities:** The parish held its Eighth Annual Patronal Dinner-Dance on September 12 as part of its inauguration of the celebration of the Bicentennial of Orthodox Christianity in North America.

The Twenty-Second Annual Christmas Bazaar was held by the parish on November 12-13. Beautiful handmade crafts and traditional ethnic and American foods were featured at the bazaar along with a bake sale.

On November 19, the parish hosted a **special event** in tribute to the Bicentennial of Orthodox Christianity in North America. Father Daniel Kovalak, from Holy Cross Church in Williamsport, gave a lecture entitled *The Challenge of the Bicentennial*. The talk was followed by a fellowship hour.

## DUNDAFF

### St. John's Church



On Sunday, Sept. 12, Bishop Herman blessed newly renovated church.

*Christ is Born!  
Glorify Him!*



Procession to St. John's Church, Dundaff.



Anna Janusz greets Bishop Herman with flowers at St. John's Church.

## JERMYN

### St. Michael's Church

**Baptisms:** Kristan Marie Twarzik, daughter of Zina and Louis Twarzik, November 11; Ann Kravetsky, daughter of Edward and Victoria Kravetsky, December 11.

**Parish activities:** The parish held a local celebration of the Bicentennial of Orthodoxy in North America on November 7. Bishop Herman blessed two banners and a litya tray following Divine Liturgy, and a banquet dinner was held at the church hall, serving over 330 people.

St. Mary's Altar Society sponsored two successful bread sales in November and December; over 800 loaves were sold.

The parish P.T.A. sponsors a breakfast buffet underneath the church, following Divine Liturgy on the second Sunday of the month.

## LYKENS

### Holy Ascension Church

**Parish activities:** The parish hosted a successful Fall Bazaar and also participated in the local Lykens Community Day.

Gramota presentations at St. Michael's Church, Jermyn.



Alex Hockin



Ruth Ann Lasichak



John Guzey

### MINERSVILLE

#### Ss. Peter & Paul Church

**Wedding:** Stephen Comisac III and Deborah Farkas were united in marriage on August 21.

### MOUNT CARMEL

#### St. Michael's Church

**Wedding:** George Winnick and Valerie Zbicki were united in marriage on October 16 by Archpriest



Blessing of new banners at St. Michael's, Jermyn.

Michael Lepa, Archpriest Michael Evans, and pastor and priest Roman Star.

### OLD FORGE

#### St. Michael's Church

**Baptisms:** Adam David Barsigian, son of David and Kathy Barsigian, December 19; Alexis Elizabeth Benson, daughter of Lawrence and Deborah Benson, September 26.

**Parish activities:** The Annunciation Ladies Club hosted a chicken and holupki dinner on September 19. The Ladies Club also held a peroghi sale on October 19 during which over 12,000 peroghis were sold.

Children, parents, and teachers of the Church School enjoyed a hayride together at the Mountain View Farm in Clarks Summit on October 17. The children were able to pick a pumpkin there, and they brought their pumpkins back to the church hall, where they were transformed into jack-o-lanterns.

The Church School sponsored a "Costume Ball in the Fall" on October 31. The Church School children, along with some of the adult parish members, dressed up for the occasion, and the children were then able to trick-or-treat without having to leave the building.

The parish hosted a Patronal Agape Potluck Dinner on November 8. The Anthracite Male Chorus, under

the direction of John Barsigian, gave a concert after the meal. Church School children, dressed somewhat like their patron saints, presented their compositions on the lives of their respective saints. After the festivities, the assembly then went in procession to the church for the all-night vigil.



Old Forge - Front row: Seth Mahaffey, Kyra Mahaffey, Paul Tumavitch, and Maura Elko. Back row: Michael Mahaffey, Nikolas Mahaffey, and Fr. David Mahaffey.

### PHILADELPHIA

#### St. Stephen's Church

**Parish activities:** September 19 was observed as a Charity Sunday by the parish, whose Senior Citizen Forum and Parish Outreach Program co-sponsored a special program featuring speakers from the Deborah

Heart and Lung Center Hospital in Brown Mills, N.J. The program was primarily devoted to fostering an awareness of the humanitarian commitments and the work that the Deborah Foundation is actively pursuing worldwide.

The principal guest speaker was Serge Gambal, son of the late Father Basil and Matushka Gambal of Frackville, Pa. Serge is a former parishioner of St. Stephen's, and is a retired Chief Executive Administrator of Deborah, who serves on its Board of Directors, and also is currently a consultant to all hospital administrators in the state of New Jersey. Mr. Gambal gave a detailed description of the operation of the hospital and the many good works that are being done by its physicians, nurses, and medical personnel.

Two nurses accompanied Mr. Gambal and spoke of their missions of mercy to Russia, Lithuania, and Greece through the Deborah Foundation. Their last trip to Russia was recently featured in a special program aired on the PBS network. Each mission project consists of teams of physicians, nurses, and support staff, who set up surgical operating rooms in local area hospitals in which hundreds of children are given heart operations. Each mission project costs over a million dollars. They are made possible through the voluntary work and support given by the Deborah Foundation and its chapters throughout the United States and Europe.

## WALLINGFORD

### St. Herman's Church

**Parish activities:** The Church School, in September, began its year with good attendance, as the children learned about the two hundredth anniversary of the Orthodox Christians coming to North America. The Church School also sponsored a brunch and made "mementos" for each parishioner during a recent Sunday morning.

The parish sponsored a Media Food Festival in October that enjoyed widespread participation and was successful.

## PHILADELPHIA

### St. Mary's Church



Bishop Herman presents Gramotas and icons on the Eightieth Anniversary of the parish.



Bishop Herman and some of the parish children.

The parish has sold its property on Moore Rd., and has relocated to a temporary facility at the Williamson Trade School on Route 352 in Wallingford. The Divine Liturgy is held at 10 a.m. Sunday mornings.

## WILLIAMSPORT

### Holy Cross Church

**Parish activities:** The parish auxiliary held its Annual Fall Dinner meeting, and the newly elected officers are: Carol Serwint, Presi-

dent; Elsie Skvir Nierle, Treasurer; and Christine Sinatra, Secretary.

The parish sponsored a special Bicentennial event on October 18, which featured Father Thomas Hopko, Dean of St. Vladimir's Seminary, who gave an inspiring lecture entitled "The Way of the Cross." The lecture was attended by numerous visitors, as well as parishioners.

The parish was the scene of a memorable occasion on Sunday,

*Continued on the next page.*

## Holy Cross Church, Williamsport

*Continued from page 75.*

October 31. His Grace, Bishop Herman, celebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, which included the elevation of its pastor, Father Daniel Kovalak, to the rank of Archpriest, and the ordination to the Holy Priesthood of Father Peter Dubinin, who is a parish native son. Over a hundred parishioners and guests, many from St. Tikhon's Seminary, gathered in the parish center for a dinner after the Liturgy. This was the first ordination for the parish, and it was held at the conclusion of Vocations Month during the Bicentennial year, making it a special occasion for prayer and thanksgiving.

Vespers was held on the campus of Bucknell University in Lewisburg on November 3. This college campus ministry is an outgrowth of the parish's weekly Bible studies, monthly youth group meetings, and inquirers classes.

The parish sponsored a concert of Orthodox Liturgical Treasures, performed by the Bicentennial Male Chorus at the St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Church in South Williamsport, November 14.

Father Daniel Kovalak was elected First Vice-President of the United Churches of Lycoming County at the ecumenical agency's Annual Assembly held November 15. Father Daniel also participates in UCLC's Media Ministries by offering morning devotions on the local radio station and writing articles for the local newspaper.



Father Thomas Hopko lectures.



Fr. Daniel Kovalak elevated to Archpriest.

## Bicentennial Male Chorus Update

Our diocesan **Bicentennial Male Chorus** has continued to celebrate the joy of the Bicentennial by performing both in and beyond our diocese.

This fall, the Chorus has offered "Orthodox Liturgical Treasures" concerts in St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Bethlehem; St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Sparta, N.J.; St. John's Orthodox Church, Nanticoke; St. John's Orthodox Church, Edwardsville; St. Stephen's Orthodox Catholic Cathedral, Philadelphia; St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Church, South Williamsport; and Holy Resurrection Orthodox Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre.

The Chorus represented our diocese well at the annual **Education**

**Day** at St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, N.Y. on October 2. They sang the responses to the Hierarchical Liturgy together with the St. Vladimir's Chorale, and performed a concert during the afternoon activities. Some two thousand people in attendance thoroughly enjoyed and were inspired by their performance.

The Chorus already has four concerts pending for the coming months. Their recording is now available through St. Tikhon's Bookstore.

If your parish is interested in sponsoring a concert by the **Bicentennial Male Chorus** as a Bicentennial outreach to your local community, contact **Fr. Daniel Kovalak, Director**, at 1725 Blair Street, Williamsport, PA 17701



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# Daily Devotions

## JANUARY

1. Col. 2:8-12 (Circumcision)
2. 2 Tim. 4:5-8
3. Heb. 11:17-23,27-31
4. Heb. 12:25-26; 13:22-25
5. 1 Cor. 9:19-27
6. Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7
7. Acts 19:1-8
8. Eph. 6:10-17
9. Eph. 4:7-13
10. James 2:14-26
11. James 3:1-10
12. James 3:11-4:6
13. James 4:7-5:9
14. 1 Pet. 1:1-2,10-12; 2:6-10
15. 1 Thess. 5:14-23
16. 1 Tim. 4:9-15
17. 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9
18. 1 Pet. 3:10-22
19. 1 Pet. 4:1-11
20. 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5
21. 2 Pet. 1:1-10
22. 2 Tim. 2:11-19
23. Col. 3:4-11
24. Heb. 8:7-13
25. Heb. 9:8-10,15-23
26. Heb. 10:1-18
27. Heb. 10:35-11:7
28. Heb. 11:8,11-16
29. Eph. 5:1-8
30. Col. 3:12-16
31. Heb. 11:17-23,27-31

## FEBRUARY

1. Heb. 12:25-26; 13:22-25
2. Heb. 7:7-17
3. James 1:19-27
4. James 2:1-13
5. Col. 1:3-6
6. 1 Tim. 1:15-17
7. James 2:14-26
8. James 3:1-10
9. James 3:11-4:6
10. James 4:7-5:9
11. 1 Pet. 1:1-2,10-12; 2:6-10
12. 1 Thess. 5:14-23
13. 1 Tim. 4:9-15
14. 1 Pet. 2:21-3:9
15. 1 Pet. 3:10-22
16. 1 Pet. 4:1-11
17. 1 Pet. 4:12-5:5
18. 2 Pet. 1:1-10
19. 2 Tim. 2:11-19
20. 2 Tim. 3:10-15
21. 2 Pet. 1:20-2:9
22. 2 Pet. 2:9-22
23. 2 Pet. 3:1-18
24. 1 John 1:8-2:6
25. 1 John 2:7-17
26. 2 Tim. 3:1-9
27. 1 Cor. 6:12-20
28. 1 John 2:18-3:10

- Luke 2:20-31,40-52 (Circumcision)
- Mark 1:1-8
- Mark 12:13-17
- Mark 12:18-27
- Luke 3:1-18
- Matt. 3:13-17
- John 1:29-34
- Matt. 4:1-11
- Matt. 4:12-17
- Luke 19:37-44
- Luke 19:45-48
- Luke 20:1-8
- Luke 20:9-18
- Luke 20:19-26
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